



ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY TARGETS POLICY

Introduction and background

Haslam Park Primary School recognises that good attendance is central to raising standards and pupil attainment. For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and the child should be at school, on time, every day unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

This policy is written with the above statement in mind and this policy underpins our school ethos to:

- ❖ Promote children's welfare and safeguarding;
- ❖ Ensure every pupil has access to the full time education to which they are entitled;
- ❖ Ensure that pupils succeed whilst at school.

Why Regular Attendance is so important

Learning:- Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil's absence disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning of others in the same class. Evidence from both Primary and Secondary schools show that good attendance of 95% and above leads to higher Year 6 scores and higher grades at GCSE level. Ensuring the child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility – parents, pupils and all members of school staff.

To help us all focus on this we will:

- ❖ Report to the parent/carer at least half-termly on how the child is performing in school, what their attendance and punctuality rate is and how this relates to their attainments;
- ❖ Celebrate good attendance by displaying individual and class achievements;
- ❖ Contact parents/carers should their child's attendance fall below the school's target for attendance.

Understanding types of absence:

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parents), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required in writing.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been given. The type of absence can lead to the Authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. This includes:

- ❖ Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- ❖ Truancy before or during the school day
- ❖ Absences which have never been properly explained
- ❖ Children who arrive at school too late to get a mark
- ❖ Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- ❖ Day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed.

Persistent Absenteeism

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's education and we need parent's fullest support and co-operation to tackle this.

We monitor all absence and the reasons given thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the persistent absenteeism mark or is at risk moving towards that mark is given priority and we will inform the parents/carers immediately. Our Attendance Officer and Pastoral/Parent Liaison Officer are responsible for this.

Absence Procedures:

If the child is absent the parent/carer must follow the following procedures:

- ❖ Contact the school as soon as possible on the first day of absence. The school has an answer phone available to leave a message if nobody is available to take the call.
- ❖ Send a note in the school planner on the first day they return with an explanation of the absence – the parent/carer must do this even if you have already telephoned us.
- ❖ Or call into school and report to reception.

If the child is absent we will:

- ❖ Telephone the parent/carer on the first day of absence if we have not heard from the parent/carer;

- ❖ Invite the parent/carer to discuss the situation with our Attendance Officer and/or Parent and Pastoral Leader.
- ❖ Refer the matter to the Local Authority if attendance moves below 85%.

Please refer to Appendix 1: for Haslam Park Protocol.

Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be sort out in this way, the school may refer the child to the Early Intervention Service. He/she will also try to resolve the situation by agreement but, if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed and unauthorised absences persist, these officers can use sanctions such as Penalty Notices or prosecutions in the Courts.

Under Section 444 of the Education Act, Parents can be fined up to £2500 or face 3 months imprisonment if they fail to ensure their children attend school regularly.

Child Missing in Education

If a child leaves our school, the parent will inform school of the details of the next school the child will attend. If the parent does not do this, school will inform Childrens' Services and will follow the procedure outlined in the CIME form. Please refer to Appendix 2: CIME form.

If after thirty days, all procedures from the form have been completed and fulfilled, the school will remove the child from roll and delete all absence from the day of departure.

Please refer to Appendix 2: Haslam Park CIME form.

School follows the protocol set out in Appendix 3: Transfer into School Protocol.

Lateness

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If a child misses the start of the day they can miss work and do not spend time with their class teacher getting vital information. Late arriving pupils also disrupt lessons, can be embarrassing for the child and can also encourage absence. Good time keeping is a vital life skill which will help our children as they progress through their school life and out into the wider world.

How we manage lateness:

The school day starts at **8.50 a.m.** and we expect the children to be in the playground at **8.45 a.m.** ready to line up when the whistle is blown.

Registers are marked by **8.55 a.m.** and the child will receive a late mark if they are not in by that time.

At **9.20 a.m.** the registers will be closed. In accordance with Regulations if the child arrives after that time they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site, but this will **not** count as a

present mark and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence. This may mean that the parent/carer could face the possibility of a Penalty Notice if the problem persists.

If the child has a persistent late record the parent/carer will be asked to meet with the Deputy Headteacher and/or Attendance Officer to resolve the problem, but the parent/carer can approach us at any time if they are having problems getting the child in school on time.

We will encourage good punctuality by celebrating good class punctuality. An On Time award will be awarded weekly to the class who has most children in line at 8:50 am. Patterns of punctuality are monitored half termly.

Holidays in Term Time:

There is **NO** automatic entitlement in law to time off in school time to go on holiday.

From September 2013, Headteachers may not grant leave unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Taking holidays in term time will affect the child's schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents to help us by not taking children away in school time. If the parent/carer choose to take the child out of school during term time then it will be unauthorised and the parent/carer will incur a fine of £60 (at present) per parent, per child. Further to this the child's name can be removed from the school roll. It is important that you understand leave in term time will **not** be agreed by us.

School Targets

The school has targets to improve attendance and the child has an important part to play in meeting these targets.

Targets for the school and for classes are displayed in the school and the parent/carer should take time to study them.

The minimum level of attendance for this school is 95% attendance. Our target is to achieve better than this however because we know that good attendance is the key to successful schooling and we believe our pupils can be amongst the best.

Through the school year we monitor absences and punctuality to show us where improvements need to be made.

Summary:

- ❖ The school has a legal obligation to publish attendance figures to the Authority, and parents/carers.
- ❖ Parents have a legal obligation to ensure their children attend school regularly and punctually.
- ❖ The school is committed to working with parents to achieve the highest possible level of attendance.

