



# Policy for Attendance

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## **Mission Statement**

At Hudson Road Primary School we value each child as an individual, and we foster a sense of belonging to the school family. Everyone is respected and able to achieve and develop as lifelong learners in an environment that celebrates diversity and challenges prejudice.

## **Rationale**

Regular attendance at school is essential to ensure uninterrupted progress and to enable children to achieve their potential. The attendance pattern for all children is monitored weekly with the school seeking to work actively with parents to ensure a regular pattern is maintained. Monitoring attendance is also part of our safeguarding procedures as children being absent from education for prolonged periods or on short but repeated occasions can act as a warning sign.

Non attendance is an important issue that is treated seriously. However each case is different and the school acknowledges that no one standard response will be appropriate in every case. Consideration is given to all factors affecting attendance before deciding whether intervention strategies are needed.

In every case, early intervention is essential to prevent the problem from worsening. It is essential that parents/carers keep the school fully informed of any matters that may affect their child's attendance; they are reminded of this duty in the school prospectus, on our website, and in admission meetings.

Further details regarding roles and responsibilities are identified in the appendix to this policy.

## **Aims**

- To encourage full attendance and good punctuality.
- To monitor each child's attendance and punctuality and liaise with parents/carers as soon as concerns arise.
- To work closely with the local Sunderland/Together for Children Attendance team.
- To analyse attendance figures and identify trends and patterns that need action.

### **Who is involved?**

- Class Teachers and Support Staff
- School Office Staff
- Early Help
- Head teacher
- Governors
- Parents/Carers
- Pupils
- LA/TfC and other Attendance Officers
- Social care services like social workers or Family Support where allocated

### **School Responsibilities**

The School Leadership Team and all teaching and support staff work to ensure a high level of enjoyment and commitment to learning as a means of ensuring regular attendance.

Specific responsibilities for attendance matters are identified in the appendix.

Where school attendance problems occur, the school will work with parents in the interests of the child to achieve a resolution.

Attendance is recorded and data stored and analysed using the SIMS Attendance module. Attendance concerns and meetings are recorded using CPOMS.

It is a statutory duty for class teachers to call and maintain accurate registers; these are legal documents, and it may be called for as evidence by the court. Class teachers are legally responsible for marking their class register twice per day at the start of each session.

### **Parental Responsibility**

Throughout this policy the term 'parent' represents one parent, both parents or carers with whom the child resides.

Parents are informed of their responsibility to ensure that their children attend regularly, in the school prospectus. Punctuality is also stressed as lateness impacts on learning not only for the individual, but the class as a whole.

Attendance is discussed with each parent at consultation evenings, with the current percentage attendance being reported.

Parents have a legal obligation to ensure their children receive full time education. This is achieved by regular attendance at school.

**When a child is unwell, parents should contact the school before 9.30am on the first day of absence informing the school of the reason for absence.**

### **Pupil Responsibilities**

We expect every child to have good attendance and to understand its importance without needing an acknowledgement or reward.

At Hudson Road we also acknowledge that an on-going or chronic medical need may also impact on a child's possible attendance and should be viewed supportively.

### **Authorised Absence**

The Head teacher, not parents, authorises absence; Hudson Road Primary School adhere to the DFE guidelines in authorising absence. Absence for any reason during term time is discouraged.

Absence known to be for the following reasons would be authorised:

- Illness
- Religious observance
- Attendance at medical appointments which cannot be made outside of school hours
- Attendance at appointments at the direction of the Home Office or relevant international embassy or consulate.

When it has become necessary to make a referral to the Attendance Officer, they liaise with the school regarding absences following contact with parents.

Calls from parents regarding absence are logged.

After registration, checks are made to ensure that all children are accounted for. Telephone calls are made to parents of children who are not in school to ensure that children are safe; this forms part of our child safeguarding procedures and works in conjunction with our Child Protection policy. Where no contact can be made with parents, school may need to make a home visit and/or contact the police to request a welfare check.

### **Requests for Leave of Absence**

**The current law does not give any entitlement to parents to take their child on leave during term time.** Any application for leave of absence must be in exceptional circumstances and the head teacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave. Such permission is granted in accordance with arrangements made by the governing body and is at the discretion of the Headteacher.

When application is made for authorised absence during term time, the Head teacher gives consideration to:

The age of the child

The nature of the parent's wishes

The timing of the proposed absence

The attendance pattern in the present and previous academic years

The attendance percentage

The child's progress

**You must allow enough time for the head teacher to consider your request before leave is taken. It is possible that the head teacher may refuse permission. Parents can be issued with a penalty notice or prosecuted for periods of unauthorised leave.**

### **Analysis of Attendance Data**

The Attendance Administrator and Head teacher are responsible for analysing attendance figures on a monthly and termly basis. This analysis helps to identify children whose attendance is causing concern.

