

# Haytor View Community Primary School & Nursery



## Attendance Policy 2020 - 21

*Learning together - enjoying success - aiming high - celebrating difference – enriching community*

### **Rationale**

Haytor View Community Primary School is committed to providing a full and quality educational experience for all pupils. We believe that if pupils are to benefit from education, good attendance is crucial. As a school we do all that we can to ensure maximum attendance for all pupils. Any problems that prevent full attendance will be identified and addressed as speedily as possible.

It is the policy of our school to celebrate achievement. Attendance is a critical factor to a productive and successful school career. Our school will actively promote and encourage 100 per cent attendance for all our pupils.

Our school will give a high priority to conveying to parents and pupils the importance of regular and punctual attendance. We recognise that parents have a vital role to play and we aim to establish strong home-school links and communication systems, which can be utilised whenever there is concern about attendance.

If there are problems which affect a pupil's attendance we will strive to work in partnership with parents and pupils to resolve those problems as quickly and efficiently as possible. We will adopt a clearly focused approach aimed at returning the pupil to full attendance at all times.

It is the responsibility of the whole school community to promote regular attendance at school.

This policy applies to children all children on the school roll, both those attending full and part time.

### **Objectives**

- To encourage full attendance and punctuality of all children on roll;
- Support parents to reduce absenteeism and address Persistent Absence;
- Liaise directly with pupils and their families to facilitate effective communication with schools and related services to address issues of attendance;
- To record and monitor attendance and absenteeism and apply appropriate strategies;
- To minimise the occurrence of absenteeism;
- To acknowledge and reward a successful record of attendance;
- To reward 100% attendance;
- To ensure a consistent and rigorous approach to attendance and the monitoring of;
- To work with the appropriate members of the school, the education welfare service and appropriate agencies in developing and maintaining a school attendance policy;
- To encourage parents to be actively involved in promoting their child's attendance;
- Implement the legislative requirements regarding the employment of children. This may include visiting employers and families where it is alleged that the child is working illegally;
- Safeguard and promote the welfare of all children of compulsory school age.

### **Statutory Duty of Parents**

The Education Act 1996 requires parents or guardians to ensure their children receive efficient, full-time education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

### **Statutory Duty of Schools**

Schools are responsible for recording pupil attendance twice a day; once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session. An entry must be made in the attendance register for all pupils of compulsory school age who are on the school's admission roll.

### **Principles**

Parents are legally responsible for ensuring that a child of compulsory school age attends school regularly. We will work towards ensuring that all pupils feel supported and valued. We will send a clear message that if a pupil is absent, she/he will be missed. We will encourage parents/carers to be actively involved in promoting their child's attendance. We will ensure that all staff are aware of the requirements of the registration process and that they receive training on Registration Regulations and the Law relating to attendance.

Regular information will be sent to parents and pupils informing them of attendance rates and related issues. Attendance will be an important feature of the school Improvement Plan. Consistent and vigorous monitoring and evaluation procedures are in place.

### **PROCEDURES:**

#### ATTENDANCE REGISTERS:

- The attendance register is called at the beginning of the morning session (8.50am) and afternoon session (12.50pm);
- The attendance register identifies whether each pupil registered at the school is present or absent, if a child is absent a reason is sought for their absence;

*Currently as a result of COVID risk assessment arrangements, we have extended the drop off time from 8.35am to 9.00. The register is taken as the children arrive into school. The register closes at 9am.*

#### LATE CHILDREN BEFORE THE REGISTER CLOSES 8.50am – 9.00am:

- If a child is late before the register closes (9.00am), where known the reason for the lateness is recorded on the electronic register record for the child as a LATE mark.
- Where there are a concerning number of late marks before the close of the register, the parents of the child will be asked to meet with Teacher of the child, where the impact of lateness on a child's learning will be explained to the parent. A record of this meeting will be made on the child's electronic communications log.
- Where punctuality does not improve the parent will be asked to meet with the Phase Leader to discuss the issue of lateness and impact on learning and well being, and to explain the next steps in the school's aim to improve attendance.
- Where this does not improve punctuality a meeting will be arranged with the Head of Learning and Development for them to explain the impact of lateness on learning and progress and the action they are going to take.
- Where meetings are held with parents or a child a note will be added to the child's communication log.

