
Hartlip Endowed Church of England Primary School (Aided)

Policy for Attendance

Mission Statement

At Hartlip Endowed Church of England Primary we aim to create an exciting learning environment through a creative and imaginative curriculum. All members of our school community are valued and shown respect enabling them to achieve their personal best. We are committed to establishing and maintaining high standards in work and behaviour and developing positive relationship between all members of the school community based on a Christian foundation.

Our Attendance Policy is centred, as all our policies on our identified and selected Christian Values: Trust, Forgiveness, Thankfulness, Peace and Friendship.

- ✓ All members of the school community are **trusted** by all those within the school community to deliver the very best for the children in all that they do
- ✓ Things will go wrong. There is a quiet acceptance of this deployed throughout the school and the opportunity to move on and learn from this, demonstrated through the value of **forgiveness**.
- ✓ All members are **thankful** for the community to which we belong and demonstrates this accordingly
- ✓ We learn in **peace**. We accept that we all learn in different ways and have different needs that require accommodation
- ✓ We learn in **friendship**; supporting each other to achieve to our very best potential at all times.

Rationale

The first priority of a school is to ensure that all children reach their full potential. In order to do this it is important that all children are in school and on time every day. Poor attendance and lateness impacts on the learning of the whole class, as staff have to stop teaching in order to incorporate a late child or recap the previous days learning, thus taking them away from their current focus group.

The Government target for schools attendance is 95%. We have set our school target at 97% as we believe if we are to raise standards effectively children must be in school regularly.

This policy is written in line with the Cluster Attendance Guidance.

Promoting and celebrating good attendance

Attendance is measured as follows:

Outstanding: 96.1% or above,

Good: Between 95.6% and 96.0%

Requires Improvement: Between 95.1% and 95.5%

Termly attendance figures are reported to parents as school recognises that the attendance of a child is a parent's responsibility. School support individuals in achieving maximum attendance in whatever way is helpful and impactful to each individual case.

Holidays During Term Time

As a school we actively discourage parents from taking holidays during term time as this has a detrimental effect on their child's learning.

Any request for holiday absence must be put in writing and each application will be considered on its own merit. The Governors' policy is that only in extremely limited circumstances should absence be authorised and in any event:

- Holidays will not be authorised if a child's attendance will be below 95%.
- Holidays will not be authorised retrospectively.
- Penalty charges may be levied for unauthorised absence (see Appendix 1).

Absences from school due to illness

Should a child be ill and it is necessary for them to be absent we expect parents to:

- Telephone the school by 9.30am on the first day to notify us of the absence.
- Speak to us personally **and** send a letter giving a reason for the absence to the office on the child's return to school.
- A DoJo message to a teacher/Headteacher whilst helpful does not suffice alone for informing absence.

As a school we will:

- Operate a 'First Day Calling' System if we have not heard from parents.
- Ring to find an expected 'date of return' if the absence continues beyond 3 days.
- If there has been no personal contact by parent/carer, send a reminder if a letter explaining the absence is not received.

Absence from school for medical appointments

We believe that for **routine** medical and dental appointments every effort should be made to make them for after school or in the school holidays. If they have to be made during the school day, they should be at the end, allowing for early collection of no more than 30 minutes.

We recognise that some hospital/dental treatment appointments have to be during the school day, especially if it is part of an ongoing treatment programme. If this is the case, please bring the appointment card into school before the appointment so it can be copied.

Authorisation of absence (non-holiday)

The authorisation of absence from school is at the discretion of the Head Teacher. Absence is only authorised in specific circumstances e.g. illness or on compassionate grounds. No absence is automatically authorised.

Lateness

At **8.45am**, the school bell rings to invite children in to the classroom. The school day begins at **8.55am**. Any one arriving after this time will be marked as late.

Learning begins **promptly** at **9.00am**. It is essential for the quality learning of each individual and collectively as a class, that all learning starts together and is not interrupted by the late arrival of a child which is both disruptive for that individual and for the rest of the class. The **registers will close at 9.00am** and any children arriving after this time will be marked with an unauthorised absence.

Referral to Educational Welfare Officer (EWO)

As a state school we receive routine visits from the Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) to inspect our registers and we work closely with the EWO to support good attendance. In circumstances where absence and lateness persist, it will become necessary to involve the EWO to support parents and children to improve attendance.

As part of the referral process as a school we will:

- Write to parents to inform them that attendance has dropped below 90%.
- Arrange a meeting to discuss the issue with the EWO and parents if there is no improvement in attendance or lateness following the letter.
- Refer families to the EWO if the lateness or poor attendance continues.
- Refer families to the Early Help Team.

We will expect parents to:

- Make every reasonable effort to improve their child's attendance and lateness.
- Attend meetings arranged with the EWO.

This policy was amended in February 2016



Dear Parent/Carer

Penalty Notices for Unauthorised Absence Revised Code of Conduct –September 2013

From April 2005, Kent Local Authority (LA) introduced Penalty Notices for unauthorised absence from school of at least 10 sessions (5 days) in a current term.

The issuing of a Penalty Notice is considered appropriate in the following circumstances:

- Where an excluded child is found in a public place during school hours during the first five days of exclusion.
- Overt truancy (including pupils caught on truancy sweeps).
- Parentally-condoned absences.
- Unauthorised leave for the purpose of a family holiday in term-time.
- Delayed return from leave of absence without prior school agreement.
- Persistent late arrival at school (after the Register has closed).

Circumstances where a Penalty Notice may be issued:

- A Penalty Notice can only be issued in cases of unauthorised absence or where an excluded child is found in a public place during school hours.
- Use of Penalty Notices will normally be restricted to **one per pupil per parent per academic year**. However, where a pupil accrues additional unauthorised absence of up to 10 sessions in a subsequent term and one period of absence relates to a period of unauthorised leave for the purposes of a family holiday, consideration will be given to issuing a second Penalty Notice.
- Not more than twelve may be issued per pupil per parent per academic year for being found in a public place whilst excluded.
- In the case of a period of unauthorised leave for the purpose of a family holiday in term-time a Penalty Notice may be issued on more than one occasion.
- A Penalty Notice may be issued to **each** parent liable for the offence or offences.
- In cases where families contain more than one poor-attending pupil multiple issue of penalty notices may occur.
- There will be no restriction on the number of times a parent/carer may receive a formal warning of a possible issue of a Penalty Notice for unauthorised absence.

Appeals

There is no statutory right of appeal against the decision to issue a Penalty Notice and the sole authority to authorise absences lies with the Head Teacher and their decision is final.

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations do not allow Head Teachers to give retrospective authorisation for absence.

Payment of Penalty Notices:

- Arrangements for payment will be detailed on the Penalty Notice.
- Payment of a Penalty Notice discharges the parent/carer's liability for the period in question and they cannot subsequently be prosecuted under other enforcement powers for the same period.
- Payment of a Penalty Notice within 28 days is £120 reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days of receipt of the Notice.
- Kent County Council retains any revenue from Penalty Notices for the administration of the scheme and enforcement.

Non-payment of Penalty Notices:

- Non-payment of a Penalty Notice may result in prosecution under the provisions of Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

Please ensure that your child attends school/alternative provision regularly and on time.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

**THE EDUCATION (PENALTY NOTICES) (ENGLAND) REGULATIONS
2007; EDUCATION ACT 1996
PENALTY NOTICES FOR UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE
£60 PENALTY IF PAID WITHIN 21 DAYS
£120 PENALTY IF PAID AFTER 28 DAYS BUT WITHIN 42 DAYS**