Overall results are shared with the Attendance link governor and all of the governors at termly meetings through the Head teacher's report.

Parents are able to request a copy of the attendance data for their child.

School staff or the allocated school Early Help worker will, if necessary, make home visits to families with particular concerns with attendance or punctuality and work with them to overcome any problems or issues they may be having.

### **Attendance and Punctuality Concerns**

Every effort is made to support parents/carers in achieving good attendance for their child. However, if despite initial interventions by school staff, attendance or punctuality do not improve then the Non Attendance procedures are used.

- Stage 1 – Letter home to parents highlighting their child's poor attendance and the effect on their child's progress. An informal meeting is set up with the Early Help worker
- Stage 2 – A meeting is set up between the Headteacher, Early Help worker and the parent to discuss the issues and agree improvement strategies.
- Stage 3 – Concerns closely monitored. If no rapid improvement it may result in a further meeting/home visit with the Headteacher and Lead Governor for Attendance and all absences will only be authorised with proof of illness from a GP/nurse
- Stage 4 – Referral to TfC/Sunderland Attendance Team

### **Elective Home Education**

If a parent chooses to educate their child at home, the school follows the Elective Home Education procedures. They follow the checklist set out by TfC and the guidelines for Local authorities.

### **Review**

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years. Minor amendments can be made in consultation with the Head teacher.

**Appendix**

<b><u>Role</u></b>	<b><u>Responsibility</u></b>
Head teacher	Operational management of the policy. Consider requests for authorised absence. Give approval in advance in appropriate circumstances, taking account of the child’s attendance record to date. Authorise absence after it occurs when a satisfactory explanation is accepted. Complete HT witness statements on pupil absence for court use. Analysis of trends in attendance to identify appropriate action.
Class Teachers	Prepare and deliver stimulating and engaging work for all pupils. Registration of pupils at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions. Alert the attendance staff of any children who demonstrate an unsettled pattern of attendance or whose attendance pattern changes. Return registers to designated place immediately after registration. Report percentage changes at parent consultations: encourage regular punctual attendance; work to secure this. Ensure all absence notes and messages are passed to the attendance staff.
School Administrator	Print weekly registers. Update data using the OMR. Record late arrival and reasons. Complete referrals to the Attendance Team. Provide attendance reports when requested. Complete the annual DFE attendance returns
School Attendance Administrator	Ensure reasons for absences are accurately recorded Update records using agreed codes. Make calls to parents when first day of absence contact has not been made. Prepare standard letters requesting reasons for absence when this is unexplained. Liaise with the Early Help worker and make referrals as necessary. Work with the HT and Early Help worker towards improved patterns of attendance for referred pupils identifying the course of action that should be taken. Prepare letters to inform parents when a child’s attendance is giving cause for concern and is being monitored. Collect absence notes and reasons for absence. Identify cases of unauthorised absence which necessitate action and advise School Administrator, Headteacher and or Early Help worker. Prepare information for Attendance Team referrals.
Parents	Ensure their child attends daily and on time. Keep the school fully informed on all matters that might affect their child’s attendance. Telephone school on the first day of absence to inform the school of the reason. Provide a note confirming the reason on the child’s return to school. If attendance becomes a concern– work with the school to resolve any issues. Give serious consideration to whether or not it is appropriate or necessary to request term time absence.

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**Author:** Mrs C Westgate/Mrs C Brown

	Make application for any term time leave of absence prior to proposed dates and abide by the decision of the school.
Early Help worker	Work closely with school and families to resolve attendance issues. Make home visits on behalf of the school. Attend meetings at agreed times. Work with the School Administrator, School Attendance Administrator and HT towards improved patterns of attendance for referred pupils identifying the course of action that should be taken. Make referrals for Early Help support (with the permission of the parent).
Attendance Team	On receipt of a written referral, take appropriate action, which may include:  Advice on strategies to improve attendance Assessment home visits Action planning Agreed time limited intervention Attendance at school meetings Written record of work undertaken Verbal feedback where appropriate Written response to referral within 10 days Liaison with other agencies Onward referral to other agencies Liaison with other LA departments Preparation of cases for prosecution including sending warning letters Convening an LA Attendance panel Preparing S.9 Witness Statements for Magistrate court
Attendance Link Governor	Monitor pupil attendance and ensure that action is in line with the policy. Analyse trends in attendance data to identify appropriate action. Ensure reasons for absence are accurately recorded. Complete regular register checks Report to the Governing body

Headteacher	Mrs Cathy Westgate
School Administrator	Mrs Caroline Brown
School Attendance Administrator	Ms Lisa Scrafton
School Early Help Worker	Ms Grace Harrison
Attendance Governor	Father Andrew Collins Jones