

BLACK HORSE HILL INFANT SCHOOL



ATTENDANCE POLICY

22nd October 2019

Approved by Committee _____

28th November 2019

Approved by Full Governing Body _____

G Watt

Signed _____ (Vice-Chair)

J Morris

Signed _____ (Headteacher)

Black Horse Hill Infant School

Children need to attend school regularly to benefit from their education. At Black Horse Hill we firmly believe that every lesson counts as does every day at school. For a child to reach their academic potential high attendance at school is essential. We expect children to attend school if they are fit enough to do so. We believe that our children should enjoy coming to school and we provide a caring and rewarding environment for the children to learn. 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 Department for Education and Skills.

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

DEFINITIONS & PROCEDURES

Authorised absence

An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or carer. For example, if a child has been unwell and the parent/carers writes a note and/or telephones the school to explain the absence.

Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents/carers do not have this authority. Consequently not all absences supported by parents/carers will be classified as authorised.

NB: Amendments made to the Education Regulations 2006, taking effect from 1st September 2013, provide Headteachers with the discretion to consider authorising an absence during term time, only in 'exceptional circumstances'.

The Governing Body of Black Horse Hill Infant School has agreed the following criteria for such circumstances:

Exceptional Circumstances under which absences during term time may be authorised:

If parents/carers are limited in the time that they can take their holidays due to factors such as:

- ☐ A factory shutdown
- ☐ One/both parents/carers work in the Armed Forces

Other factors will be considered by the Governing Body in light of the amendments to the Education Regulations 2006.

Parents/carers wishing to apply for their child to be absent during term time must complete an 'Exceptional Circumstances Form' available on the school website (or from the School Office).

Unauthorised absence

An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of the school. Therefore the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent/carer.

If the school does not consider the circumstances to be 'exceptional' and the parent/carer takes the child out of school during term time anyway, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

The Wirral Attendance Team will be notified of the absence taken and a Penalty Notice will be issued if the child's attendance has fallen below 90%.

Attendance

Registers

Registers are statutory documents.

Registers are marked twice daily by the teachers using E-Schools website. This information is then sent electronically to the school office where absences are checked and coded appropriately.

Medical absences

Stage 1

- Parents/carers to ring school on first day of absence before 9.30.
(If procedure is not followed then the secretary rings on the first day of absence and records the reason in the absence book) On return to school parents/carers will provide a letter explaining their child's absence from school.
- Secretary and teachers monitor absences and report to the headteacher.

Stage 2

In the case of frequent absences, the headteacher writes to the parents/carers, requesting a meeting, suggesting that the school nurse or doctor becomes involved.

Stage 3

If this strategy does not improve the attendance, then the Wirral Attendance Team may become involved.

Appointments during the school day

If a child has a medical appointment during the school day, parents/carers are asked to collect a 'pass' from the school office. The pass is to be returned to the office, when the child is back in school. A record is kept of all passes issued.

Long-term absence

When children have an illness that means they will be away from school for over five days, the school will do all it can to send material home, so that they can keep up with their school work if they are capable of working.

If the absence is likely to continue for an extended period, or be a repetitive absence, support services will be contacted so that arrangements can be made for the child to keep up with their education

Repeated unauthorised absences

The school will contact the parent/carer of any child who has an unauthorised absence. If a child has a repeated number of unauthorised absences, the parents/carers will be asked to visit the school and discuss the problem. If the situation does not improve, the school will contact Wirral Attendance Team who will visit the home and seek to ensure that the parents/carers understand the seriousness of the situation.

The governors, supported by the LA, reserve the right to consider taking legal action against any parents/carers who repeatedly fail to accept their responsibility for sending their children to school on a regular basis.

Rewards for good attendance

Children will receive certificates for 100% attendance at the end of the school year.

At the end of each term children will be invited to an end of term treat for good attendance at school which will have been decided by the School Council.

Attendance targets

The school writes an Attendance action plan each year. In the plan the school sets attendance targets to achieve attendance which is in line with similar schools and national figures. These are agreed by the senior staff and governors at the annual target-setting meeting.

Reporting to parents

Parents/carers will be provided with termly information on their child's attendance. Attendance will also be discussed at Parent/Teacher meetings in October and March. A Traffic light system will be used to inform parents/carers how their child is doing.

GREEN = Good! Keep it up!

All pupils with 96% attendance or higher will be rewarded with a green certificate to bring home. Consistently high attendance across the school year will be celebrated and rewarded at the end of each term. The children will have a say as to what this treat might look like!

AMBER = Worrying

Attendance between 90% and 95.9% would raise concerns for pupils' progress and parents/carers will be alerted with an 'amber' letter, which may help to identify patterns of absence which we could address.

RED = Serious Concern

For attendance which falls below 90%, parents/carers will receive a red letter outlining absences for the term, and highlighting the serious impact that this would have on progress if it continued.

Punctuality

Stage 1

Reminders to parents/carers about start and finishing times are sent out regularly, in newsletters.

Teaching staff mark the registers for late arrivals. Registers close at 9.00.

Children arriving after close of register have to report to the office and fill in the late book. The secretary records why the child is late, in line with the guidelines.

Parents/carers, who wish to pick their child up early for authorised reasons, record it in a book in the secretary's office.

Stage 2

Parents/carers, who are persistently late, including pre-close of register are sent a letter, from the headteacher, requesting a meeting to discuss the problems.

Stage 3

Lateness reported to the Local Authority Attendance Team.

Monitoring and review

It is the responsibility of the governors to monitor overall attendance, and they will receive regular updates on attendance from the headteacher. The Governing Body also has the responsibility for this policy, and for seeing that it is carried out. The governors will therefore examine closely the information provided to them, and seek to ensure that our attendance figures are as high as they should be.

The school will keep accurate attendance records on file for a minimum period of three years.

Class teachers will be responsible for monitoring attendance in their class and for following up absences in the appropriate way. If there is concern about a child's absence, they will contact the school office immediately. If there is a concern about the attendance of a particular child, this will be reported to the headteacher, who will contact the parents/carers.

This policy will be regularly reviewed by the Governing Body.

J.Morris

September 2019