



**High Halstow
Primary Academy**

Attendance Procedure

Dated: November 2019

INTRODUCTION

Regular attendance at school is essential to promote the education of all pupils and to enable them to make the most of the educational opportunities available to them. The School's ethos demonstrates that children feel that their presence in school is important and that they are missed when they are absent or late. The School will take appropriate action when necessary in order to promote the aims of the Policy.

At High Halstow Primary Academy we take seriously our responsibility to monitor and promote the regular attendance of all our pupils. We acknowledge that irregular attendance seriously disrupts continuity of learning, undermines educational progress, can lead to underachievement and low attainment and impedes the child's ability to develop friendship groups within school.

All children are sometimes reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If a child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and may make things worse.

AIMS

- To maximise attendance of all children
- To provide an environment which encourages regular attendance and makes attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated at the school
- To monitor and support children whose attendance is a cause for concern and work in partnership with parents and carers to resolve any difficulties
- To analyse attendance data regularly to inform future policy and practice
- To work closely and make full use of the support from the wider community including the Attendance Advisory Practitioner and multi-agency teams.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The following people have key responsibilities in the pursuit of high levels of attendance and punctuality:

Governors

- To set out and monitor progress towards annual targets for attendance
- To evaluate the effectiveness of the Attendance Policy

Principal

- To ensure that effective systems are in place to accurately reflect individual pupil and group and whole school attendance patterns
- To monitor individual pupils, group and whole school attendance and punctuality.
- To work in partnership with key agencies if attendance and/or punctuality is an issue
- To provide Governors with information to enable them to evaluate the success of the Policy and practice
- To write to parents/carers regarding any concerns about their child's attendance
- To arrange meetings with parents/carers to discuss support and set targets for those experiencing attendance difficulties

Class Teacher

- To provide an accurate record of attendance for each child in their class
- Send any notes from parents to the office daily

Office Staff

- To prepare, manage and co-ordinate the use of the Bromcom Attendance Manager System
- To monitor and track attendance patterns for all children and prepare relevant attendance reports when necessary
- To ensure that a satisfactory reason for every absence has been established for each child at the end of each week
- To make a judgement in conjunction with the Principal whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised

Pupils

- Pupils have a responsibility to themselves and others to play a positive role in the life of the school and to make the most of the education opportunities available

Parents

- Parents have a duty under the law to ensure their children attend school. If parents do not do this, they are liable for prosecution

ADMINISTRATION

- The school uses Bromcom to store and monitor its legal responsibilities in relation to attendance. Registers are a vital legal document and teachers are required by their contractual duties to take an attendance register at the beginning of both the morning and afternoon sessions
- Registers are returned to the School Office after the closure of the registration period. Registers must be completed carefully and accurately, as they provide a record of a pupil's attendance. Failure to complete a register accurately leaves the school vulnerable to complaint from parents or carers and constitutes a risk if an emergency evacuation has to take place.

ABSENCE lateness

- Registration is 8.50am
- Pupils arriving after the register has been closed at 9.30am will be considered as late
- Pupils arriving after 9.00am must report to the School Office so that their attendance and meal choice can be recorded
- Pupils arriving after 9.15am will be officially absent for the morning session. This will be considered an unauthorised absence unless a satisfactory reason is given, for example a doctor's appointment. It is advised that medical evidence is given to the School to keep on record. If the School is not in receipt of medical evidence it is not obliged to authorise the absence.
- Action to address lateness will be taken in line with the school's strategy to improve punctuality

- Pupils who are consistently late disrupt not only their own education but also that of others.
- Where persistent lateness gives cause for concern our Principal or Office Team will contact the family and liaise with the Attendance Advisory Practitioner (AAP).

Illness

- Parents/carers are asked to contact the school on the first day of absence to provide the reason for the absence and where possible on each subsequent day of absence. Parents/carers should also provide a written explanation on their child's return to school
- Where Office Staff are not made aware of the reason for a child's absence they will wherever possible, contact parents/carers by telephone on the first day of absence
- If any member of staff is concerned about a reason for absence, the Vice Principal or Principal should be informed

Medical or Dental Appointments

- Absence from school due to a medical or dental appointment will be considered as an authorised absence. Parents/carers are requested to provide written confirmation of these appointments (Appointment Card, letter inviting to appointment etc)
- Parents/carers are encouraged to make all medical appointments out of school hours

HOLIDAYS DURING TERM TIME

Revised regulations on education from September 2013 state that no holidays will be authorised in term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. In light of this the Governors have taken the decision that under no circumstances will holidays during term time be authorised. A pupil's absence during term time can seriously disrupt their continuity or learning. Not only do they miss the teaching provided on the days they are away, they are also less prepared for the lessons on their return. Should a child's attendance be a cause for concern there may be a referral to the Attendance Advisory Practitioner who will issue a Penalty Notice.