*Currently as a result of COVID risk assessment arrangements, we have extended the drop off time from 8.35am to 9.00. The register is taken as the children arrive into school. The register closes at 9am, any child who arrives after 9am is recorded as unauthorised late. .*

#### LATE CHILDREN AFTER THE REGISTER CLOSES 9.00am:

- If a child is late after the register closes (9.00am), the reason for the lateness is recorded on the electronic register record for the child as an UNAUTHORISED absence due to lateness.
- Where there are a concerning number of late marks after the close of the register, the parents of the child will be asked to meet with class teacher or phase leader, where the impact of lateness on a child's learning will be explained to the parent.
- Where punctuality does not improve the parent will be asked to meet with the Head of Learning and Development to discuss the issue of lateness, where this does not improve punctuality a meeting will be arranged with the Education Welfare Officer for them to explain the impact of lateness on learning and progress and the action they are going to take. The discussion will be recorded on the child's electronic communication log.
- *Where meetings are held with parents or a child a note will be added to the child's communication log.*

#### FOLLOWING UP ABSENCE – Also refer to **SAFEGUARDING** section below

- First day call is used to ascertain why a child is not in school;
- Where the office is not able to contact a parent of an absent child, the absence is recorded as UNAUTHORISED;
- Parents are required to either contact the school office or to send a letter into school, when a child has been absent – otherwise the absence is recorded as UNAUTHORISED;
- Where there are safeguarding concerns relating to the child, a home visit maybe undertaken by a school leader to ascertain as to the well being of the child;
- Where a child is open to Social Care a phone call/email is sent to the child's allocated Social Worker on each day of the absence in order that they can take appropriate action;
- Where a parent has not sent a letter into school or made contact with the school office informing them of the reason for the absence, the class teacher will make contact with the parent to seek to establish the reasons for the absence;
- Where a parent is subject to individualised attendance procedures, e.g. needing to provide evidence of attendance at a medical appointment if a child is absent, they will be reminded of this by the office in order to have the attendance authorised;
- Where a parent is subject to individualised attendance procedures, e.g. needing to provide evidence of attendance at a medical appointment if a child is absent, and they do not provide this evidence a decision will be made by the Head of Learning and Development as to whether the absence will be recorded as UNAUTHORISED;
- *Where meetings or telephone discussions are held with parents or a child a note will be added to the child's communication log.*

#### INDIVIDUAL PUPIL MONITORING & FOLLOW UP ACTIONS:

All attendance matters including lateness, holiday absence and illness are managed on an individual basis with the parent and child, in order to support a personalised approach to good attendance within the framework of the policy:

- There is a half termly whole school analysis undertaken of all children attendance below 95%, the attendance patterns and reasons for absence are reviewed on an individual basis. This analysis also includes identifying children with 10 absences or more, in order that appropriate measures can be taken;
- There is a report which is shared with class teachers every half term of priority children and discussions to be held with parents;
- In Key Stage 2 where appropriate children are engaged in discussion regarding addressing attendance concerns is a relational approach;
- TAPAS leadership meetings provide an opportunity to review issues and actions for individual children;
- Where there are concerns regarding the volume of absence or patterns of absence, a meeting will be arranged with the class teacher or phase leader. The focus of the

meeting will be the impact of the child's attendance on their learning and progress. This meeting will be recorded on the Child's communication log;

- Where there are unusual patterns or volume of absence, parents will be informed that their child's absences will no longer be automatically authorised. Authorisation for absence will depend upon individual circumstances, in this situation where parents are able to provide evidence of the reason for the absence such as a medical appointment card, the absence will be authorised. It is at the Co – Head Teacher's discretion as to whether absence is authorised on an individual basis;
- Where a child's attendance falls below 90%, further scrutiny is undertaken as to the reasons for the high level absences and Parents are requested to provide medical evidence in order to have absences authorised;
- Where a child's attendance falls below 90% there will be scrutiny undertaken by the administration team over the preceding 6 month period, if there are 10 unauthorised absences over this period the Education Welfare Officer will be informed in order that they can undertake appropriate action;
- The school in partnership with the Education Welfare Service will initiate Fast Tracking procedures in an effort to improve attendance. Where this is not successful in improving attendance, legal advice will be sought.
- The school meets with the EWO every half term to review attendance;
- The reason for the absence is recorded on the electronic register and is recorded as either UNAUTHORISED or AUTHORISED according to criteria outlined above;
- Where there have been significant improvements in a child's attendance, the child's achievements will be celebrated on the newsletter and they will receive an individual certificate in assembly;
- When teachers and school leaders meet with parents, they refer to the Pupil Absence % table to demonstrate impact on learning time for children.
- Any record of a meeting with a parent to discuss attendance, will be recorded on the child's individual communication log;

#### EARLY HELP

- Where meetings take place between school leaders where Fast Track procedures are being considered, the Parent/Carer will be offered Early Help via the Early Help Lead Practitioner;

#### HOLIDAY ABSENCE

As from the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013, all schools are unable to authorise any requests for absence relating to holidays in term time. This has been brought about by an amendment to the Education (Pupil Registration)(England) Regulations 2006 which has removed reference to holidays and the ten day period.

