



Policy on School Attendance

Date last reviewed by Safeguarding Committee: December 2018

Date of next review: December 2021

At Handcross Primary School, every child is special

Aims for Handcross Primary School (September 2018)

- To provide a safe, happy and stimulating environment where all children are valued, respected, listened to and have a sense of belonging.
- To create a trusting atmosphere where children develop confidence, independence and a positive attitude to learning and life.
- To have high expectations which inspire, motivate and challenge **every** child to learn and think independently.
- To develop excellent relationships between home, school and other agencies to support and benefit the children and the whole school community.
- To plan creative, exciting, well- resourced and memorable lessons, based on our knowledge of *how* children learn.
- To accurately assess pupils so that the teaching is differentiated and interventions have a direct *impact on the children's learning*.
- To provide children with the skills to talk about progress towards their targets and for their achievements to be celebrated.
- To prepare children socially, emotionally and educationally to become well rounded members of society, who can make a positive contribution to life in modern Britain.

The Governing body of Handcross Primary School places a high priority on achieving standards and feel that excellent pupil attendance and punctuality are essential. In order for children to achieve their potential, pupils must be highly motivated to learn and eager to attend school. Regular, punctual attendance will establish good habits that will support them throughout their lives. To achieve this, the Governors and staff are committed to working in partnership with parents to ensure that the school achieves a MINIMUM of 96% attendance throughout the school.

The Government expects us to:

- Promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence (less than 90%);
- Ensure every pupil has access to full-time education, to which they are entitled; and,
- act early to address patterns of absence.

Purpose

This policy provides a framework and guidance for staff and parents to encourage pupils to attend school regularly so that they can take full advantage of the educational opportunities available.

Relationship to Other Policies

The policy on attendance should be read in conjunction with the policy on Child Protection, school session times, and current guidance produced by the school for staff on the registration of pupils. The home-school agreement is also pertinent.

The school follows the following government guidance:

‘Children Missing Education: Statutory guidance for local authorities September 2016’

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-missing-education>

‘School Attendance’ Government guidance for maintained schools November 2018’

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-attendance>

School Attendance Behaviour and Attendance, parental responsibility measures, updated Jan 2017 statutory guidance

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/parental-responsibility-measures-for-behaviour-and-attendance>

Roles and Responsibilities:

All teachers are expected to:

- register pupils accurately and efficiently on SIMs by 9:00 a.m;
- report pupil attendance and lateness daily;
- encourage pupils to attend school regularly and inform colleagues if there is a problem that may lead to absences.
- Inform parents of individual pupils attendance record at Parents’ Evening and in the end of year schools report

- Monitor daily patterns of attendance and report any concerns that arise to the SLT
- Provide work for children to do at home if an absence is due to a long illness, disability or other circumstances
- Make parents aware of concerns over good attendance
- OFFICE STAFF are expected to:
- Input attendance data on SIMs system
- parents or carers are contacted by 9:30 a.m. when reasons for absence are unknown or unauthorised;
- Make first day absence calls and record reasons for absence
- Print off official reports for each calendar month for monitoring purposes
- Monitor alongside HT/ DHT, patterns of attendance and lateness
- Carry out attendance concerns procedures with parents of children whose attendance is of a concern, such as sending out letters, arranging attendance meetings, referring for fixed penalty notices.

Pupils are encouraged to:

- attend school regularly and be punctual;
- inform staff if there is a problem that may lead to absences.

Parents and carers are expected to:

- ensure the child attends school regularly- this is included in the Home – School Agreement;
- inform the school on the first day of non-attendance;
- not take holidays in term-time
- Ensure that their children attend school regularly
- Notify school on the first day of absence before 8.30am by phone/letter
- Complete a request form for absence in term time for exceptional circumstances
- Ensure when their child returns to school they bring in written confirmation of why they were absent

- Hand in medical evidence for absence due to illness where attendance is a concern
- Meet with the HT or DHT to discuss their child's attendance if requested

The Headteacher is expected to:

- Set attendance targets for the school;
- Monitor pupil attendance and punctuality
- Inform/Meet with parents whose children's attendance causes concern in order to address issues and improve attendance
- Report school attendance statistics to the LA and Governing Body;
- the LA officer is provided with registers of attendance and supported in following up long-term absences;
- ensure pupils absent for long periods because of ill-health receive appropriate learning support;
- ensure all holidays taken during term time are unauthorised and parents are challenged
- recognise children with excellent attendance at the annual Prize Giving ceremony.

GOVERNING BODY will:

Monitor whole school attendance termly and take appropriate action should it affect standards. The Headteacher provides data to FGB on pupil attendance, including comparisons with previous terms and years. The Headteacher and the Governing Body evaluate the data and agree further actions, if required.

The School will ensure that the LA is informed about the long-term absence of any pupils.

Late Procedures

Children who arrive late (after the doors close at 8:55am) and have gone to the office entrance, must be signed in by their parent/carer or appropriate adult, a reason for the lateness is also requested. The office staff will update the SIMS system with their mark. Children who frequently arrive late will be monitored; parents will be contacted to discuss parents over reasons for poor punctuality. Children who arrive late after the registers have closed due to a medical appointment will be marked M (in). Any child arriving after 9:15am for any reason other than medical will be marked U (late after registers closed). Children who have to leave for any reason throughout the day should be signed out at the main office by their parent/carer or appropriate adult. This is

strongly discouraged. Parents are requested to make dental or medical appointments outside of school hours.

Holiday in Term Time Procedures

Children attending Handcross Primary School are not allowed days absence for holidays. Any absence, other than for illness or emergency medical attention, will be coded as Unauthorised (G) – Family holiday not agreed or (O) Unauthorised. Parents may choose to complete an 'Exceptional Circumstances Form' stating why they are removing their child during term time. This is given to the Headteacher. Only exceptional circumstances will be authorised.

Strategies for Monitoring Good Attendance

Individual certificates are presented termly where full attendance (100%) has been gained.

ALL children who achieve 100% attendance for the whole school year are rewarded with a certificate and a special attendance award.

An attendance trophy is awarded to the best attending class

Deputy Head Teacher will monitor attendance and any child with below 95% attendance will trigger concern and an action plan put in place.

Children with attendance below 90% (Persistent Absenteeism) will be monitored by the Deputy Head Teacher and other actions taken as necessary.

School attendance, Safeguarding and Children Missing Education

A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. School staff will follow the school's procedures for dealing with children that go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future (Keeping Children Safe in Education (updated September 2018) and Children Missing in Education, updated Sept 2016) All Schools are required to make the local authority aware of every registered pupil who fails to attend school regularly and any children who have been absent from school, where the absence has been treated as unauthorised for a continuous period of not less than 10 school days Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 regulation 12. This attendance policy is part of broader suite of Safeguarding policies including the school Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Illness

It is a school's decision whether to accept a reason for a child's absence and whether to authorise that absence. In the majority of cases a parents' note explaining that their child was ill can be accepted without question or concern (we expect medical evidence to be provided for absences of more than 4 days). In exceptional circumstances further evidence of a child's illness may be requested.