

Ashby Hill Top Primary School



Attendance Policy

Signed on behalf of Governing Body _____

Agreed Date: August 2016

Review Date: August 2018

Policy on Attendance

1 Introduction

- 1.1 We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is development of positive attitudes towards school. To this end, we strive to make our school a happy and rewarding experience for all children. We will reward those children whose attendance is very good. We will also make the best provision we can for those children who, for whatever reason, are prevented from coming to school. For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly. We expect all children on roll to attend every day and be in attendance on time, when the school is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so - unless the reason for absence is unavoidable. This school attendance policy is written to reflect the law and also the guidance produced by the Department of Education.
- 1.2 Amendments to The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 remove references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. **The amendments make clear that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Headteachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.**

Absences soon mount up – see the impact of time off over one year:

Child's attendance	No. of days missed	No. of Hours of lessons missed
95%	9½ (approx. 36 lessons)	47
90%	19 (approx. 76 lessons)	95
85%	28½ (approx. 116 lessons)	142
80%	38 (approx. 152 lessons)	190
75%	47½ (approx. 200 lessons)	237

2 Definitions

2.1 Authorised absence

- An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or guardian. For example, if a child has been unwell, the parent writes a note or telephones the school to explain the absence.
- Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents do not have this authority. Consequently, not all absences supported by parents will be classified as authorised. For example, if a parent takes a child out of school to go shopping during school hours, this will not mean it is an authorised absence.

2.2 Unauthorised absence

- An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of both the school and a parent.

- Therefore, the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent.

3 If a child is absent

- 3.1 When a child is absent unexpectedly, the class teacher will record the absence in the register, parents are requested to inform the school office before 9:30am if their child is to be absent from school. If, by that time, a child is absent and we do not know the reason, we will try to contact the parent. If there is no reply we will try at least once more.
- 3.2 When the child returns to school, a note should be brought from a parent or guardian to explain the absence, unless the parent has previously notified us by telephone.
- 3.3 A note may be sent to the school prior to the day of absence, e.g. if a child has a medical appointment.
- 3.4 If there is any doubt about the whereabouts of a child, the class teacher should take immediate action by notifying the school office. The school will then be in contact straight away with the parent or guardian, in order to check on the safety of the child.

4 Requests for leave of absence

- 4.1 We believe that children need to be in school for all sessions, so that they can make the most progress possible. However, we do understand that there are circumstances under which a parent may legitimately request leave of absence for a child. The Headteacher has the discretionary power to grant leave if it is considered that there are special circumstances relating to that application.

Requests must be made on a "Request for Absence" form (see Appendix 2)

Special Circumstances DO NOT include the circumstances such as:-

- Wanting to go away for the weekend;
- Wanting to take a family holiday;
- Friends or family organising a holiday without realising when school holidays fall;
- The financial implications of going on holiday (ie: it's cheaper to take a holiday during school time than during school holiday time);
- Taking a Friday off "to avoid the traffic" etc when going away for the weekend
- A day off for a special occasion (eg birthday)
- Flight times (etc) not coinciding with school hours
- Leaving school early on the last day of term

- 4.2 No absences will be authorised:-

- During the week of, or the week before; Year 6 SATs for any reason other than illness;
- During winter weather (eg snow & ice) when school has managed to stay open, unless school has been previously notified (eg: hospital appointment), children are expected to attend school as usual. (See separate policy on Inclement weather)

- 4.3 In brief, the regulations mean that:

- Parents cannot demand a leave of absence as an automatic right;
- Parental requests must be in writing and the headteacher may ask for additional information before making a decision
- The headteacher will not apply blanket policies to approve/reject all applications;
- All requests must be considered on their own merits but there must be special circumstances before the request is granted;
- Extended periods of absence will be granted only in exceptional circumstances.

Parents may request a copy of their child's attendance record from the school office.

5 Long-term absence

- 5.1 When children have an illness that means they will be away from school for over ten days, the school will do all it can to, so that they can keep up with their school work, for example provide reading books, etc, but school does not provide “worksheets etc for a child to complete at home.
- 5.2 If the absence is likely to continue for an extended period, or be a repetitive absence, the school will contact the support services, so that arrangements may be made for the child to be given some tuition outside school.

6 Repeated unauthorised absences

- 6.1 The school will contact the parent or guardian of any child who has repeated unauthorised absence. If a child has a repeated number of unauthorised absences, the parents or guardians may be asked to visit the school and discuss the problem. If the situation does not improve, the school will then contact the Attendance Improvement Service for advice, where a visit to the home may be sought to ensure that the parents or guardians understand the seriousness of the situation, section 6.2 may be actioned if a satisfactory solution is not found.
- 6.2 The governors reserve the right to consider taking legal action, including imposing fines, against any parents or guardians who repeatedly fail to accept their responsibility for sending their children to school on a regular basis.

7 Rewards for good attendance

- 7.1 All the children who have 100 per cent attendance in any one term will receive an excellence certificate for attendance, awarded at the last assembly of the term. There are special certificates and medals for any child who has 100 per cent attendance for a whole year.

