



HEADLEY PARK

PRIMARY SCHOOL

Policy Documentation

Policy: Attendance (HPPS Appendix to CST Policy)

Responsibility for review: LGB
Date of last review: 17 May 2022

1. Rationale

- Headley Park Primary School is committed to providing a full and efficient education to all pupils and embraces the concept of equal opportunities for all.
- 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 above 96% 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 school attendance policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by the DFE.
- Every term the school will examine its attendance figures, identifying individual families who may need support.
- The school will review its systems for improving attendance at regular intervals to ensure that it is achieving its set goals.

2. Aims

The aims of our attendance policy are to:

- Maximise attendance rates for all pupils individually and for the school community as a whole.
- Clarify staff roles and responsibilities regarding attendance and punctuality.
- Inform pupils and parents of the clear procedures to be followed in cases of absence or lateness.

3. Promoting school attendance

We promote the importance of good school attendance by:

- Celebrating successful attendance with the weekly Headley Park Attendance Cup.
- The class with the best attendance in a term receives an additional playtime.
- Any class with 100% attendance in any given week receives 5 minutes extra play (to be taken at the teacher's discretion).
- A weekly feature on the school newsletter states whole school attendance.
- Attendance is discussed with pupil premium children termly in allocated check in sessions with class teachers.

4. Methods for improving attendance below 96%

1. All adults in school provide a good role-model for pupils in terms of punctuality and attendance.
2. Accurate and thorough marking of the registers at the beginning of each school session, using the agreed system of symbols.
3. Parents will inform the school office by telephone before 8.30am that their child is ill and will not be attending school that day. Parents/carers must update the school each day before 3pm to notify us of their child's return to school.

4. Teachers/Admin staff to pursue reasons for all absences when they have not been given and to inform the Assistant Headteacher if no satisfactory reason is given by the parent/carer.
5. If the school does not hear from a parent/carer then the school will take the following actions to establish the whereabouts of the child:
 - a. Contact parents/carers via a variety of means – phone, text, email and letter if needs be.
 - b. Call emergency contacts, speak to siblings in school and other sources such as social media if appropriate.
 - c. Undertake a home visit/s (take a calling card/prepared letter requesting urgent contact).
 - d. Check with other agencies and any professionals involved.
 - e. If the Assistant Headteacher/Headteacher deem it necessary, report the child as missing in education (Education Welfare Service tel: 0117 352 1438 email at childrenmissingeducation@bristol.gov.uk).
6. Headteacher and Assistant Headteacher to monitor and analyse whole school, group and individual pupil attendance termly and determine next steps to include:
 - a. Letters to families with child's attendance below 90% asking for medical evidence of any future absence.
 - b. Individual meetings parents/carers if children are below 85% to offer support before any potential penalty.
 - c. The EWO will be informed if there is no improvement in attendance and penalty notices being requested for missing eight sessions within a ten week period.
 - d. If low attendance persists after the issue of a fine, this can lead to prosecution
7. Headley Park Primary school does not authorise holiday absences apart from in **exceptional circumstances** such as:
 - a. Bereavement
 - b. Compassionate Leave
 - c. Weddings of immediate family members
 - d. Educational experiences discussed with the Headteacher in advance of the absence being requested
8. Therefore any **holiday absences will be classified as unauthorised** and parents will be informed accordingly.

5. Requesting term time leave

Parents must return a '[Pupil Term Time Leave Request](#)' form. The request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated. Wherever possible, this should be **at least four weeks** before the absence. Leave of absences cannot be approved retrospectively. You have to get permission from the Assistant Headteacher/Headteacher if you want to take your child out of school during term time.

- You must make the application **in advance**.
- The request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, wherever possible, **at least four weeks** before the absence.
- Leave of absences cannot be approved retrospectively.

- The Assistant Headteacher/Headteacher will consider if there are **exceptional circumstances** (see above, point 4.7) in relation to the application.
- If leave is granted, it is up to the Assistant Headteacher/Headteacher how many days are authorised.

The school will review each application individually, considering the specific facts and circumstances. Parents may be required to provide the school with additional evidence in order to support the request. The expectation of the school is that term time holidays **should not be planned or booked** as a matter of course, as they are **highly likely to be unauthorised**.

Absence will be marked as **unauthorised** if:

- No explanation is forthcoming.
- The school is dissatisfied with the explanation.
- The pupil is absent for unexceptional special occasions (e.g. a birthday).
- The pupil is on a family holiday.
- If pupil attendance is already below 90%.

Where a leave of absence is granted, the school will determine the number of days the pupil can be away from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the school's discretion.

In April 2017, the Supreme Court clarified the definition of regular attendance to be attendance 'in accordance with the rules prescribed by the school'. Therefore, if an absence is not authorised by the school, the pupil's attendance is deemed to be irregular.

Parents/carers have a legal responsibility to ensure that their child attends school on a regular basis. It is a criminal offence under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 to fail to secure regular attendance of a registered pupil at the school. This applies to both resident and non-resident parents/carers who may both be subject to legal sanctions if their child fails to attend school regularly. It also applies to others who may not be the parent/carer but may have day to day care of the child.

6. Punctuality

Pupils late for the start of the morning and afternoon session will report to the school office. The secretary will register them in the school system and record their reason for absence (reported as an L registration mark) and their dinner requirement. Anyone arriving after 9.15 am (15 minutes after the close of the register) is no longer deemed as late and is classified as U (unauthorised).

Parents/carers of pupils who are late for sessions more than six times in any one term will be invited to a meeting with the Assistant Headteacher to discuss further support. If this does not improve a child's punctuality then a fixed term penalty notice will be requested.

7. Penalty notices

Penalty notices may be issued to parents who do not comply with the school's policy.

The penalty is £60 (per parent, per child) payable within 21 days, rising to £120 if paid between 22 and 28 days. Failure to pay will result in prosecution.

Penalty Notices may be issued when:

- A parent has taken their child on holiday during term without school authorisation especially when the pupil will miss exams i.e. SATs in Year 2 and Year 6.
- Enquiries at school after a truancy sweep beyond the school gates show the pupil's absence at that time was unauthorised.
- Pupils are regularly late after the register has closed each day.
- A pupil has 8 or more unauthorised absences within the previous 10 week period.