



HARDY MILL PRIMARY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY

Hardy Mill Primary is committed to provide 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/carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

School attendance is subject to various education laws and this school attendance policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by the Department for Education (See Appendix).

Each year the school will set attendance/absence targets. The school will review its systems for improving attendance at regular intervals to ensure that it is achieving its set goals.

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

Promote Attendance

The foundation for good attendance is a strong partnership between the school, parents and the child.

The Home/school agreement will contain details of how we will work with parents and our expectations of what parents will need to do to ensure their child achieves good attendance.

We will ensure that our pupils are made aware of the importance of good attendance and how this will benefit them.

Leave of Absence in Term Time

Under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006, only the school (and not parents/carers) can authorise an absence. Where the reason for a pupil's absence cannot be established at the time the register is taken, that absence shall be recorded as unauthorised. If a reason for absence is provided by the parent/carer, the school may decide to grant leave of absence which must be recorded as authorised using the appropriate national code.

Amendments have been made to the 2006 regulations in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013. These amendments, as described below, came into force on 1 September 2013.

Amendments to the 2006 regulations remove references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. The amendments make clear that head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are **exceptional** circumstances. Head teachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

At Hardy Mill Primary School, the governors acknowledge that 'exceptional' circumstances do not occur regularly, by definition. The following circumstances would generally not be considered as 'exceptional':

- Relatives coming to visit
- Cheaper holidays in England and abroad
- Family day trips or extended weekend breaks
- Visiting family/friends who have different half terms or holidays
- Shopping
- Birthday treats

It would not be expected that 'exceptional' circumstances would occur more than once or twice during a child's time at our school.

Parents will be prosecuted if their child is absent from school for 10 or more school sessions over a consecutive two terms (i.e. 5 school days) without permission. An unauthorised absence is:

- Any absence from school that the school has not permitted or cannot give permission for
- Persistent late arrival at school

In most circumstances a formal letter of warning will be issued advising parents that a Penalty Notice may be issued. This warning letter will also include details of the child's absences. This is an opportunity for the parents to work with the school to improve the child's attendance and avoid the need to issue a Penalty Notice. If there is no improvement then a Penalty Notice will be issued.

A Penalty Notice will be issued without warning for the deliberate taking of holiday in term time without/against school permission and where this has created a period of unauthorised absence of at least 5 days in the past two half terms.

Requests for leave of absence other than holidays

Parents sometimes wish to request leave of absence for their child which would not be classed as a holiday. These may include:

- attendance at weddings or funerals
- attending graduation ceremonies for close family members
- taking part in a recognised sporting competition (e.g. competing for Greater Manchester schools football team)
- attending special award ceremonies with parents

These will be treated on their individual merits. However, requests must still be made in writing to the head teacher and corroborative evidence should be provided by parents making these requests. In most circumstances a maximum of one day authorised leave would be granted

Leave of absence for religious observances will always be granted. Again, in most cases a maximum of one day authorised leave will be granted.

Roles Responsibilities and Procedures

School

- Registers are taken by staff at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions. Morning registration takes place at 8.50am and afternoon registration is 1pm for Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 and 1.15pm for Key Stage 2 classes.
- Lateness is recorded as an unauthorised absence when the reason given was avoidable and/ if it has occurred after the registration period has closed.
- All messages from parents reporting absences are recorded in the school message book and marked on the electronic registration system.
- Rates of attendance and punctuality will be monitored at least half-termly or earlier if an individual matter has been raised. Concerns will be raised by school with the parent and/or carer by letter.
- If the punctuality and/or attendance issue remains unresolved, the Head teacher along with the school social worker will arrange to speak to the parent/ carer so that a solution can be found with the school and home working together.
- If efforts are not successful then the school social worker will re-contact the parent/carer and further action may follow including home visits and possible agency referrals.
- Following an absence for a significant period, the school will liaise with the parent/ carer to arrange an appropriate re-integration programme which meets the needs of the individual circumstances.

