



Holly Hill  
Church School

# Attendance and Punctuality Policy

*As a Christian school our vision is to promote 'Life in All its Fullness.' Our ethos is based on our 12 Christian values of hope, honesty, patience, joy, forgiveness, tolerance, thankfulness, respect, kindness, friendship, gentleness and love. It is within the vision and the ethos that this policy is written and will be implemented.*

Dated Issues: July 2018

Review Date: June 2020

Signed: ..... (Chair of Pupil Support Committee )

## Rationale

**‘Central to raising standards in education and ensuring all pupils can fulfil their potential is an assumption so widely understood that it is insufficiently stated – pupils need to attend school regularly to benefit from their education. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind. Children with poor attendance tend to achieve less in both primary and secondary school’.**

**School Attendance: Statutory guidance and departmental advice, DFE Aug 2013**

We aim to ensure that all children attend school regularly and on time to enable them to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available.

Poor attendance disadvantages a child's learning and can affect their ability to sustain friendships.

Regular, punctual attendance is valued and positively encouraged for all of our pupils.

Children whose attendance is good will be rewarded regularly.

Improved attendance and time keeping will be recognised.

Holly Hill expects the highest attendance and punctuality from all pupils, at all times.

We support pupils and their families to ensure that excellent attendance is achieved.

- Birmingham Education Authorities target for attendance is 96%.
- At Holly Hill we are continuously working towards our goal of 100% attendance for all pupils.

### **Overall Aims:**

- To ensure that statutory obligations are fulfilled. Children must get an education between the school term after their 5th birthday and the last Friday in June in the school year they turn 16.
- To ensure that every child is safeguarded and their right to education is protected.
- To raise standards and ensure every child reaches their full educational potential, through good attendance and punctuality.
- To ensure the school attendance target is achieved.
- To make attendance a priority for all those associated with the school including parents/carers, pupils, teachers and governors by ensuring all stakeholders receive regular communication, about the importance of good attendance and punctuality.
- To keep accurate, up-to-date records and have a robust and rigorous system for analysing attendance.
- To identify causes of low attendance/punctuality with individuals, classes and groups of pupils and address them.
- To work with external agencies, in order to address barriers to attendance and overcome them.

## Rights and responsibilities for attendance/punctuality

### The Legal Framework

There are legal obligations on:

- The parents/carers to secure education for their children, whether at school or otherwise, to send them to school regularly once they are on the school's register
- The school to register attendance and notify the Local Authority of a child missing from school for 5 consecutive days
- The Local Authority to provide education and to enforce attendance

### Who is responsible for attendance issues in school?

- Parents / carers are responsible for ensuring that their child attends school regularly and on time
- Mrs Gallagher is the named senior member of staff with responsibility for attendance issues, who works closely with the designated safeguarding lead where there are attendance concerns
- Members of school staff, both teaching and non-teaching, have responsibility for attendance issues in school
- Attendance matters are reviewed by the Head Teacher and members of the Pupil Support Committee.
- Attendance issues are reported termly to the Full Governing body.

Name	Role	Responsibilities
	Governor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure compliance with relevant legislation (eg pupil registration, attendance registers)</li> <li>• Set attendance targets with the Headteacher</li> <li>• Review school attendance</li> <li>• Agree and Review School Policy</li> </ul>
Charlotte Taylor	Head Teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure compliance with relevant legislation (eg pupil registration, attendance registers)</li> <li>• Overall management and implementation of the policy.</li> <li>• Respond to parental requests for extended leave in line with Birmingham Local Authority policies and procedures.</li> <li>• Consider the use of Penalty Notices, in line with Birmingham Local Authority policies and procedures.</li> <li>• Conduct daily checks of 'comments report' of reasons for children's absence.</li> <li>• Ensure action is taken to safeguard children by ascertaining reasons for absence are identified for every child on their first day of absence.</li> <li>• Arrange for a home visit when telephone contact cannot be made with parent / carer.</li> </ul>
Dawn Gallagher	Deputy Head Teacher/ Attendance Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct daily checks of 'comments report' of reasons for children's absence.</li> <li>• Ensure action is taken to safeguard children by ascertaining reasons for absence are identified for every</li> </ul>

