

## Review history

Approving Body

Date

Minute number

FGB

21.02.22

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# Attendance Policy

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## Mission Statement

*Ashbourne Hilltop and St Oswald's have worked in conjunction with each other to develop this policy and guidance to support our families with good attendance and a positive relationship with education now and in the future.*

Our aim is to encourage and assist all pupils to achieve excellent levels of punctuality. We aim to ensure that all our pupils receive a full time education which maximises opportunities for each pupil to realise their true potential.

We will strive to provide a warm, welcoming and caring environment whereby each member of the community feels wanted and secure.

All school staff will work with pupils and their families to ensure each pupil attends school regularly and punctually. Children who are persistently late or absent soon fall behind with their learning. Children who are absent from school frequently develop large gaps in their learning which will impact on their progress and their ability to meet age related expectations. A child whose attendance drops to 90% each year will over their time at Primary School have missed two whole terms of learning.

We will all establish an effective system of incentives and rewards which acknowledges the efforts of pupils to improve their attendance and time keeping and will challenge the behaviour of those pupils who give low priority to attendance and punctuality; this is of paramount importance in ensuring that all children have full access to education

## Aims

- To improve the overall percentage and attendance rate of all pupils at school.
- To make attendance and punctuality a priority for all stakeholders.

- To ensure an effective monitoring system is established; to provide support advice and guidance to parents.
- To improve pupil's achievement by ensuring high levels of attendance and punctuality.
- To develop positive and consistent communication between home and school.
- To raise awareness of parents, carers and pupils of the importance of uninterrupted attendance and punctuality at every stage of a child's education.
- To promote effective partnerships with the Education Welfare support service and with other service and agencies.
- To promote a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which pupils feel safe secure and valued and encourage in pupils a sense of their own responsibility.

### Rights, Responsibilities and Roles

#### School

##### Class Teacher

- Keeping an overview of class and individual attendance looking particularly for either poor overall attendance, anomalies in patterns of attendance and /or unusual explanations for non-attendance offered by children and their parents/carers.
- Informing the leadership team where there are concerns and acting upon them.
- Providing background information to support referrals.
- Monitoring follow up once actions have been taken to correct attendance concerns.
- Emphasising with their class the importance of good attendance and promptness.
- Follow up absences with immediate requests for explanation and this should be noted in the registers.

##### Head teacher

- Overall monitoring of school attendance
- Trends in authorised and unauthorised absence
- Contacting families where concerns raised about absence including arranging meetings to discuss attendance issues
- Monitoring individual attendance where concerns have been raised
- Making referrals to the EWO service
- Providing reports and background information to inform discussion
- Liaising with other professionals to determine potential sources of difficulties and reasons for absence.

##### Administrative Staff

- Collating and recording registration and attendance information.
- Taking and recording messages from parents regarding absence.
- Ensuring the absence/late book is completed.
- Contacting parents of absent children who arrive late or go home.
- Keeping an overview of class attendance and individual attendance particularly looking for anomalies in patterns of attendance and or unusual explanations for attendance offered by children and their parents/carers and reporting concerns to the Head teacher.

- Sending out standard letters regarding absence.

### Pupils

- Pupils will make sure that they attend school regularly and on time.
- Children will have their attendance celebrated during a reward assembly.
- Will tell a member of staff about any problem or reason that may prevent them from attending school.

### Parents

- Parents are legally responsible for ensuring their child's regular and punctual attendance where they are properly dressed and equipped and in a fit condition to learn.
- Parents are responsible for immediately informing the school of the reason for any absence by **phone call** on the first morning of any absence.
- Parents will avoid arranging family holidays during term time.
- Parents will ensure that their children arrive in school well prepared for the day.
- Parents will agree to this as part of the Home School Agreement and sign this agreement.

## Actions

### Registration

The school day begins at 9am. Doors open at 8.45am and parents have 15 minutes to bring their children into school. Pupils benefit from arriving at 8.45am as they access an additional 15 minutes of morning activities which consolidates their current learning.

Doors close at 9am prompt. The register is taken. The register closes at 9.10am. Any child who arrives at school after 9am must be taken straight to the office whereby a Late mark will be placed in the register and they will be then taken to the classroom.

In the afternoon the register is taken at 12.30pm (Yellow Class), 1.00pm (Red and Blue Classes) and 1.10pm (Orange and Purple Classes).

### Procedures for Following up Absence/Lateness

Parents are advised to phone into school on the first day of their child's absence to give a reason. This reason will be detailed on the register.

Contact will be made on the first day of absence via a phone call. If the phone is not answered, then a text message will be sent.

When a pupil is persistently absent or late and without good reason and the school's efforts to effect improvement have been unsuccessful it may be necessary to refer the matter to the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) (letters are included at the end of the policy which can be used) and/or the MAT team based at Etwall Children's Centre.

Follow up will be undertaken on specific individual absences which fall below 90%

The Head teacher monitors the attendance and lateness. Where there is a pattern beginning to emerge the parents are contacted by letter. If there is no improvement the Head teacher will phone the parents and arrange a meeting to discuss the situation or contact the parents by letter.

