



## **Attendance Policy**

**Date:** September 2016

**Signed (Head Teacher):**

**Signed (Chair of Governors of Governors):**

Hallbrook Primary School is committed to improving and sustaining attendance as it recognises the links between attendance, attainment, safeguarding and future life opportunities. Whilst 100% attendance would be ideal, we do recognise that children have time off due to illness, doctor's appointments, out of school music exams etc.

This policy is intended to set out what is expected within school regarding the minimum attendance required of all pupils, the procedures for monitoring and evaluating persistent absenteeism and lateness and outlines the procedures that are in place to deal and reduce such issues.

### **Aims of the Policy**

- To set out expectations of attendance, both nationally and within school;
- To detail procedures regarding absence from school;
- To detail procedures regarding 'Leave of Absence Requests';
- To detail how absenteeism is monitored and evaluated;
- To detail procedures regarding 'lateness';
- To detail how lateness is monitored and evaluated.

### **Expectations for Attendance**

- Across each term we expect all children at Hallbrook to maintain **at least a 95%** attendance rate on an annual basis.
- The school gates/doors are open from 08:45 until 08:55 to allow pupils time to be ready in their classrooms by 08:55 for morning registration. All external doors will be locked at 08:55. Pupils arriving at school between 08:55 and 09:00 should enter via the main entrance.
- Morning lessons start at 09:00 prompt therefore pupils who arrive after 09:00 will be marked as late.
- Afternoon registration takes place at 13:15.

### **Reporting Absence due to Illness**

1. Parents are requested to inform school of the child's absence (due to illness) each day. This can be done by contacting the school office between 08:30 and 09:00. The office staff will contact parents on the first day of absence if no such contact is made. This is to ensure each child's safety.
2. A reason for absence is marked in the attendance register in accordance with the codes. (See Appendix 1)

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

If a parent wishes to take their child out of school for any reason, including planned medical appointments, a 'Leave of Absence Form' must be completed prior to the day(s)/time(s) of absence.

Wherever possible, parents should arrange non-urgent medical appointments out of school hours or during school holidays.

In the event of absence in an emergency situation, parents have a responsibility to inform school by means of a letter or telephone call to the office so that the child's absence can be coded accordingly. Failure to do so will mean the absence is recorded as 'unauthorised'.

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

Government guidelines, which came into effect on 1st September 2013, prevent Head Teachers from authorising any leave of absence for holidays during term time unless:

- The Head Teacher considers that there are exceptional circumstances relating to the application **AND**
- An application has been made in advance by the parent.

Any Leave of Absence for 'exceptional circumstances' must be requested using the 'Leave of Absence' form for pupils **prior to any holiday bookings being made.** (See Appendix 2)

Requests considered to fall under the heading of 'exceptional circumstance' may include children of service personnel.

Where a family chooses to take a holiday during term time without the Head Teacher's written permission or where there is evidence that a previously authorised absence is later found to be a holiday without seeking the prior approval of the Head Teacher, the absences will be coded as unauthorised.

### **Penalty Notices**

Schools are increasingly expected to ensure that the legal sanctions in place are actioned and will be accountable for this. Hallbrook Primary School will not automatically issue Penalty Notices for unauthorised holidays except when the child falls into one of the categories below:

- 1) Child has low attendance (the school will take into account the previous academic year);
- 2) Child is already subject to attendance improvement support by the Attendance Improvement Officer;
- 3) Further unauthorised absence is taken following previously unauthorised absence.

Where school wishes a warning letter and subsequent Penalty Notice to be issued, the Head Teacher will contact the school's Attendance Improvement Officer who will issue a warning letter on behalf of the school.

Where a Penalty Notice is issued, the parent(s) of any child who has absences recorded as a result of an unauthorised family holiday will each be fined £60 which must be paid within a 21 day period. Failure to pay the fine(s) within the timescale will result in the fine(s) being doubled to £120 which will need to be paid within 28 days of the original fine being issued. If the fine(s) remain unpaid after the full period of 28 days has expired, parents may face legal action under section 444 of the Education Act 1996. If found guilty of an offence under this Act, parents will receive a criminal record and could be fined up to £1000.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation of Attendance**

- School monitors the attendance of pupils and any patterns of absenteeism.
- If any child has **less than 90%** attendance at the end of each month, a letter is sent home to the parents/carers highlighting the fact that their attendance has fallen below the required percentage.