		<p>child on their first day of absence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arrange for a home visit when telephone contact cannot be made with parent / carer.</li> <li>• Develop an Attendance Action Plan; identify causes of absence and set the precise actions that will be taken to improve the attendance of any child who has attendance below 96%.</li> <li>• Undertake half termly reviews of the Attendance Action Plan and provide a copy of this for the Senior Leadership Team to evaluate.</li> <li>• Analyse attendance data termly for individuals and groups of pupils (ethnic groups, boys, girls, pupil premium, SEND) and responding to findings.</li> <li>• Report on Attendance / Punctuality to the Governing Body.</li> <li>• Meet with the Office Manager / Learning Mentor to monitor the systems and structures, ensuring they are having an impact on improving pupil attendance and punctuality.</li> <li>• Revise and amend the policy, as required.</li> </ul>
Denise Harris	Learning Mentor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct home visits as instructed by DHT / HT.</li> <li>• Take responsibility for promoting good attendance /punctuality on a day-to-day basis, including liaising with parents / carers.</li> <li>• Monitor lateness report weekly to identify any child with frequent lateness.</li> <li>• Monitor attendance data half termly to identify any child with regular periods of absence, extended absence or persistent absence.</li> <li>• Promptly inform the DHT, if there are any concerns relating to attendance/punctuality.</li> <li>• Work with pupils and their families where attendance is a concern, identifying barriers to good attendance and working to overcome these.</li> <li>• Liaise with parents/carers of identified children by letter, telephone, meeting or by other methods to improve children's punctuality and / or attendance.</li> <li>• Ensure that rewards and incentives for attendance and punctuality are being used and are effective.</li> <li>• Liaise with and report to other professionals and outside agencies to improve attendance and punctuality.</li> <li>• Work with class teachers, to plan for the reintegration of pupils after long-term absence.</li> <li>• Meet with the Office Manager /Bursar / Deputy Head Teacher to monitor the systems and structures, ensuring they are having an impact on improving pupil attendance and punctuality.</li> </ul>

<p>Jackie Ingleby / Jo Robinson</p>	<p>Office Manager / Bursar</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Check the school answer phone and take messages from parents/carers about pupil absence.</li> <li>• Implement the daily checks of SIMS registers after morning and afternoon registration sessions.</li> <li>• Carry out and record the outcome of first day calls, when a child doesn't arrive at school if no reason has been received.</li> <li>• Record reasons for absence and update class registers daily.</li> <li>• Prepare a 'comments report' providing reasons for any absence on a daily basis and present this report to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (HT / DHT).</li> <li>• Undertake ongoing monitoring of the school's official register to identify any child with frequent lateness, regular periods of absence, extended absence or persistent absence.</li> <li>• Promptly inform the HT, if there are any concerns relating to attendance/punctuality.</li> <li>• Provide weekly/termly/yearly data for DHT to analyse.</li> <li>• Maintain SIMS attendance records in line with this policy.</li> <li>• Report to the Local Authority, as requested.</li> <li>• Oversee the admission and induction of new pupils.</li> <li>• Support HT with the promotion of good attendance and punctuality, through finding/organising incentives.</li> <li>• Ensure staff are following the registration systems and structures in this policy.</li> <li>• Inform parents / carers of school policy and procedures when parents have failed to inform the school of a pupil's absence.</li> <li>• Meet with the Office Manager /Bursar / Learning Mentor to monitor the systems and structures, ensuring they are having an impact on improving pupil attendance and punctuality</li> </ul>
	<p>Class Teachers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure quality first teaching every day; with lessons that are well planned and resourced so that they challenge, inspire and meet their learners' needs</li> <li>• Keep accurate and up-to-date daily records of pupil attendance through the SIMS register system</li> <li>• Take a formal register of all pupils twice a day. This is done on the school's SIMS system at 9.00 am and 1.00 pm             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update the fire register as a live document</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Regularly remind children and parents about the importance of good attendance</li> <li>• Follow up on pupil absence by ensuring reasons for absence are sought</li> <li>• Provide a welcoming and safe environment, which encourages attendance and promotes the best</li> </ul>