Revised regulations on education – related penalty notices (from September 2013.)

The Amendments to the 2006 Regulations will reduce the timescales for paying a penalty notice. Parents must, from 1 September 2013, pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. This brings attendance penalty notices into line with other types of penalty notices and allows local authorities to move quickly on prosecutions.

The procedures and consequences outlined above applied equally to persistent lateness.

OTHER ABSENCE

In some instances, there may be a need to apply for leave for special circumstances and these will be considered on an individual basis and a decision will be made to authorise or unauthorise the absence.

CHILDREN NOT COLLECTED AFTER SCHOOL HOURS

There are rare occasions when perhaps due to an emergency, parents are not able to collect their children promptly from school, or make arrangements for their collection at the end of the school day. If the child *is* not collected, the school will make enquiries to find the parents using the emergency contact numbers provided by the parents. If after one hour it has not been possible to contact parents/carers then the local Police will be informed of the situation. The Principal will also contact the Referral Team at Social Services to inform them of a possible problem.

REPORTING TO PARENTS AND CARERS

All absences both authorised and unauthorised and lateness will be reported to the parent/carer at the end of the year within their child's report.

ATTENDANCE PROMOTION

We aim to raise and maintain levels of attendance by:

- Promoting a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which pupils feel safe, secure and valued
- Raising the awareness of the importance of a differentiated and relevant curriculum
- Promoting opportunities to celebrate and reward pupil's successes and achievements.
- Raising awareness of the importance of good attendance
- Ensuring that attendance is monitored effectively and reasons for absence are recorded promptly and consistently

ATTENDANCE CODES

The following codes will be used to indicate the reason for absence

- L** late- between 9am and 9.15am or after 9.15am if authorised
- U** Late- Late after 9.15am- unauthorised absence for whole of morning session
- M** Medical- hospital admission, dental, optician, hospital or doctor's appointment
- C** Other authorised absence- bereavement, family reasons, child performance
- G** Unauthorised holiday absence

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Attendance data will be analysed to establish patterns of irregular attendance. This will include children with:

- Incomplete weeks
- Monday and Friday absences
- Lateness
- Periods of extended absence
- Periods of unauthorised absence
- Children with attendance below 90%

This data will be discussed with the Attendance Practitioner as part of the regular meetings held at school.

The Head of School and Attendance Practitioner will discuss the impact of the School's Attendance Policy and the strategies used to promote good attendance annually.

Systems and Structures to Tackle Attendance and Punctuality Issues

When children's attendance and punctuality is a concern to the school the following systems and structures are followed:

On the first day of absence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents called to enquire about child's wellbeing • Establish when child will return Enter 'I' for illness or 'M' for medical appointment on system • If no contact can be made, emergency contacts are called. • If contact cannot be made or acceptable reason cannot be established, absence is recorded as 'O' unauthorised.
On the Second day of absence in any school year (authorised or unauthorised and not necessarily consecutive days)	An 'Attendance Concerns' letter is sent out inviting you to meet with the School, stating that unless attendance improves you may be liable for a penalty notice
After 5 or more days of unauthorised absence following the 'Attendance Concerns' letter – within 6 week period	A letter will be sent outlining that we will be working with the Local Authority to initiate a penalty notice
If attendance does not improve or attendance drops below 90%	Prosecution might be considered for further periods of unauthorised absence. Action may be taken by the school and local authority against parents/carers who fail to ensure that their child is properly educated. The action may result in a formal warning, a fine, or an appearance at court.

System for Punctuality

On the fourth instance of lateness (4 times in the late book as code L, Late before the register close)	'Lateness Concerns' letter is sent to parents reminding them of the importance of punctuality, school timings.
Following 3 more instances in the late book as a Code L, Late before the register close.	'Attendance Meeting' letter is sent out stating that the parent must come in to school for a meeting with the Head of School and Home School Support Officer to address concerns.
Following 3 or more instances in the late book as a Code U (Late After The register closed)	'Attendance Meeting' letter is sent out stating that the parent must come in to school for a meeting with the Head of School and Home School Support Officer to address concerns.
If punctuality does not improve	Prosecution might be considered for further periods of unauthorised absence. Action may be taken by the school and local authority against parents/carers who fail to ensure that their child is properly educated. The action may result in a formal warning, a fine, or an appearance at court.