

Hillesley

PRIMARY SCHOOL



Our vision, based on our School's Christian values, is to provide a welcoming, nurturing environment for learning at the heart of our community. Together, we provide a solid foundation of growth, appreciating each child with their God-given uniqueness and individual needs, thus empowering them to become responsible and fulfilled members of society

Attendance Policy

Approved by:

HILLESLEY PRIMARY
SCHOOL GOVERNORS

Date: 25 MARCH 2021

Next review due by:

MARCH 2022

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1. Introduction

See Appendix C for Covid-19 addendum to policy

Hillesley CE VA Primary School seeks to establish and maintain 100% pupil attendance in all years. Regular pupil attendance is a vital factor in ensuring pupil progress, continuity in education provision and, ultimately, success. Hillesley CEVA Primary School will strive to provide a welcoming, caring environment whereby each member of the school community feels respected.

Regular attendance at school is essential to ensure uninterrupted progress and to enable children to meet their full potential. The attendance pattern for all children is monitored weekly with the school seeking to work actively with parents to ensure a regular pattern is maintained. We expect all children on roll to attend every day, when the school is in session as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. We do all we can to encourage the children to attend, and to put in place

appropriate procedures to support this. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is the development of positive attitudes towards school and learning.

Poor attendance can seriously affect each child's:-

- attainment in school
- relationships with other children and their ability to form lasting friendships
- confidence to attempt new work and work alongside others

Each child's attendance can be summarised as:

96+ - An excellent level of attendance. This will help all aspects of their progress and life in school. This will give them a good start in life and supports a positive work ethic.

95%-96% - A good level of attendance but there is scope to make it better.

90-95% - Absence might now be affecting attainment and progress at school.

Below 90% - Absence IS causing **SERIOUS CONCERN**. It is affecting attainment and progress and is disrupting your child's learning. The school will work with you and the Local Authority to improve your child's attendance.

Permitting absence from school without a good reason is an offence by the parent. Only the school can authorise absence. The school will not assess all reasons as 'valid'.

In Hillesley Primary we aim to have a whole school attendance rate of a minimum of **96%**.

Non-attendance is an important issue that is treated seriously. However each case is different and the school acknowledges that no one standard response will be appropriate in every case.

Consideration is given to all factors affecting attendance before deciding what intervention strategies to apply.

a) In every case, early intervention is essential to prevent the problem from worsening.

It is essential that parents keep the school fully informed of any matters that may affect their child's attendance;

b) Prior to the engagement of external attendance support services, the school may issue letters to parents clearly defining the concerns within school regarding a pupil's absence. It is hoped that a quick response and change in levels of absence will prevent the need for involvement. (See Appendix A and B)

2. Arrival and Registration

All children should be in the school ready to register at 8.55a.m. Children are entitled to enter the school from 8.45am. The register is taken twice a day. A day counts as 2 attendances. Morning registration ends at 9.00 a.m. If a child arrives after the registration period, he/she must report to the school office and will be marked as 'Late'. Arrival after 9.15 a.m. is recorded as an unauthorised late mark.

3. Parental Responsibility

Throughout this policy the term 'parent' represents one parent/both parents or carer with whom the child resides.

Parents are informed of their responsibility to ensure their children attend regularly, in the school prospectus. Punctuality is also stressed as lateness impacts on learning not only for the individual, but the class as a whole.

Attendance may be discussed with parents during consultation evenings.

Parents have a legal obligation to ensure their children receive a full time education.

For Key Stage 1 children, full time means 21 hours. For Key Stage 2 children, full time means 23.5 hours per week. This is achieved by regular attendance at school.

4. Illness and Medical Appointments

When a child is unwell, parents should contact the school before 9.15am on the first day of absence informing the school of the reason for absence.

When a child is absent, the class teacher will record the absence in the register. As part of our Safeguarding Procedures, the school office will endeavour to contact the parent or carer and other emergency contacts if no message has been received regarding the reason for the absence to check on the safety of the child.