		<p>performance from children</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish good and effective communication links with parents/carers and work collaboratively in meeting the child's needs</li> <li>• If required, to work collaboratively with other agencies to assist them in fulfilling their statutory duties, regarding for example, child protection</li> <li>• Work with pupils and their families where attendance is a concern, identifying barriers to good attendance and working to overcome these</li> <li>• Promptly inform the DHT, of pupils who persist with poor attendance</li> <li>• Discuss pupil attendance and punctuality regularly and at Parents Evenings</li> </ul>
	<p>Parents</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children should only be kept at home if they have a serious illness or injury. If this is the case, parents should contact the school by 9am on the first day of absence. Parents should provide medical evidence such as a doctor's appointment card or prescribed medicine for the school to copy if requested</li> <li>• If a child has a minor illness e.g. mild headache, stomach ache etc. parents should inform the school and bring them in. If they don't get any better, school will contact parents straight away, to collect them</li> <li>• If pupils' have a clinic or hospital appointment, parents must let the school know and their provide appointment letters / cards for the school to copy. Pupils' should attend school before their appointment and be brought back to school after appointments</li> <li>• Ensure their child attends school and arrives on time every day</li> <li>• Promote a good attitude to learning by ensuring their children attend school in the correct uniform and with the basic equipment required for lessons.</li> <li>• Arrange routine appointments out of school hours</li> <li>• Telephone to inform the school to on the first day of absence for their child</li> <li>• Ensure that the school has at least 3 current contact numbers and ensure that the school they are kept up to date</li> <li>• Ensure that they do not blame their child when they are late for school</li> <li>• Work in partnership with the school and other agencies in the best interests of their child; this includes informing the school about significant influences and changes in the child's life, which may impact on learning.</li> </ul>

## **Monitoring and Recording Attendance & Punctuality**

### **Class Registers**

Class registers are recorded using SIMS. The system ensures that no children are missed and that pupil information can be shared quickly and securely. Registers are the only way of recording pupil attendance and must be completed accurately. This is the responsibility of whichever member of staff has been directed to take the register for that session.

Registers can be re-submitted in the case of a mistake or a pupil arriving after submission, but registers must be accurate and submitted at key times (see below).

### **Morning Register**

Class registers remain open until 9:10am. At that point, the teacher must submit their final register and close down SIMS. The teacher may submit the register as many times as they wish before 9.10 am (e.g. if a mistake has been made or a child has arrived slightly late) but at 9.10 am the register must be correct and submitted.

From 9.00 am the school doors are closed. The office staff meet and register children arriving late at the front door. The office staff ensure that all parents / carers complete children's names, classes and reasons for absence correctly using the electronic signing in system. This is to ensure that no children are missed on the register when arriving late to school.

Children arriving after 9:00am are recorded as 'L' (late after register closed) in the register.

The Office Manager / Bursar then checks that the children who have arrived late have been marked 'L' (Late) in the registers and corrects any mistakes or inputs codes for children who are known to be absent. The office manager checks with class teachers that children marked absent are not in school. She then begins first day absence calls. (see below)

### **Afternoon Register**

Registers must be submitted by teaching staff straight after lunch before afternoon lessons commence. They should be submitted by 1:10pm

### **Monitoring First Day Absence**

If a child is absent from school and the school has not received a phone call or other message from the parent/carer, a first day absence call will be made.

The Office Manager / Bursar follows this system:

- Phone parents' contact number(s).
- If the parent / carer cannot be contacted using their contact number then they will phone the other emergency contact number(s) to get an up-to-date contact number for the parent/carer and update the school system accordingly.
- When contacted, the parent/carer will be asked to provide a reason for their child's absence. The absence reason is written as a 'comment' on SIMS and the register code will be updated.
- The Office Manager / Bursar must establish a reason for every absence. No absence should be left on the system as an 'N' (no reason given) code.
- The 'Comment Report' will be printed and given to the Head Teacher / Deputy Head Teacher.

