

Dear HPPS families,

### Attendance at HPPS

Our mission at Headley Park is to ensure that every pupil leaves our school with the ability and desire to learn more, unlock their potential and make their mark in the world.

Good attendance and punctuality are **essential** if children are to succeed at school. Research shows that there is a direct link between good attendance and academic progress and achievement. Therefore, it is absolutely vital that children are in school everyday in order to maximise their learning.

Our current whole school attendance is 92%, which is well below our target of 96%. Our aim is for **all** pupils to have an attendance of 96% or more.

We appreciate that currently there are high levels of sickness across Bristol with an increase in flu, scarlet fever and COVID cases. However, as a school, we do have to continue to work to improve our overall school attendance figures. Therefore, we have revised our approaches to help us achieve our goal.

### Attendance percentages

Attendance percentages can be misleading. 90% attendance may seem like a good level of attendance. However, the reality is that 90% attendance means that your child will miss half a day of school each week or 19.5 days of school during the school year. That is nearly four school weeks.

The table below shows the amount of lost learning a child may have missed over a year and over a whole school career by missing school.

Overall Percentage	No. of days missed per <u>year</u>	No. of days missed over <u>career</u>
100%	0 days	0 days
96%	8.5 days	52 days
94%	11 days	78 days
92%	15 days (3 weeks)	104 days
90%	19.5 days (4 weeks)	131 days
80%	37 days (a whole term)	261 days

As a school we want all our children to achieve and we are constantly looking at ways of improving our systems for that to happen. One of the systems we have been reviewing is attendance and we have made it a key target for our school to improve attendance.

### Promoting school attendance

At Headley Park Primary School, we promote the importance of good school attendance by:

- Celebrating attendance in assemblies and fortnightly newsletters;
- Discussing attendance with children and families who may need support; and
- Discussing attendance at parent consultation meetings throughout the year.

This term, we will be launching an updated **stepped response** to help us improve attendance. The steps are in line with Local Authority and Government guidance and follow best practice identified in other primary schools in Bristol.

We will be working hard to support families where attendance has fallen. We will do this through:

- Ensuring everyone understands their responsibility for securing good attendance at school;
- Holding weekly attendance meetings with our attendance team to review whole school attendance and investigate reasons for individual pupil's attendance levels;
- Sending regular communication to parents regarding children's attendance at school;
- Following a stepped response to falling attendance (see below) including supportive phone calls, emails and meetings to help parents with improving their child's attendance;
- Inviting parents to meet with the attendance leader to discuss ways to improve attendance when needed;
- Contacting parents when children are persistently late at the beginning of the school day; and
- Making home visits where appropriate to support a child in returning to school.

In cases where attendance falls below the school's expectations and continues to fall after each step, there will be a staged response taken. Individual pupils and cases will be discussed by the attendance team in our weekly meeting and the stepped response may be adapted to suit the needs of each individual case. The steps are:

1. **A supportive phone call or playground check in from the class teacher** (to talk about reasons for absences and offer any support needed)
2. **A supportive phone call from the phase leader** (to offer support and to remind parents on the number of days that have been missed and the impact on learning)
3. **An email from the phase leader** (to inform parents that attendance is now being monitored)
4. **An email from the attendance leader** (to invite parents in for a meeting to set an action plan to help improve attendance)
5. **A meeting with the headteacher** (to discuss reasons why the aims set in the action plan are not being met)

#### **Our attendance team**

Our attendance team consists of:

Sally Shackell	Attendance administrator
Mark Inskip	Attendance leader and assistant headteacher
Alex Gingell	Headteacher
<i>Caroline Bishop</i>	<i>Phase 1 leader (Nursery, Reception and Year 1)</i>
<i>Katie Meaker</i>	<i>Phase 2 leader (Years 2, 3 and 4)</i>

**Daily absence from school**

In order to safeguard the children in our school, we have a duty of care to follow up on any unknown absences.

If their child is not going to be in school, parents should inform the school office by telephone **before 8.30am** on the first day of absence.

If we have not heard from parents, the processes we may take are clarified below:

Notification from parent received		<u>No</u> notification from parent received	
Day	Action	Day	Action
1	No further action	1	The office team will call the contact numbers for the child in order to gain an explanation for the absence. They will leave a voicemail asking you to call the school back if no one answers. If no explanation is received by midday, we will call other contacts on the list.
2	No further action (as long as notification has been received on day 2 also).	2	If no explanation is received, the office will call all emergency contacts we have for the child.  On day 2, the attendance leader is notified that no explanation has been provided. In some cases, we may visit home.
3	The office will call home to check in and see how the child is. They will remind parents that we can offer calpol at school and that we send a child home if they are unwell at school during the day.  A member of the leadership team will be informed when a child is absent for 3 days.	3	If no explanation is received, the office will call all emergency contacts again. A home visit will be made and a letter posted through the letterbox.  If we receive no response, we will call 101.  Child Missing in Education processes begin.
4	The class teacher will make a phone call home to check in, remind of the support we can offer in school if a child is not well and to arrange a time to send work home to be completed (if appropriate).	4+	We will continue to follow Child Missing in Education processes. <i>(Education Welfare Service tel: 0117 352 1438 email at <a href="mailto:childrenmissingeducation@bristol.gov.uk">childrenmissingeducation@bristol.gov.uk</a>).</i>
5	A senior leader will call home for a		

	conversation about the absence.	
6	<p>If a child is still not back at school, we may not authorise the absence.</p> <p>We may arrange to visit home (particularly if we have not received any medical evidence for the absence).</p>	

### **Sickness absence**

Of course, there may be times when children are sick and unable to attend school. [This NHS website](#) provides really useful information about when a child can come into school, when they should be kept at home and when they can return after an illness. For example, children can come to school with a minor cough or cold but should not come into school if they have a [high temperature](#) (38C or above). Cases of scarlet fever should be treated with antibiotics and children can return to school 24 hours after starting their course of antibiotics.

### **Working with you**

We can only achieve great school attendance (and therefore great learning outcomes!) by working together. These updates are designed to help improve school attendance for every child and ensure every child is able to reach their full potential over their time at Headley Park.

Thank you for taking the time to read this email. Further information can be found on our website [here](#) and in a short webinar [here](#).

Kind regards,

The Headley Park Attendance Team