- a) Every effort should be made to arrange medical appointments outside school hours.
- b) An appointment card or verification by the doctors/dentist/ hospital may be required.
- c) If it is necessary for a child to be out of school for this reason, the child should be returned to school directly after the appointment.
- d) If your child is absent due to vomiting/diarrhoea then they should not return to school for the next 48 hours after the last time that the child is sick. This is to reduce the risk of infection to other children and adults at school.

5. School Responsibility – The Law and School Attendance

5.1. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [school attendance guidance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#) (and [2010](#), [2011](#), [2013](#), [2016](#) amendments)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the [school census](#), which explains the persistent absence threshold.

Under the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations the governing body is responsible for making sure that admissions and attendance registers are kept. Unless stipulated, each regulation applies to all schools in England.

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations restricts authorised leave of absence to be for families with exceptional circumstances. The decision rests with the school and all applications for absence requests must be made in advance by the parent the pupil normally resides with.

The Education (School Attendance Targets) (England) Regulations 2007 require governing bodies of all maintained schools to set overall absence targets, and for some governing bodies to set "focused absence targets" as required by the Secretary of State. School governors are bound by the statutory requirement under Section 538 of the Education Act 2006 which requires governing bodies to provide information requested by the Secretary of State. This includes absence data that will be collected every term through the School Census.

The Senior Leadership Team and all staff work to ensure a high level of enjoyment and commitment to learning as a means of ensuring regular attendance. The Headteacher holds responsibility for attendance matters, supported by the Attendance Administration staff.

Attendance is recorded and data stored and analysed using the SIMS Attendance module.

It is a statutory duty for class teachers to call and maintain accurate registers; these are legal documents, and may be called for as evidence by the court. Class Teachers are legally responsible for marking their class register twice per day at the start of each session.

The Headteacher, not parents, authorises absence; Hillesley Primary adhere to the DfE guidelines in authorising absence. Absence for any reason during term time is discouraged.

Absence known to be for the following reasons would be authorised:

- Illness
- Religious observance
- Attendance at medical appointments which cannot be made outside school hours

The local authority has full responsibility for prosecuting parents where absence continues to be problematic.

6. Family Holidays/Absence during Term Time

The Governors recognise that pupil absence during term time can seriously disrupt a pupil's continuity of learning. Parents are therefore strongly urged to avoid booking a family holiday in term time. Parents do not have an automatic right to withdraw pupils from school for a holiday and in law, have to apply for permission in advance. Such permission is granted in accordance with arrangements made by the governing body and in line with the Department of Education's statutory guidance and department advice.

When an application is made for authorised absence during term time the Headteacher will give consideration to the following:

- Nature of the proposed absence/is this an exceptional circumstance
- The age of the child
- The timing of the absence
- The attendance pattern in the present and previous academic years. Absence will not be authorised where attendance is lower than 90% or where the absence would take attendance below 90%.
- The child's progress

Examples of what may constitute exceptional circumstances:

1. To have a short absence to attend a family wedding, or a special family celebration (e.g. an 80th birthday of a grandparent); or to attend a special family reunion; or to attend a special religious/cultural festival.
2. If a parent, due to nature of the work, cannot possibly take time off during the regular school holidays. This would need to be evidenced by a letter from the employer. Factors indicated above will still be taken in to account.

Please note to have a week's winter or summer holiday in school time, because the cost is cheaper during term time, does not constitute an exceptional circumstance. The date and time of the request will be looked into when considering the exceptional circumstances listed above.

Definitions

Every half-day absence has to be classified by the school (not by the parents) as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of each absence is always required, preferably in writing or by telephone.

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 guardian.

For example, if a child has been unwell and the parent writes a note or telephones the school to explain the absence. Only a school can make an absence authorised.

Unauthorised absence

An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without permission of the Headteacher.

Unauthorised absences are those, which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no authorisation has been given. This includes:

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences that have never been properly explained
- Holidays not agreed

7. Penalty notices

If a child of compulsory education age fails to attend regularly at a school at which they are registered or at alternative provision made for them then the parent may be guilty of an offence under section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

Payment of a Penalty Notice fine

Arrangements for the payment are detailed on the Penalty Notice and are as follows:

- If paid within 21 days, the penalty is £60 per responsible parent, per child
- If paid after 21 days, but within 28 days, the penalty is £120, per responsible parent, per child.