- The Head Teacher / Deputy Head Teacher will check the 'comment report'. If any parent has not been able to be contacted then the Head Teacher / Deputy Head Teacher will consider options in order to establish that the child is safe and well. This may include a Home Visit.

**Child Protection and safeguarding concerns must be acted on immediately, in line with the school Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.**

### **Home Visits**

- If Office Staff and Learning Mentors are unable to make contact with parents / carers or any of the emergency contacts for a child then the Head Teacher / Deputy Head Teacher will consider deploying staff to undertake a home visit.
- Before deploying staff to undertake a home visit the Head Teacher / Deputy Head Teacher will aim to identify any risks and identify any actions needed to minimise these risks.
- Before undertaking a home visit the member of staff undertaking the visit must check with the child's class teacher and with office staff to ascertain that the child has not arrived in school.
- Staff undertaking home visits will ensure that they are aware of any risk factors and ensure that they take actions identified to minimise these.
- Staff undertaking Home Visits will complete the Home Visit Log in the Office prior to undertaking the visit.
- Staff undertaking home visits must take their mobile phone and ensure it is switched on so that they can contact school and school can contact them.
- If the child arrives in school office staff will contact staff undertaking the home visit.
- Upon return to school staff will update the home visit log with the outcome of the visit and inform the Head Teacher / Deputy Head Teacher of the outcome.

### **Strategies for promoting/rewarding excellent attendance**

#### **Weekly Celebration Assemblies**

Celebration Assemblies are held every week on Friday. Classes with the highest attendance/punctuality receive attendance/punctuality Cool Cat Kitty and a sticker for their class balloon on the Attendance Award Board.

#### **Year Group Newsletters**

Each half term, the year group newsletter is used to highlight the importance of good attendance and punctuality. It regularly includes sections reminding parents of our school attendance target and what that means in terms of number of days absent. It also includes information about any initiatives, which the school is using, to promote attendance and punctuality.

#### **School Attendance Award Board**

The board includes information about the classes with the highest attendance and punctuality.



### **Breakfast Club**

The charge for our Daily Breakfast Club is subsidised by the school every day. This supports parents by allowing them to drop their children off from 8.30 am, ensuring they are on time for school. Pupil Premium funding is used for identified children to help improve attendance and punctuality.

### **The School Learning Environment**

A welcoming, organised learning environment that supports and celebrates its learners is a key factor in ensuring children enjoy school and attend regularly. All staff ensure that their learning environments are of a high quality. Regular, rigorous environmental audits are carried out by the SLT, to ensure this.

### **Staff Promoting Good Attendance**

It is important that teachers regularly promote good attendance with their classes.

### **End of Term Attendance Rewards**

At the end of each term there is a special reward for children who have achieved 100% attendance. The HT, Learning Mentor and Pupil Support Committee organise and lead on the end of term attendance incentives.

### **Attendance Certificate**

Children with 97%+ attendance, receive a special attendance certificate, signed by the Head Teacher to take home and keep. Certificates are presented each term, to reward those who achieve excellent attendance.

### **Sharing attendance data**

Pupils are informed on a weekly basis of the class with the best attendance / punctuality.

This develops healthy competition between year groups to improve attendance. It also engages the class teacher in conversation with their classes about attendance.

### **Parent/teacher consultation evenings**

This provides an opportunity for class teachers to praise and recognise excellent attendance or share attendance concerns and discuss barriers to good attendance. Where necessary a target for improving attendance is set. The class teacher then monitors this. If there is no improvement in attendance/punctuality, the pupil is referred to the Learning Mentor.

### **School Attendance Letters**

The school sends out letters, to communicate with parents about attendance and punctuality. (Copies of all standard letter formats are included at the end of this document.)

