



HOLLAND PARK
PRIMARY SCHOOL



Attendance Policy

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Pupil Attendance Policy

AIMS

Holland Park Primary School is committed to providing a full and efficient education to all pupils and embraces the concept of equal opportunities for all.

We will endeavour to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome.

For a child to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance is essential. We will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

School attendance is subject to various Education laws and this pupil attendance policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by the Department for Education.

Each year the school will examine its attendance figures. From April 2011 the government requirement to set attendance targets ceased. We will review systems for improving attendance at regular intervals to ensure we are achieving our set goal.

This policy will contain within it the procedures that the school will use to meet its attendance goal.

Statements of Expectations

Pupils have a responsibility to themselves and others to play a positive role in the life of the school and to make the most of the educational opportunities available.

What is expected of the pupils:

- ◆ To respect themselves and others
- ◆ To do all they can to attend school regularly and punctually
- ◆ To inform a trusted adult if they feel that they are being bullied
- ◆ To encourage friendship and a sense of belonging.

Parents/carers* have the prime responsibility for ensuring that their child attends school regularly and punctually. They have a legal responsibility to ensure that their children attend school regularly, and stay in school for every lesson after they have registered. Parents should also make sure that the children arrive on time, properly dressed, with the right equipment and in a fit state to benefit from the education offered to them. Parents may be prosecuted if a child does not attend school regularly and punctually. This will be done under the 1996 Education Act and aims to ensure that parents carry out their duty to secure suitable education for their children. The expectation is that children should attend every day that the school is open to them.

If a child is in the care of foster parents or in a residential home, it is important that the carers recognise their parenting role where attendance at school is concerned. They will be supported by close co-operation between the school, education welfare services and social care where such a child's attendance is irregular.

What is expected of the parents/carers;

- To keep requests for their child to be absent to a minimum
- To offer a reason for any period of absence, preferably before the absence or on each day of absence using the school absence line, SchoolComms text system, telephoning the school office staff or completing the online absence form.
- To ensure that their child arrives at school on time (the school day begins at 8.50am), properly dressed, with the right equipment and in a condition to learn. A reason should be offered for any lateness
- To work closely with the school (and any company that assists the school/Trust with attendance) to resolve any problems that may impede a child's attendance
- To take family holidays during school holiday periods and be aware that requests for holidays during term time will be refused except in compassionate / exceptional circumstances
- To be aware of curriculum requirements and be especially vigilant with regards to attendance during important academic dates such as SATS
- To support their child and recognise their successes and achievements.

* **Parent/carer means parents, carers, grandparents, foster families and those who care for a child as if they were their parent.**

Holland Park Primary School will endeavour to provide an environment that is conducive in educating every individual pupil. School attendance will be positively supported wherever possible and the promotion of good communication and co-operation between all parties involved will be paramount. The school has a statutory responsibility to record and monitor the punctuality and attendance of pupils for both the morning and afternoon sessions.

A register of attendance has to be taken once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session. The register has to record whether a pupil is present, engaged in an approved educational activity off site or absent.

If a pupil is absent the register must record whether the absence was authorised or unauthorised. The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 clearly state that where a parent provides a reason for absence, the school decides whether or not the absence(s) in question are recorded as authorised or unauthorised.

What is expected of the School:

- To create a school ethos that pupils want to be part of
- To meet the legal requirements set out by Government
- To give a high priority to punctuality and attendance
- To develop procedures that enable the school to identify, follow up and record unauthorised absence, patterns of absence and parent condoned absence with effective monitoring and intervention
- To consistently record authorised and unauthorised absences within the guidance of the 1996 Education Act
- To develop a range of effective strategies to follow up intermittent and long term absence and promote good attendance
- To encourage open communication channels between home and school
- To develop procedures for the reintegration of long-term absentees
- To develop procedures leading to a formal referral to Aquinas School Attendance Provisions
- To adequately provide for pupils with difficulties, within the bounds of resources available, and ensure the appropriate delivery of the curriculum.

Our school has a responsibility to provide education and promote regular attendance of all statutory school age children.

In line with all SIGMA Trust Schools, our school uses Aquinas School Attendance Provisions to work with parents and carers to encourage regular school attendance of statutory age children. Aquinas School Attendance Provisions are authorised by Essex Police to issue Penalty Notices for non-school attendance and unauthorised leave of absence during term time, and work with Essex County Council to progress non-school attendance cases to court under Section 444 of the education Act 1996. The court may fine the parent and/or put in place a School Attendance Order (SAO), an Education Supervision Order (ESO) or a Parenting Order.

School Procedures

Any child who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity [attendance out of school].

Only the Headteacher or a member of staff acting on their behalf can authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence must be recorded as N (No reason yet provided for absence) in the first instance.