These changes reinforce the government's view that every minute of every school day is vital and that pupils should only be granted authorised absence by the school, in exceptional circumstances e.g. illness, exclusions, or due to other unavoidable causes.

Parents are reminded that unauthorised absences may result in the instigation of parental responsibility measures which could be a penalty notice, or a fine of up to £2,500 and/or a term of imprisonment of up to 3 months.

Where parents have requested holiday:

- Unless the request can be considered as 'exceptional circumstances', the holiday leave will be unauthorised;
- The parent will be contacted by the Co – Head Teacher to inform them of the policy;
- Where a family has holiday absence, an analysis will be undertaken by the administrative team, of the preceding 6 months attendance to identify whether it falls below 90% and whether there are further unauthorised absences, which includes other unauthorised absences other than holiday. Where this is the case, the

Education Welfare Officer will be informed for their consideration as to fixed penalty notice or fast tracking procedures;

Where a child is absent from school and it is suspected that they may be on holiday:

- If parents are not able to be contacted absence will be unauthorised;
- A meeting will be held with the parent on their return;

#### PERSISTENT ABSENCE

The DFE thresholds are used to identify children as persistently absent, the school uses its judgement in determining whether the parents of identified children are contacted by letter or whether an appointment held with a school leader. Children who are identified as Persistently Absent require immediate addressing.

#### AWARDS

- Individual termly stickers and certificates are given for 100% attendance;
- Individual 100% attendance across the year are awarded certificate and badge;
- Individual end of year certificates (framed) and awards are given for 100% attendance;
- Children with significant improved attendance will be awarded a certificate.
- Each week the class with the highest attendance receives a certificate in assembly;
- Where a class achieves 100% attendance the class receives a certificate and a class award;

#### MISSING IN EDUCATION PUPILS:

- Will be recorded on the S2S database via Sims;

#### KEEPING PARENTS UPDATED:

- Attendance is regularly featured on the school newsletter, informing parents of arrangements for attendance and their responsibility;
- Meetings are sought with parents regarding matters of attendance, where appropriate children are engaged in consideration of their attendance and impact on learning;
- Every opportunity is sought to remind parents of the importance of attendance & related procedures;
- The newsletter states the current attendance rate of individual classes;
- The parents of children who have been working to address attendance issues have improvement acknowledged both in writing and in person when this has occurred;
- Pupil attendance addressed at parent interviews;
- Pupil attendance forms part of individual induction arrangements.

#### **SAFEGUARDING:**

- A record of named children where safeguarding is a concern is kept in the office, in the event that one of the named children is off from school a school leader is informed;
- Where a pupil has a CiC, CiN or CP Plan, the social worker is informed of any absences by email, including the details e.g. explained or unexplained. The email is passed onto the Parent Worker for their attention, to ascertain a response to ensure a thorough audit trail;
- Where a family cannot be contacted, one of the emergency contacts from the pupil record will be called to seek assurance over the safeguarding of the child;
- If there is an allocated social worker, contact will be made to see if they can get assurances over the safety of the child;
- School Leaders may undertake a home visit where they are concerned as to the reasons for a child being kept off from school;
- If no contact is able to be sought and the child has not been seen/located, the following will happen:
  1. School Leader will Risk Assess the situation based on known information;

2. The Police will be contacted on 999 if the child is considered to be at risk of immediate and significant harm or danger;
3. The police will be contacted on 101 if not at risk of immediate significant harm, but where there are escalated welfare concerns;
4. If there is no immediate increased risk, contact will continue to be made by the above means. Where this is unsuccessful the Education Welfare Officer will be contacted to undertake enquiries, it will be reviewed as to whether the police will be called on the 101 number;
5. Where there has been no contact made ahead of a weekend, the police will be contacted on the 101 number.

***A record will be kept of all action taken on the pupil communication log or safeguarding file, as appropriate to ensure there is a robust audit trail.***

#### **COVID:**

Where a child is absent from school as a result of COVID, individual discussion is held with the parent to ascertain the exact reasons and explore:

- 1) Whether there is a positive diagnosis;
- 2) Whether the child should be self isolating;
- 3) Whether the child can return to school and arrangements for this;
- 4) Whether the child requires remote learning to be implemented and arrangements for this;

The purpose being to ensure that any COVID related absence is managed between home and school, to ensure it does not have a detrimental impact on the child's development and progress.

#### EVALUATING IMPACT

- A termly report is undertaken by School Leaders, which has year to year comparisons with school and national data

#### IMPLEMENTATION

- The Co – Head Teacher implements this policy on a day to day basis;
- Appeals in relation to this policy should be made in writing to 'The Chair of the Governing Board' C/O the School Office