Example:

In a one child family where both parents have equal responsibility, the Fixed Penalty Notice would be £120 if paid within 21 days and £240 if paid after 21 days.

In a two child family, where both parents have equal responsibility and both children have been absent from school, the Fixed Penalty Notice would be £240 if paid within 21 days and £480 if paid after 21 days. The LA will not accept payment after 28 days and will, proceed to prosecution. A Penalty Notice can only be issued when an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason or in one of the following circumstances of unauthorised absence:

- Holiday during term time when the school has not authorised the absence and the child has missed at least 10 sessions within a 10 week period
- Persistent late arrival at school after the registers have closed, and where the U code is used on the attendance certificate on at least 10 occasions within a 10 week period.

In cases of persistent lateness, the school will issue a formal warning letter to a parent giving fifteen school days for an improvement to be made, before requesting a Penalty Notice.

There is no right of appeal by parents against a penalty notice, so these 15 days allow parents time to make representations to the school. If there is further unauthorised absence during the fifteen-day period the school can request a Penalty Notice be issued by the LA.

8. Rewards

The prime benefit derived from regular attendance is that continuity and progression in learning are ensured.

Individual children

Certificates are awarded at the end of each term for anyone with 95% attendance or above. This is celebrated at the school assemblies.

At the end of the year any pupils with 100% attendance during one or more terms, will receive a special 100% attendance certificate, presented at Celebration Worship.

Individual Incentives

Where positive impact is required, all staff in contact with the child must take extra care to welcome the child each morning, praise punctual attendance and acknowledge the effort the child has made. It is also appropriate to recognise the effort the parent has made to secure the child's attendance.

Individual rewards are sometimes employed as an additional incentive where appropriate; these are designed according to the child's particular need.

9. Monitoring and review

This policy will be subject to regular review in light of changes made to legislation or the publication of new advice.

APPENDIX A

FIRST LETTER TO PARENTS REGARDING POOR ATTENDANCE

Hillesley
PRIMARY SCHOOL



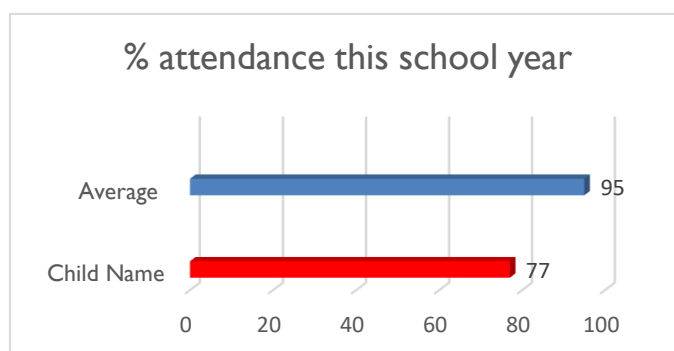
Parent Name
Parent Address

Date

Attendance Concern

Dear

I am concerned that <Child's Name> has missed more school than his/her classmates this year.



<Child's name> has been absent for _____ days so far this school year. This means their attendance is currently ____%. This includes illness, medical appointments, other authorised absence and unauthorised absence.

The attendance target for each child is minimum 96%.

Pupils can fall behind when they miss school; whatever the reason for the absence.

Every child benefits from good and punctual attendance. We ask that you make every effort to ensure that _____ is in school as regularly as possible. We will be monitoring _____'s attendance and look forward to seeing an improvement.

We appreciate your assistance.

Yours sincerely,

Jayne Pedley
Head Teacher

APPENDIX B

SECOND LETTER TO PARENTS REGARDING POOR ATTENDANCE

Hillesley
PRIMARY SCHOOL



Parent Name
Parent Address

Date

Persistent Attendance Concern

Dear Parents

As you are aware, we monitor the attendance and punctuality of the children closely at Hillesley Primary School.