Parents/carers

- Parents are responsible for ensuring that their child attends school regularly, punctually, properly dressed and equipped and in a fit condition to learn. Children who have been allowed to stay up very late at night and, therefore, are tired at the start of the day are not in a fit condition to learn.
- If a child is prevented for any reason from attending, or is late, parents are requested to notify the school as soon as possible - by telephone, email or writing.
- Parents/carers are expected to report their child's absence to the school office by 9.10 am on the first day their child is absent.
- A pupil's absence from school must be considered as unauthorised until a satisfactory explanation is forthcoming from the parent.
- Parents will be informed promptly of any concerns which may arise over a child's attendance.
- Parents should avoid, if at all possible, making medical/dental appointments for their child during school hours.
- All holidays should be taken during the school's designated periods of closure.
- When a pupil is delivered late to school parents must sign the pupil in at the school office and record in a designated file the reason the pupil is late.
- There is an expectation that parents/carers will work with the school to resolve any attendance issues.

Pupils

- Expectation that they attend regularly and are on time for registration and lessons
- Need to answer to their names when the register is taken in the morning and afternoon. In Nursery, the children are taught a simple procedure for self-registration.
- All pupils arriving after 8.50 am and/ or when the doors are closed must report at the school office to register their arrival at school.

Lateness

Morning registration will close at 8.50am. Any pupils arriving after this time will be marked as having an unauthorised absence 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.

The afternoon registration will be at 1.00 pm for Early Years and Key Stage 1 and 1.15pm for Key Stage 2.

Pupils arriving after the start of school but before the end of the registration period will be coded as 'late before registers close'.

Attendance Targets

The school will set attendance targets each year. A system for analysing performance towards the targets will be established and a senior school manager will be responsible for overseeing this work. The school will make use of the attendance data available on the ASP, when setting its target. Targets will relate to national averages.

Strategies for promoting good attendance

- Hardy Mill offers an environment in which pupils feel valued and welcomed. The school's ethos demonstrates that pupils feel that their presence in school is important, that they will be missed when they are absent/late.
- A varied and flexible curriculum will be offered to all pupils.
- Attendance data will be regularly collected and analysed in order to help identify patterns, set targets, correlate attendance with achievement, and support and inform policy/practice.
- Parents will be reminded regularly (via newsletters, parents' evenings, etc) of the importance of good attendance.
- The head teacher will report to the school's governing board on attendance matters termly.

Attendance Awards

Class attendance awards:

Award	Class Attendance	Free choice time earned for the class
Gold Cup	98% +	15 minutes
Silver Cup	97% +	5 minutes
Bronze Cup	96% +	-

- Attendance will be celebrated weekly in Honours Assembly where each class will be awarded an Attendance cup.
- Each class will agree with the class teacher suitable free choice activities to be earned for good attendance. Classes can then accrue time through good attendance until they have earned at least half a day of free choice time.
- Each class will have a classroom display of attendance cups earned.

Individual attendance awards:

- Children who achieve 99.5%+ attendance at the end of each academic year will be rewarded with a certificate.
- Children whose attendance/ punctuality has been poor but has improved significantly will be rewarded with a certificate.

Adopted: May 2015

Reviewed: July 2019, November 2020, November 2021

Appendix 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 this 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 V1 Section 444 contains the details of when an offence is committed if a child fails to attend school.

Register and Admission Roll Keeping.

The legal requirements are found in:
The Education [Pupil Registration] (England) Regulations 2006

Attendance Targets

The legal requirements are found in:
The Education (School Attendance Targets) (England) Regulations 2007

Guidance documents on attendance

The following DfE documents are used to guide attendance recording.

Absence and Attendance codes (Guidance for Schools and Local Authorities).

Keeping Pupil Registers (Guidance on applying the Education Pupil Registration Regulations).

These and other guidance documents are available on the DfE website.

