



HIGHGATE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Attendance Policy December 2021

Know the true value of time; snatch, seize, and enjoy every moment of it. No idleness, no delay, no procrastination; never put off till tomorrow what you can do today.

Earl of Chesterfield

Introduction

Highgate Primary School believes that regular school attendance is the key to enabling children to maximise the educational opportunities available to them. Good attendance is therefore essential if children are to achieve their full potential.

As set out in this policy, the school will work with families to identify the reasons for poor attendance and try to resolve any difficulties.

The school recognises that attendance is a matter for the whole school community. Our Attendance Policy should not be viewed in isolation; it is a strand that runs through all aspects of school improvement, supported by our policies on safeguarding, bullying, behaviour and inclusive learning.

The school aims to promote, among parents and children, a high level of awareness of the need for, and benefits of, regular and prompt attendance.

Communication

The school's expectations with regard to attendance are communicated in a range of ways, including the following:

- Parents are advised of the school's expectations during the induction meetings for new children.
- Parents are reminded regularly in newsletters of the importance of good attendance and timekeeping.
- Pupils and classes with excellent attendance are highlighted and celebrated in school assemblies.
- Parents will be informed of their child's level of attendance at each parent consultation meeting.
- Attendance figures will be included with the child's annual progress report.
- Attendance figures are reported termly to the governors in the Head's Report.
- The school's Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher hold attendance meetings with parents.

Procedures

The school registers are closed at 9.10am each morning. Children who have not arrived by the end of registration are marked absent. Parents are requested to ring school by 9.10am to notify us that their child will be absent. The school will then authorise absences that are due to sickness.

Latecomers report to the school office on arrival. The child will be given a 'late after register closed' mark. If the school has been informed that the child will arrive late due to a medical/dental appointment then an 'M' attendance mark will be given on arrival.

A child's absence will be recorded as unauthorised if no satisfactory explanation is given for absence, or if the school considers the information received from a parent is not an acceptable reason for absence.

Attendance Monitoring

Attendance is monitored half-termly and parents will be informed of their child's attendance should it fall below 95%.

Parents are invited to attend a meeting to discuss their child's attendance:

- when a child's absence is unexplained; or
- when a child's attendance drops below 90%.

If a member of staff is concerned about the level of attendance or punctuality of any of the children in their class, they should inform the Head of Inclusion.

Pupils identified as persistent absentees (in line with the set government criteria and the school's attendance target) are marked for further monitoring and/or action due to the link between attendance and attainment.

Long term medical conditions are monitored with evidence (either a letter from a consultant doctor or photocopy of medical prescriptions) where appropriate.

Where lateness becomes an issue, the class teacher will discuss the matter with the parents and this will be monitored and a record kept. If lateness remains an issue, the Head of Inclusion will arrange a meeting to discuss the matter with the parents.

In the eventuality of a child having long term absence, a pattern of persistent absence, or if attendance does not improve despite the school's involvement, the Education Welfare Service will be contacted for advice.

Absence Requests

Holidays in term time are not a right for parents and Headteachers are not permitted to allow such requests.

Parents needing to take their children out of school in term time for exceptional circumstances are required to complete an Exceptional Absence Request Form, which needs to be signed by the Headteacher. This request is at the Headteacher's discretion and will be considered alongside regular attendance patterns over the past year before a decision is given to the parents.

Only in exceptional circumstances will leave of absence be granted. When considering any absence request, consideration will be given to cultural needs and individual family circumstances. In all cases, evidence of the reasons for the absence may be requested.

Links to other policy documents

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

- Home/School Agreement
- Safeguarding Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy

Staff Responsible

William Dean – Headteacher

Rebecca Lewis – Deputy Headteacher and Head of Inclusion

Jewel Canlas/Elaine Clesham – Office Team

Policy Monitoring and Review

A copy of this guidance is available to all staff and parents and is published on the school website. Parents will be made aware of this policy when their child is admitted to this school.

This policy is reviewed every two years by the Governors' Safeguarding Committee.