- If the situation regarding absenteeism continues at the next monitoring, a second letter requesting medical evidence for absenteeism is sent to the parents/carers of the child.
- If an adequate response to the second letter is not received, and the situation regarding absenteeism continues, without medical evidence, then the matter is forwarded to the school's Attendance Improvement Officer to pursue. The Attendance Improvement Officer will make contact with parents/carers themselves and arrange home visits to discuss a child's attendance in more detail. Targets for improvement will be discussed but in some cases the Attendance Improvement Officer can take legal action against parents of poor attending pupils.
- Individual attendance figures are reported to parents in each child's annual report. Whole school attendance figures are reported to the Governing Board termly.
- The class with the highest % attendance during a month will receive a certificate.
- Children who achieve 100% attendance during a term will receive a certificate.
- Certificates are given out to children with 100% attendance at the end of each academic year.

### **Procedures regarding 'lateness'**

Any child who arrives at school after 09:00 must report to the school office and will be marked as 'Late'.

Arriving late causes disruption to the whole class and can embarrass your child and detrimentally affect their learning for the entire school day.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation of 'lateness'**

- School monitors the punctuality of pupils and any patterns of persistent lateness.
- If a child receives 3 or more late marks in a monthly period, the Head Teacher will write to the child's parents asking them to make sure that their child arrives at school on time.
- If the child continues to receive persistent late marks, the school will contact the school's Attendance Improvement Officer.

### **The Role of the Local Authority**

The Local Authority has a statutory duty under the Education Act 1996 to initiate legal proceedings where a child is not receiving suitable education either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. This can be through a number of formalised routes, including Penalty Notices and prosecution of parents/carers for irregular attendance, School Attendance Orders and Education Supervision Orders.

**APPENDIX 1: Codes**

<b>/</b>	Present (AM)	Present
<b>\</b>	Present (PM)	Present
<b>B</b>	Educated off-site (NOT dual registration)	Approved Education Activity
<b>C</b>	Other authorised circumstances	Authorised absence
<b>D</b>	Dual registration	Approved Education Activity
<b>E</b>	Excluded	Authorised absence
<b>G</b>	Family holiday (not agreed)	Unauthorised absence
<b>H</b>	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
<b>I</b>	Illness	Authorised absence
<b>J</b>	Interview	Approved Education Activity
<b>L</b>	Late (before registers close, i.e. up to 09:30)	Present
<b>M</b>	Medical / Dental appointment	Authorised absence
<b>N</b>	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
<b>O</b>	Unauthorised absence	Unauthorised absence
<b>P</b>	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
<b>R</b>	Religious observance	Authorised absence
<b>S</b>	Study leave	Authorised absence
<b>T</b>	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
<b>U</b>	Late (after registers close, i.e. after 09:30)	Unauthorised absence
<b>V</b>	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
<b>W</b>	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
<b>X</b>	Non-compulsory school-age absence	Not counted in attendance figures
<b>Y</b>	Enforced school closure	Not counted in attendance figures
<b>Z</b>	Pupil not on roll	Not counted in attendance figures
<b>#</b>	School closed to all pupils	Not counted in attendance figures

# HALLBROOK PRIMARY SCHOOL



## Leave of Absence Request for Pupils

This application must be made in advance and must only be completed by the parent/carer with whom the pupil normally resides.

Applications for term-time family holidays, including occasional family days out, will be unauthorised and further action may be taken.

Please refer to the school's 'Attendance Policy' for further details.

PUPIL'S NAME	YEAR GROUP / CLASS
DETAILS OF ABSENCE REQUEST	
DATE(S) OF ABSENCE	
PARENT / CARER SIGNATURE	DATE REQUESTED (MUST BE IN ADVANCE OF DATE OF ABSENCE)

### FOR SCHOOL USE ONLY

AUTHORISED / UNAUTHORISED	REASON IF AUTHORISED	
ATTENDANCE IMPROVEMENT OFFICER (Y/N)	% ATTENDANCE (previous academic year)	% ATTENDANCE (current academic year)
ABSENCE CODE	HEAD TEACHER'S SIGNATURE	