8 Monitoring and review

- 8.1 It is the responsibility of the governors to monitor overall attendance, and they will request a termly report from the headteacher. The governing body also has the responsibility for this policy, and for seeing that it is carried out. The governors will therefore examine closely the information provided to them, and seek to ensure that our attendance figures are as high as they should be.
- 8.2 The school will keep accurate attendance records on file for a minimum period of three years.
- 8.3 The rates of attendance will be reported in the school prospectus.
- 8.4 Class teachers will be responsible for monitoring attendance in their class, and for following up absences in the appropriate way. If there is concern about a child's absence, they will contact the school office immediately. If there is a longer-term general worry about the attendance of a particular child, this will be reported to the headteacher, who will contact the parents or carers
- 8.5 At the end of each month, the Headteacher will undertake a review of attendance and where it falls below 90%, the Headteacher will determine whether or not to contact parents with concerns. This may be done by telephone or letter. The first contact will be to see if there are circumstances that school can help with in order to improve rates of attendance. If attendance does not improve, letters will follow to state that absence cannot be authorised without a medical note and finally that the matter is being referred to the Attendance Improvement Service. Example letters are in Appendix 1, but their wording may be adapted to individual circumstances.

8.6 This policy will be reviewed by the governing body every two years, or earlier if considered necessary.

Security of registers

Official Registers by law must be kept for at least 3 years.

These are safely kept in a secure locked cabinet on the school premises.

Responsible person for absence: Mr Steve Garner Head Teacher

Summary:

The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend. All school staff are committed to working with parents and pupils as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible.



Ashby Hill Top Primary School

An Academy School

Beaumont Avenue, Ashby de la Zouch, Leicestershire LE65 2NF

~ Headteachers: Mr Steve Garner

Telephone: 01530 415736

Fax: 01530 414283

email: office@ashbyhilltop.leics.sch.uk

website: www.ashbyhilltop.leics.sch.uk

Date XXXXXXXX

Dear Parent/Carer

Re: (Pupil name and form + nature of letter)

Ashby Hill Top School is continually striving to raise attendance levels in order to maximise the educational achievements of all pupils. There is a great deal of current research available which clearly shows that even quite low levels of absence have a negative impact on achievement and attainment.

To keep you informed, as part of our regular checks on attendance it has been noticed that the attendance for currently stands at% which is below the expected level.

If there are any issues that are making it difficult for your child to attend school regularly, please do not hesitate to contact me to discuss your concerns or whether there is anything we can do together to resolve any issues.

Yours sincerely

Steve Garner
Headteacher



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Date XXXXXXXX

Dear Parent/Carer

Re: (Pupil name and form + nature of letter)

Further to my earlier letter this academic year (date inserted), I am writing to express my continued concern about’s attendance which currently stands at%. This is below the expected level and will have a negative impact upon learning and achievement.

.....’s attendance will continue to be monitored by the school, if there is no improvement, you will be contacted again to arrange a meeting to discuss this issue further.

I look forward to seeing a marked improvement in your child’s attendance. If you are experiencing difficulties in securing your child’s attendance or have any other concerns please do not hesitate to contact me by phone or in person.

I trust that I can rely on your continuing support in this matter.

Yours sincerely,

Steve Garner
Headteacher



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Date XXXXXXXX

Dear Parent/Carer

Re: (Pupil name and form + nature of letter)

It has been noted that your child regularly arrives late for the start of the day. This is disruptive to both your child's education and that of the other children in their class.

I must also bring to your attention the legal responsibility you have in ensuring your child receives the efficient full-time education to which they are entitled. Not only does this mean that you must ensure your child attends Ashby Hill Top Primary School regularly, but that they arrive on time at the start of the school day. School is open at 8.45am so the children have plenty of time to be ready for the register.

I trust I can rely on your full co-operation in resolving this issue. As the Headteacher, I regularly monitor attendance/lateness and will contact you again only if the problem persists. If there is anything further you wish to discuss, or support needed to improve the situation then please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Steve Garner
Headteacher



Ashby Hill Top Primary School

Request for Leave of Absence

Child's Name	Class
Date of leave requested:	
From:	To:
Please state the reason for the leave requested. Please give as much information as possible. The headteacher may request additional information before making her decision.	
Signed	Date
<i>Signed by person with parental responsibility for this child</i>	
<p>Please note:</p> <p>Parent do not have an automatic right to take their child out of school for a holiday.</p> <p>The Headteacher has the discretionary power to grant leave if it is considered that there are special circumstances relating to that application.</p> <p>Special Circumstances DO NOT include the circumstances such as:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wanting to go away for the weekend; • Wanting to take a family holiday; • Friends or family organising a holiday without realising when school holidays fall; • The financial implications of going on holiday (ie: it's cheaper to take a holiday during school time than during school holiday time); • Taking a Friday off "to avoid the traffic" etc when going away for the weekend • A day off for a special occasion (eg birthday) <p>No absences will be authorised:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During the week of, or the week before; Year 6 SATs for any reason other than illness; • During winter weather (eg snow & ice) when school has managed to stay open, unless school has been previously notified (eg: hospital appointment), children are expected to attend school as usual. (See separate policy on Inclement weather) <p>In brief, the regulations mean that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Parents cannot demand a leave of absence as an automatic right; ▪ Parental requests must be in writing and the headteacher may ask for additional information before making a decision ▪ The headteacher will not apply blanket policies to approve/reject all applications; ▪ All requests must be considered on their own merits but there must be special circumstances before the request is granted; ▪ Extended periods of absence will be granted only in exceptional circumstances. • Leave of absence may be granted for special circumstances that are a "one-off" special event, this is at the headteacher's discretion, and also for parents who cannot take a holiday during school holiday time (eg their own place of work will not allow it) or because parents have been unable to go on holiday during school holiday time (eg due to a stay in hospital etc). Under these circumstances, up to ten school days leave per academic year may be granted by the Headteacher where:- • The child has at least 95% attendance during that school year up to the date of the request; or • If the request is being made during the Autumn Term, where the child has at least 95% attendance during the two school terms leading up to the request being submitted. <p style="text-align: center;"><i>If these levels of attendance do not apply, then leave will not be authorised.</i></p>	