Lateness

Gates open at 8.30am and close at 8.50am during which time class registers are taken. Children arriving after 8.50am should report to the main school office to be signed in. Any pupil arriving between 8.50am and 9.10am will be marked as LATE (L). Any pupil arriving after 9.10am may be marked as having an unauthorised lateness (U) unless there is an acceptable explanation i.e. school transport was delayed. In cases for example, where the absence at registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate authorised absence code will be entered once evidence has been submitted for this.

The afternoon register will close 15 mins after the beginning of afternoon registration.

It should be noted that pupils will be marked as late even if the circumstances for this lateness have been approved by the school.

Late Collections

It is disruptive for children to arrive at school late but it is also distressing for children to be left late at the end of the day. We understand that emergency situations can occur that prevent a prompt collection but children should be collected at 3.00pm. All collections should be from the playground unless prior permission has been requested in writing. In the event that you cannot collect your child on time you should:

- Where possible, inform the school before 2.00pm of any alternative collection arrangements. We cannot guarantee to inform Class Teachers of alternative collection arrangements if the school office is not informed before 2.00pm. In these instances, children will be taken to the office once all the other children have been released. The office staff will then be able to pass on any new arrangements.

- Contact a friend or family member to see if they can collect your child at the correct time.
- Arrange after school care with another provider such as The Chase Nursery, Willow Tree Nursery, etc. (There will be a charge for this service.)

Please be aware that at 3.30pm most support staff leave for the day. Your child will be seated in the main reception area where office staff will supervise them until you arrive.

First Day Absence

If there has been no notification to the school, the Administrative Team will contact the parents/carers directly by SchoolComms text message in the first instance to ascertain the reason for absence. If no communication is received, the Administrative Team will telephone parents to ascertain the reason for absence. If there is still no communication with parents, the absence will be marked as unauthorised (O). In some cases, the Family Liaison Team may undertake a home visit and ask to see the child for safeguarding purposes.

Further Absences

Parents should contact the school **EVERY DAY** that their child is absent, unless they have informed the school that they will be off for a certain number of days (for example if the child has chicken pox).

Ten Days Absence

Any pupil who is absent, without an explanation, for 10 consecutive days will be deemed to be 'Missing in Education' and notified to the Local Authority, by submitting a referral to Aquinas School Attendance Provisions. The school will include details of the action they have taken to contact parents.

Frequent Absence

It is the responsibility of the Administrative Team to be aware of and bring attention to any emerging attendance concerns.

In cases where a pupil begins to develop a pattern of absences, the school will refer the case to Aquinas School Attendance Provisions.

In other cases, the school will seek advice from Aquinas School Attendance Provisions. Family Liaison Workers may also be able to provide parents/carers with support in increasing attendance for pupils.

Safeguarding

For all absences where there has been no notification *and* there are safeguarding concerns the school will attempt to make contact on the first day of absence and inform the relevant safeguarding services if we are unable to do this.

A 'Welcome Back'

It is important that on return from an absence, all pupils are made to feel welcome. This should include ensuring the pupil is helped to catch up on missed work and brought up to date on any information that has been passed to the other pupils.

Absence Notes

All messages are noted on pupil records/registers.

Medical paperwork received by the school will be scanned and logged on the MIS system. For those with a history of attendance issues, paperwork may be kept on file for longer in case they are needed as evidence in prosecution.

Promoting Attendance

The school will use opportunities as they arise to remind parents/carers that it is their responsibility to ensure that their children receive their education.

The Home/School Agreement is used to support good attendance at school and will be shared yearly with parents/carers and students.

Holidays in Term Time

Holidays during term time are no longer authorised and any holiday absence of five days or more may incur a penalty notice. Parents will be reminded that requests for holidays will be refused except in compassionate/exceptional circumstances. Parents must apply in advance for permission, submitting a request in writing to the Headteacher using the absence request form available at the school office.

From September 2018 parents will also be subject to a penalty notice for three days of absence during the first two weeks of the new academic year. All absences are considered on a case by case basis to decide if exceptional circumstances apply. All requests should be submitted giving adequate time for a written response to be sent by the school.

The Registration System

The School will use a MIS computerised system for keeping the school attendance records.

If completed by hand black pens must be used when marking the OMR register. All corrections must be visible (no correcting fluid). Hand completed registers are input to the MIS system.

Register Security

The registers are backed up daily and stored on the server. Registers, by law, are kept for at least 3 years.

The following national codes will be used to record attendance information:

- C Other circumstances (e.g. bereavement, agreed special occasions, performances, other approved absences not covered by other codes).
- E Excluded
- H Family holiday (agreed)
- I Illness (NOT medical or dental appointments)
(during Covid the sub codes 01 will be used for illness and 02 for confirmed cases of Covid see appendix 4)
- M Medical / Dental appointments
- R Religious observance
- S Study leave
- T Traveller absence
- X This code is used to record sessions that non-compulsory school age children are not expected to attend.

