



'Educating For Life In All Its Fullness'

Harewood C of E Primary School

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Date Approved: February 2023

Chair of Governors: J Jayne

Headteacher: A Ratcliffe

Date for Review: February 2026

School Values

'Educating For life In All Its Fullness'

(John 10:10)

As a school, we shape all that we do, to allow children to develop a strong sense of their Emotional, Spiritual and Cultural self through our Christian values:

- **Honesty**
- **Forgiveness**
- **Courage**
- **Hope**
- **Community**

We ensure that children are prepared for future life and have the Cultural Capital to be active citizens of the world they live in.

Safeguarding

The Governing Body and staff of Harewood C of E Primary School take as our first priority the responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of our pupils, to minimise risk and to work together with other agencies to ensure rigorous arrangements are in place within our school to identify, assess, and support those children who are suffering harm and to keep them safe and secure whilst in our care.

Equal Opportunities

We have a clear duty under the Equality Act 2010 to ensure that our teaching is accessible to all pupils, including those who are lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT). Our inclusive curriculum will foster good relations between pupils, tackle all types of prejudice, including homophobia, and promote understanding and respect, enabling us to meet the requirements, and live the intended spirit, of the Equality Act 2010.

Attendance Policy

This policy follows Department for Education guidance and statute:

www.gov.uk/school-attendance-absence

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/564599/school_attendance.pdf

Aims

Harewood C of E Primary School is committed to providing a balanced and effective education for all pupils. Consistent attendance is of greatest importance and allows the children to fully access the curriculum to achieve their potential. Children who attend regularly can build and maintain relationships that will contribute to development of social skills and self-esteem. We aim to ensure our children have a positive attitude towards school, learn to be punctual and remain within the law.

This policy sets out the expectations of both the school and parents, individual responsibilities and steps that will be followed in the event of poor attendance. It will support us all to achieve high levels of attendance and punctuality. Our aim is for school attendance of above 97%.

Expectations

The school will be expected to:

- Promoting a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which pupils feel safe, secure and valued.
- Ensure that attendance is recorded accurately and maintained in accordance with Government legislation.
- Make the school attendance policy readily available from the school office or through the school website.
- Ensure the school gates are open between 8.40am and 8.50am to give a calm and settled start to the school day.
- Contact parents before 10.00am if their child fails to attend without a reason being given.
- Follow up all instances of poor attendance and punctuality. Prompt action will be taken in confidence to address any problems that have resulted in poor attendance.
- Support and encourage specific families to improve punctuality and attendance.
- Provide opportunities to emphasise the importance of good attendance and punctuality in order to encourage children to attend school.
- Provide requested reports and information to the EPOSS (Local Cluster of schools) Attendance Improvement Officer, the Local Authority and the DfE. This may include discussing any pupils who drop below the 90% (persistent absentee) trigger.

Parents and carers will be expected to:

- Ensure their children attend school regularly, punctually, properly dressed and equipped for the day ahead.
- Contact the school on the first day of absence and provide an explanation for this absence before 9.00am. Maintain this contact on each further day of absence.
- Maintain regular communication with school staff where necessary and to ensure that the school is informed of any changes to contact details.
- Only prevent their child from attending school for a legitimate reason.
- Attempt to arrange dental/medical appointments outside of school hours.
- Not take their children out of school unless for exceptional circumstances.

- Collect their children on time at the end of the day at 3.15pm or notify the school office of any delays being faced.

Safeguarding

Staff at this school believe that safeguarding of children is paramount and are aware of the link between safeguarding pupils and attendance in school. This policy on attendance and registration therefore aims to ensure every pupil is accounted for on each of the days the school is open.

All staff are aware of the issues relating to attendance and safeguarding and will immediately raise concerns with the designated children protection and safeguarding staff in school.

Roles and Responsibilities

The headteacher is responsible for overseeing implementation of this policy and Governors will carry out any policy reviews that are necessary. The headteacher will include details on attendance in their reports to governors. The headteacher will ensure this policy is up to date and reviews are completed as required. They will oversee action plans for individual children and communicate with the class teacher and the EPOSS Attendance Improvement Officer where input is required.

The school office staff will process all classroom registers and will accurately record all communications (written and verbal) from parents regarding explained absences.

Class teachers will ensure registers and dinner figures are completed by 9.00am. They will be responsible for ensuring all letters from parents explaining absences are saved and information recorded appropriately. They will also inform the headteacher if they have any concerns regarding a specific child.

Support staff will be aware of the Attendance Policy and will inform the class teacher or headteacher if they have concerns about any child.

Registration

The school day starts at 8.50am and any child arriving after 9am will be marked late.

Any children arriving after 8.50am should report to the school office and sign in as classroom doors will be closed.

Leaving/returning to school during the school day

When a child leaves or returns to school during the school day, office staff must be notified and pupils must be signed in or out. In the event of a fire, office staff will take the signing in/out sheet with them and will ensure that it is checked.

Monitoring Attendance

In order to accurately monitor attendance the following systems are in place:

1. Attendance figures are reviewed at least monthly using FFT 360 Attendance Data to identify patterns of absence.
2. Individual pupil attendance will be audited termly, or sooner if a concern is raised.
3. Daily attendance is recorded with a system of registers.
4. Termly 'Headteacher's Report' submitted to Governors.

Persistent absences

The Department for Education regards attendance of 90% or below as persistent absenteeism. This means any child with 90% attendance is considered a persistent absentee. (The figure is based on a running total over the course of the year i.e. more than 10% of all possible school days spent away from school in that school year is regarded as persistent).

Actions to improve attendance

First non-attendance:

When a child fails to attend school and no explanation has been communicated to the school office or teachers, the school will attempt to contact the parents by telephone before 10.00 am. Where no confirmation of absence is received, the headteacher will be informed and additional clarification about the child's whereabouts will be sought. This may include contacting additional contacts provided by parents on the pupil data form, a visit to the home address and/or contact with outside services.