### **Lateness Report**

The Learning Mentor and the DHT monitors the Lateness Report weekly. If a child has been persistently late parents are required to attend a meeting with the Learning Mentor. If there are 3 further occasions of lateness they are required to attend a meeting with the Deputy Headteacher. If lateness persists three further times, a meeting with the headteacher will be required.

All options of support will be offered.

### **Attendance Meetings**

The Deputy Head Teacher monitors individuals, classes, year groups, different ethnic groups, SEN and FSM pupils. She identifies patterns and trends in absence/punctuality, including persistent absence. (This information is evaluated by the Pupil Support Committee.) The systems and structures are then followed, to improve attendance for these individuals or groups.

Letters are sent out to parents whose children's attendance is below 96%. Parents are invited to discuss concerns about their child's attendance to identify ways they can work in partnership with the school to improve their child's attendance.

We will arrange to meet with you to discuss ways to improve attendance if your child has:

- 3 or more 'odd days' absence in any one half term and/or
- 3 or more episodes of illness in any one term and/or
- patterns of absences on the same days each week (e.g. Mondays or Fridays) and/or
- arrived after 9.30 a.m. more than once and/or
- attendance below 96%

### **FAST Track**

- This is a formal legal system, which involves fining parents for their child's poor attendance; over a specified period of time.
- The action is taken with identified pupils.
- Families are formally written to by the school, outlining the process. Formal meetings are held after a specified period of time, for pupils with continued poor attendance.
- Targets are set and attendance is monitored for a further specified period of time. Courts can issue fines to families, whose pupils fail to improve their attendance.

### **Extended Holidays**

In line with Birmingham Local Authority, 'Leave in term Time Guidance' and the 2013 Amendment to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations, **leave for pupils during term time is not authorised under any circumstances.** The school recognises that taking children out of school may constitute a safeguarding risk and will make necessary enquiries, in order to be satisfied that the child is not at risk. The school may contact outside agencies in order to ensure that children are safe.

Head teachers may now only grant leave in term time where the circumstances are exceptional, for example:

- Death of parent/carer or sibling of the pupil
- Life threatening or critical illness of parent or sibling of the pupil
- Parent/carer recuperation and convalescence from critical illness or surgery (leave request to be made within 6 months of recovery and medical evidence required)
- Religious observance

Family emergencies need careful consideration. It is not always in the best interest of the child, nor appropriate for them to miss school for family emergencies that are being dealt with by adult family members. Being at school, friendships and support from staff can provide children with stability and care during difficult times. The routine of school can provide a safe and familiar background during times of uncertainty.

If you have exceptional circumstances, which have led you to request leave in term time for your child/ren, please complete the required form, which you can obtain from the school office. The Head Teacher will then make a decision, on whether or not the leave can be lawfully authorised and will do so only if there is a genuine, exceptional and urgent reason for a child to be absent during term time.

### **Penalty Notices**

**If a child is taken out of school without the Head Teacher's authorisation, it will be recorded as unauthorised absence. This may lead to the issuing of a penalty notice and legal action being taken.**

#### **Section 23(1) Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2007:**

Penalty notices may be issued to the parent of pupils who have unauthorised absence from school. The amount of the penalty is £60.

- If this is not paid within 21 days the amount rises to £120.
- If not paid within 28 days the Local Authority will prosecute under section 444(1) unless it comes to our attention that the penalty notice had been issued in error.

#### **Section 444(1) Education Act 1996:**

"If you are the parent of a child of compulsory school age who fails to attend school regularly, you are guilty of an offence."

The court can fine **each parent** up to £1,000 per child, order payment of the prosecution costs and/or make a Parenting Order.

Please note that penalties and prosecutions are in respect of **each parent** for each child.

A Parent' includes any person who is not a parent of the child but who has parental responsibility for the child (and applies whether or not that person lives with the child) or who has care of him/her.

**These prosecutions are criminal proceedings and could result in you having a criminal record.**

**Date agreed by the Governing Body:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signed: (Chair of the Pupil Support Committee)** \_\_\_\_\_

***Policy to be reviewed in February 2020***