APPROVED EDUCATION ACTIVITY

- B Educated off site (NOT dual registration)
- D Dual registration (ie pupil attending other establishment)
- J Interview
- P Approved sporting activity
- V Educational visit or trip
- W Work experience

UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

- G Family holiday (NOT agreed or days in excess of agreement)
- N No reason yet provided for absence
- O Unauthorised absence
- U Late (after registers closed)

Monitoring

The Headteacher, Administrative Assistant, Family Liaison Team and Welfare Officer will review the attendance of all the school's pupils on a regular basis.

Pupils identified as cause for concern or with less than 93% attendance, are monitored more closely and may be referred to Aquinas School Attendance Provisions for further intervention.

Any family whose child's attendance drops below 90% will be considered to be ***persistently absent*** and may be referred to Aquinas School Attendance Provisions for further intervention. Parents may be required to provide medical evidence for their child's absences.

Contact will be made with the parent/carer of any pupil identified as having attendance concerns. This will be undertaken by either the school or Aquinas School Attendance Provisions.

Parents/carers will be informed of the school's concerns and offered support/advice to resolve any problems that may be impeding a child from attending.

The pupil's attendance will be closely monitored and, if after a reasonable period, there appears to be no improvement, the parents/carers of the pupil will be invited to a meeting with the school to discuss the issue and hopefully resolve any problems preventing the pupil from attending.

If the parent/carers do not attend the meeting, or after such a meeting, the attendance of the pupil does not improve a Legal Action Warning Letter may be issued, which may lead to a Penalty Notice.

The electronic registration system provides many reports and information that assist the school to monitor attendance. These reports will be accessed when relevant and provide information to assist the school to strategically manage attendance issues. Aquinas School Attendance Provisions will also have access to this information and will use the reports to support their role.

Strategies used to promote good attendance and punctuality

1. Class teachers will ensure that the curriculum is delivered within a culture of inclusion and in such a way that pupils feel they have and can succeed.
2. Individual pupils whose attendance has been a cause for concern will be encouraged to set and achieve personal attendance goals.
3. Pupil attendance figures will be published at the end of the Autumn and Spring term and with their annual academic reports in the Summer term.
4. Positive verbal reinforcement will be given to pupils who have been absent from school for a period of time and an education action plan developed to help them catch up with any missed curriculum and promote future attendance.
5. Prizes may be awarded at the end of the academic year to pupils who have 100% attendance throughout the year.
6. Certificates may also be awarded for those children who have shown remarkable improvement or who have overcome medical or other difficulties to attend school and achieve a good level of attendance.
7. Each week the class with the highest attendance is awarded the 'Attendance Trophy Cup' and issued with a class certificate for that week.

Appendices

1 The Law

The Education Act 1996 Part 1, Section 7 states:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable-

- [a] To his age, ability and aptitude and
- [b] To any special needs he may have either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

For educational purposes the term parent is used to include those that have parental responsibility and/or those that have the day to day care of the child.

The legislation that appertains to children who are of compulsory school age and are registered at school is contained within this Act.

Part VI Section 444 contains the details of when an offence is committed if a child fails to attend school.

The legal requirements for keeping Register and Admission Roll are found in: The Education [Pupil Registration] (England) Regulations 2006

Categorisation of Absence

Any pupil who is on roll but not present in the school must be recorded within one of these categories.

1. Unauthorised Absence
2. Authorised Absence
3. Approved Educational Activity.

1. Unauthorised Absence

This is for those pupils where no reason has been provided, or whose absence is deemed to be without valid reason.

2. Authorised Absence

This is for those pupils who are away from school for a reason that is deemed to be valid under the Education Act 1996.

3. Approved Educational Activity

This covers types of supervised educational activity undertaken off site but with the approval of the school.

Note - Pupils recorded in this category are deemed to be present for attendance returns purposes.

This would include:

- Work experience placements
- Field trips and educational visits
- Sporting activities
- Link courses or approved education off site
- Most types of dual registration

4 - Covid 19

Since March 2022 when the final Covid restrictions were lifted the UK Health and Security Agency (UKHSA) has advised that COVID-19 should be managed like other respiratory infections, such as flu.

COVID-19 presents a low risk to children and young people. This, combined with high vaccination rates in the population, means there are no longer specific rules relating to COVID-19 in schools, colleges, childcare and other education settings.

For children and young people aged 18 and under who test positive for COVID-19, the advice is to try to stay at home and avoid contact with other people for three days. This is because children and young people tend to be infectious to other people for less time than adults.

The UKHSA has also published public health guidance on [living safely with respiratory infections, including COVID-19](#).

Other useful links:

The link between Absence and attainment

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/509679/The-link-between-absence-and-attainment-at-KS2-and-KS4-2013-to-2014-academic-year.pdf

Essex code of conduct for penalty notices

https://www.essex.gov.uk/Education-Schools/Schools/Attending-School/Documents/Essex_code_of_conduct.pdf

Essex Education Compliance Team

- Telephone: 03330 322 962
- Email: cme@essex.gov.uk

North East Essex Team (incl. Clacton, Colchester, Harwich)

- neattendanceteam@essex.gov.uk / 0333 032 2968 - option 1

NHS – is my child too ill for school

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>