Repeated non-attendance:

The following steps will be followed in the event of inadequate attendance or punctuality:

- Individual letters may be sent home to report attendance and the concerns of staff at the school.
- Where attendance falls below 90% or if a pattern of non-attendance is identified, parents will be contacted to discuss a plan for improvement.
- The school will liaise closely with the EPOSS Attendance Officer when addressing concerns about a child's attendance. Where no adequate explanation is offered for a child's absence, the Attendance Improvement Officer will be involved in plans for further action.
- Parents will be invited to a formal meeting with the headteacher and the EPOSS Attendance Improvement Officer when informal discussions have not resulted in an improvement in attendance. If parents are unwilling or unable to come to school, then this meeting can take place within the home.
- The Local Authority has the power to fine families for non-attendance and this includes when taking family holidays in term time.

Requests for absences during term time

The school is not permitted by law to authorise absence during term time apart from under exceptional circumstances. Parents are asked to respect this and to limit requests that fall outside of this law.

Exceptional circumstances include:

1. Service personnel returning from a tour of duty abroad where it is evidenced the individual will not be in receipt of any leave in the near future that coincides with school holidays.
2. Where an absence from school is recommended by a health professional as part of a parent or child's rehabilitation from a medical or emotional issue.
3. The death or terminal illness of a person close to the family.
4. To attend a funeral of a close family member.
5. Participation in a sporting event at city, regional or national level.

6. Recognised examinations in Music/Sport.

7. Where there are exceptional and unforeseen circumstances that fall outside of 1 to 6 above, the headteacher will consult with the Governors of the school.

Please note evidence should be provided in each case. Absence request forms are available from the school office or from the school website.

Requests will not be considered for:

- Absence during national assessment periods
- Cheaper holidays or holidays to fit around parents/relatives work
- Trips away to events
- Family gatherings or celebrations

From September 2023, following guidance from the attendance team, any child showing 10 or more half-day unauthorised absences in a 12 week period may be referred to Leeds City Council, who could issue families with a fine. The fine is £60 per parent, per child. So 2 parents with 2 children would incur a fine of £240. If the fine is not paid within 21 days, it will increase to £120 per parent, per child. So the family of 4 would now have a fine of £480. Failure to pay the fine can result in legal action.

Continuing concerns regarding attendance

If attendance or lateness continues to be of concern (eg too many unauthorised absences; an attendance level classed as 'persistent; an unacceptable pattern) then this will lead to a referral being made to our Cluster Attendance Officer and the Leeds City Council School Attendance Service.

Ultimately, parents/carers can be held to account for failing to ensure that their children attend school punctually and regularly. Leeds City Council School Attendance Service carries out this statutory function on behalf of the local authority in order to uphold the right of children and young people to access their education. Where necessary, statutory action can and will be taken. This may take the form of a penalty notice; or prosecution of parents in the Magistrates Court resulting in a fine or statutory order.

Appendix 1 – The impact of non-attendance at school.

Colour Code	Annual Attendance	Result of Missing School <i>(This is for the whole academic year)</i>
Green	100%	Not missing any lessons.
	99%	Missing around 8 lessons.
	98%	Missing around 16 lessons.
	97%	Missing around 24 lessons.
Amber	96%	Missing about 8 days of school. This equates to around 32 lessons.
	95%	Missing 2 about 2 weeks of school. This equates to around 40 lessons.
	93%	Missing 14 days of school – A significant amount of education entitlement to lose.
Red	90-92%	Missing more than 3 weeks of education – A significant amount of educational entitlement to lose.
	86-89%	Missing between 4 and 6 weeks. A serious loss of learning which is likely to have a detrimental effect on achievement and life chances. Around 76 lessons missed.
	81-85%	Missing between 6 and 8 weeks. A serious loss of learning which is likely to have a detrimental effect on achievement and life chances. Around 116 lessons missed.
	80% and Below	Missing more than 8 weeks. A very serious loss of learning which is likely to have a detrimental effect on achievement and life chances. Over 150 lessons missed.

Leave of Absence Request

SCHOOL:		DATE OF REQUEST:	
First Name	Surname	Date of Birth	Class
Leaving date:		Date due back in school:	
Length of absence applied for (number of school days only):			days
Siblings in other schools: Please note this request information will be shared with the attendance lead in the school in which the sibling/s attend	First Name	Surname	School
Contact Details			
Parents: (eg. Mother, Father, Grandparent, Carer):	First name:	First name:	
	Surname:	Surname:	
	Address:	Address:	
	Postcode:	Postcode:	

	Email:	Email:
	Home phone number:	Home phone number:
	Mobile:	Mobile:
	Alternative number while away:	Alternative number while away:



Reason for absence including full explanation (use a separate sheet of paper if necessary)
 The exceptional circumstances are...

Point of departure (eg. Airport, Coach, Train Station etc.):	Destination:
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Time of departure:	Flight numbers and name of airline:
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Emergency Contact Details (preferably someone who is staying in Leeds): First Name: Surname: Address: Postcode:	<u>*Provide copies of travel plans to support your request.*</u> If child is not leaving with parent(s) who is accompanying them? Who will be caring/responsible for the child? Why is/are the parent(s) not leaving with the child? Name: Relationship to child:
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Parent's Full Name:

Parent's Signature:

Date:

Parent's Full Name:

Parent's Signature:

Date:

School Section Any previous request Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Is the requested absence during exams Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>			
Reason for refusal/Comments				
Authorised <input type="checkbox"/>	Approved		for School days	
Unauthorised <input type="checkbox"/>	Not approved		for School days	
Headteacher's Signature				