



Hunnyhill Primary School

Date of Review	October 2020
Next Review Due	October 2022
Staff Responsibility	Headteacher
Notes / Source	
Signed by Chair of Governors	<i>P Stevens</i>

Attendance & Punctuality Policy

Rationale

Children should be at school, on time, every day that the school is open unless the reason for absence is unavoidable. At Hunnyhill, we expect very good attendance from our pupils in order for them to make the most of the opportunities that the school has to offer. Good attendance supports children to make good, consistent progress. We rely on partnerships with parents and carers to make sure that this is achieved.

The Law

By law, all children of compulsory school age (between 5 and 16) must have a proper full-time education. Parents/carers are responsible for making sure that this happens, either by registering the child at school or by making other arrangements that provide an effective education. If your child is registered at Hunnyhill Primary School, the school must give permission for absence and the education authority can take legal action against the parent/carer if the child does not attend. Our school Governors are updated regularly with the school's attendance figures and are actively involved in ensuring our children achieve good attendance.

Why is good attendance important?

Patterns of good attendance are established at an early age so it is therefore important that the school, home and pupils work closely together. Good attendance ensures that individuals take full advantage of all the opportunities on offer to them. Good attendance encourages children to establish regular and maintained peer group friendships. We will arrange meetings, in partnership with the Education Welfare Service, with families who we feel need support and help to improve their child's attendance.

Why is good punctuality important?

Good punctuality shows that a pupil is ready and willing to work. Late arrival can cause disruption to lessons and to other children and staff. Good punctuality is habit forming so it is important that children arrive on time from an early age

Authorised absence

Authorised absence means time out of school for approved reasons. Examples include:

- Illness and urgent medical treatment
- Medical or dental appointments that cannot be arranged outside of school hours
- Specialist hospital or clinic appointments
- Days of religious observance
- Family bereavement

We will only consider any other absence in term time where; the application is made to the Head Teacher at least two weeks before and where there are exceptional reasons for needing the absence. The Head Teacher will consider each request individually and it is entirely the school's decision and not a parental right.

Please be aware that there are specific times during the school year when a child's attendance at school is of paramount importance, i.e. the weeks before and the week of SATs exams.

Unauthorised absence

Unauthorised absence is an absence from school without any explanation from parents/carers or where the reason for being away is one that the school cannot condone. Examples include:

- Truancy
- Staying at home for birthdays, etc.
- Going shopping
- Having hair cut
- Any absence where the school has not been informed about the reason either verbally from a parent/carer, by phone or by letter.
- Any holiday not authorised by the Head Teacher

Should you decide to take your child out of school without our permission or authorisation, this will be recorded as unauthorised absence. This may result in parents being issued with a truancy penalty notice (TPN) of £60 per parent, per child by the Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) if paid within 21 days, going up to £120 per parent, per child if paid between 21 and 28 days. If not paid within 28 days, parents could face prosecution and a fine of £2500 and a possible prison sentence of up to 3 months.

Monitoring Attendance

Only the school, within the context of the law, can approve absences. It is the parents/carers responsibility to ensure that children attend school regularly and on time.

Registration takes place at 8.55am every morning and at 1.00pm in the afternoon. If a child arrives between 8.55am and 9.15am or 1.00pm and 1.10pm they will be marked late and the symbol 'L' is recorded in the register. After 9.15am or 1.10pm the symbol 'U' is recorded with a reason on the electronic register. Lateness is recorded and monitored.

Parents are expected to contact the school on the first day of their child's absence with the reason and the child's expected return date. Parents should update the school every day of the absence and should complete an Absence Slip on the child's return to school – this can be done in person, or ideally via the online form on the school website. Absences without a written explanation will remain on the registers as unauthorised.

Registers and attendance records are checked and monitored regularly by the School Administrator, Head teacher and by the Education Welfare Service. Referrals and visits can be made to homes by the Education Welfare Service where there is cause for concern regarding poor attendance. The school reserves the right to contact parents/carers and where necessary to contact the Education Welfare Service if a child's attendance becomes a concern.

Please read this policy in conjunction with the Safeguarding and related Policies.