

# **Holne Chase Primary School**

## **Attendance Policy**

Adopted by:  
Children, Families & Community  
Committee  
5<sup>th</sup> June 2019

Review Date: Summer 2020

# ATTENDANCE POLICY

Children should attend school regularly and this policy sets out how our school will achieve this. Regularly is defined as every day that the school is open.

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

## To help us all to focus on this we will:

- Give parents/carers details on attendance in our regular school newsletter
- Celebrate and reward good attendance with certificates

If parents/carers are having any problems with their child's attendance or punctuality, please phone the school office to make an appointment with the Attendance Officer.

## Why Regular Attendance is so important

Any absence can affect the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence can seriously affect their learning. It can also disrupt teaching routines and therefore impact on the learning of others in the same class.

We know that absence through illness is unavoidable. Occasionally, a child may be reluctant to come to school for a range of other reasons. If this is the case, we ask that parents/carers share the issue with us either by talking with their child's class teacher or the Attendance Officer.

Ensuring regular attendance at school is the legal responsibility of Parents and Carers and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

## If a child is absent, parents/carers must:

Contact us as soon as possible on the first day of absence

## If a child is absent, we will:

Telephone or text parents/carers on the first day of absence if we have not heard from them. Parents/carers can help us by making sure we always have an up-to-date number.

If we do not get a response to our phone call or text message, we will in the interest of safeguarding all children, make a visit to parents/carers home address to verify the reason for their child's absence.

## 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, preferably in writing.

**AUTHORISED** absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason such as; illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause. Although authorised, these occasions still constitute an absence and as such are reflected in children's' overall attendance percentages.

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

We monitor attendance rates every half term and write to parents where attendance falls below 95%. Where attendance is below 90% we invite parents in to school for an Attendance Review meeting and if the attendance does not improve, a referral can be made to the LA for legal proceedings.

### **PERSISTENT ABSENTEEISM (PA):**

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when attendance falls below 90%.

- Parents will be invited to attend a meeting with our Attendance Officer and / or Head Teacher to discuss the issue. Occasionally, the school Nurse may be involved. An individual incentive programme will be set up with targets and review dates to help improve attendance.

Children on an incentive programme will be regularly monitored.

### **Lateness:**

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If a child misses the start of the day, they lose valuable learning time.

### **How we manage lateness:**

The school day officially starts at **8.45am** when Registers are marked. (Children are welcome into the classroom from 8.35am)

At **9.00am**, the registers will be closed. In accordance with the Regulations, if your 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 parents could face the possibility of a Penalty Notice if the problem persists.

If a child has a persistent late record parents will be asked to meet with the Attendance Officer or the Head Teacher to resolve the problem.

### **People responsible for attendance matters in this school are:**

- Head Teacher / Attendance Officer
- School Administrator
- Welfare Assistant

### **Summary:**

- The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents/carers and to promote attendance. Equally, parents/carers have a duty to make sure that their children attend.
- All school staff are committed to working with parents/carers and pupils as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible.
- Children who achieve 100% for the whole year are recognised.
- Children who have a recognised medical condition will be given a personalised Attendance target

## **Holidays/Leave during term time**

Schools are no longer allowed to authorise requests for children to be taken out of school in term time unless there are “exceptional circumstances”. If you take a holiday which is not authorised by the school then they may refer the matter to the Local Authority who will consider the issue of a Fixed Penalty Notice.

Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN) are issued to each parent and are for each child. A FPN is £60 if paid within 21 days, and £120 if paid between 22 and 28 days. If the fine is not paid, parents will be prosecuted in the magistrates’ court.

If a FPN is issued, it will be one fine to cover the whole period of the absence. So the fine would be the same amount for an absence of five days or 10 days.