Identification of developing patterns of irregular attendance and lateness will be monitored and the EWO may be contacted.

## School Organisation

In order for the attendance policy to be successful, every member of the staff must make attendance a high priority and should convey to pupils the importance and value of education.

In addition there may be specific responsibilities allocated to individual staff such as the following;

### Head teacher

- To oversee and demonstrate ownership of the whole policy.
- To set challenging but achievable targets to reduce levels of absence.
- To collate and analyse attendance data.
- To liaise with the MAT team/EWO

### School Business Officer/Manager

- To oversee the efficient operation of the attendance system and the collation and analysis of attendance data.
- To follow up immediately any unexplained absences by contacting parents. To challenge suspicious or inappropriate reasons for absence.
- To liaise with class teachers and outside agencies.
- To ensure pupils arriving late are logged on the online register.

### Class Teacher

- To complete registers accurately and on time.
- To record all known reasons for absence in the register.
- To inform the HT of concerns in a timely manner.

### Parents

- Contact with school on **each day** of absence.
- Support their child and the school in achieving maximum attendance.

## Absence review Procedures

Attendance is reviewed on a half termly basis, where pupils are identified as persistent absentees, in line with the set government criteria of 90% and the school's attendance target, are subject to further monitoring and or action due to the link between attendance and attainment. We, as a school have a duty to inform parents of their child's attendance and how this can impact upon their performance.

Long term standing medical conditions need to be reviewed and monitored with evidence (either a letter from a consultant, doctor or photocopy of medical prescriptions) where appropriate.

Leave of Absence- changes to School attendance regulations

*In September 2013 the Education (pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 came into force. These regulations make it clear that Head teachers should not grant approval for any leave of absence during term time, including holidays, unless there are exceptional circumstances. These regulations also state that holidays cannot be authorised retrospectively.*

*Any requests should be on official school absence request forms and handed into the school office for consideration prior to any holiday/leave arrangements being made.*

The School will consider factors such as;

- The nature of the request and why it could not be taken in school holiday.
- General welfare of the pupil and family circumstances.
- Pupil's educational needs and ability to catch up on work missed.
- Proximity of SAT's, Phonics tests and other assessments.
- The frequency of such request from the pupil's parents.
- Amount of time requested.
- Whether a parent gave advance notice.

Exceptional circumstances will be regarded as one-off situations. If an event can be reasonably scheduled outside of term time, then it is unlikely that the absence will be authorised.

The following will not be considered as "exceptional";

- Relatives coming to visit.
- Cheaper holidays in England and abroad.
- Family day trips
- Visiting family and friends who have different half term holidays.

Examples of Authorised absence

- Sickness (if absences are excessive then a sick note from the doctors will be required)
- Emergency medical/dental appointments
- Days of religious observance
- Exceptional family circumstances (e.g.) bereavement
- Approved sporting or musical activity/competition/ examination
- Fixed term exclusion

Examples of Unauthorised Absence

- Frequent absences attributed to minor ailments but not supported by medical evidence.
- Shopping
- Birthdays
- Day trips
- Unexplained absences
- Holidays

### Penalty Notices

Penalty Notices can be issued to parents and carers for non-attendance at school as part of the Anti Social Behaviour Act 2003. A Penalty notice is an alternative to prosecution. It requires the parent to pay fixed amount as a fine for the child's non attendance and avoids a court appearance. Payment is £100 to be paid within 42 days. The 42 days after the date of issue as shown on the notice. If the fine is paid within 28 days payment reduces to £50. The fine will apply to each parent for each child who fails to attend regularly and punctually.

All letters relating to Penalty Notices can be found on the school website along with the flow chart of information.

### Strategies and Support for Promoting Attendance/Punctuality

- It is the belief of the staff that children are more likely to attend regularly if the curriculum is lively and meets the needs of the children. The curriculum will be reviewed regularly and topics will be based around the children's choices.
- Attendance statistics will be collected and used to inform pastoral and curriculum practices.
- Rewards will be given for 100% attendance.
- Pupils whose attendance falls below 90% will be set targets for improvement and meetings will be initiated.
- Regular structured meetings will be held with the school's EWO in order to identify and support those pupils whose attendance/punctuality is a concern.
- Visits to feeder schools will be made to ensure the fullest support for all children as they transfer on to their next school.

### Collection of Attendance Data

Attendance Data is collected daily, monthly and yearly. It is discussed with individual teachers, whole school and at Governors meetings and is reported in the Head teacher report.

### Monitoring of Policy

This Policy will be monitored annually by the Learning and Teaching committee.

Reviewed ..... date .....

Signed .....

## Version Control

Version Number	Author	Purpose/Change	Date
0-1	Darren Hooley and Rebecca Wood	Joint working between schools	10.02.22
1-1	Darren Hooley	Approved by Hilltop FGB	21.02.22