I am writing to you as «chosen_forename»'s attendance remains a cause for concern and is below 90% so far this academic year.

As I informed you in my last letter, we have been monitoring _____'s attendance and he/she now has an attendance figure of _____% for this academic year. This calculation includes sickness, medical appointments, authorised and unauthorised absences. I have enclosed a copy of your child's attendance grid that shows the absences or late marks.

This means that _____ is now considered to be a 'Persistent Absentee' as they are missing more than 10% of school.

I am concerned that there has been no significant improvement since my last correspondence and I would like to arrange a meeting with me at:

to discuss your child's attendance and how it can be improved.

Thank you for your support.

Yours sincerely

Jayne Pedley
Head Teacher

APPENDIX C – Coronavirus addendum

Attendance policy: coronavirus addendum

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1. Aims and scope

We are committed to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Allowing and encouraging vulnerable children to access full-time education in school
- Allowing the children of critical workers to access full-time education in school if parents/carers cannot keep them at home
- Following up on absence among any pupils who we expect to attend school

This addendum applies during the national lockdown currently in place. It sets out changes to our normal attendance policy, and should be read in conjunction with that policy. Unless covered here, our normal attendance policy continues to apply.

We may need to amend or add to this addendum as circumstances or official guidance changes. We will communicate any changes to staff, parents and pupils.

2. Guidance and definitions

This policy meets the requirements of the Department for Education’s (DfE’s) [guidance](#) on restricting attendance during the national lockdown, and its [addendum](#) to the school attendance guidance for the 2020/21 academic year.

This addendum reflects the latest advice from Gloucestershire County Council.

In section 4.3 of this addendum, where we refer to ‘close contact’, this means:

Face-to-face contact, including:

- Being coughed on

- A face-to-face conversation within 1 metre

Being within 1 metre for 1 minute or longer without face-to-face contact

Sexual contact

Being within 2 metres for more than 15 minutes (either as a one-off contact or added up together over one day)

Travelling in a small vehicle or a plane

This definition is from the DfE's guidance on restricting attendance during the national lockdown (linked above, page 24).

3. Pupils eligible to attend school during national lockdown

3.1 Vulnerable children

We expect all vulnerable children to attend school. In particular, children with a social worker are expected to attend due to their safeguarding and welfare needs.

The definition of vulnerable children includes those who:

Are assessed as being in need under section 17 of the Children Act 1989, including:

Looked-after children

Children with a child in need plan

Children with a child protection plan

Have an education, health and care (EHC) plan

On the edge of receiving support from children's social care services or in the process of being referred

Living in temporary accommodation

Young carers

Care leavers

Facing difficulty engaging with remote education at home (for example, due to a lack of devices or quiet space to study)

In need of support for their mental health

Parents/carers must inform the headteacher if their child:

Falls into one of the categories above (and is therefore expected to attend school) but parents/carers wish for their child to learn from home

Has had a change in circumstances, which means their child now falls into one of the categories above

Does not fit into one of the categories above but parents/carers have concerns that their child is otherwise vulnerable

3.2 Children of critical workers

Parents/carers who are critical workers **should keep their child at home if they can**. If this is not possible, children of critical workers are able to attend school.

Critical workers are those whose work is critical to the coronavirus and EU transition responses, including parents/carers who work in:

Health and social care

Education and childcare (including social workers)

Key public services (including the justice system, religious staff, charities delivering key frontline services, those responsible for the management of the deceased, and journalists and broadcasters who are providing public service broadcasting)

Local and national government who are involved in delivering the coronavirus response, EU transition or essential public services

Food and other necessary goods

Public safety and national security

Transport and border (including transport systems through which supply chains pass, and the construction and operational support of critical transport and border infrastructure through which supply chains pass)

Utilities, communication and financial services

A more detailed list of critical workers is available on the government website [here](#).

Parents/carers that qualify must notify the school if they wish for their child to attend, by returning a booking form to the school office.

4. Where ‘not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus’ applies

For the 2020/21 academic year, there is a new category of non-attendance to capture circumstances where pupils cannot attend school due to COVID-19: ‘Not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus’.

This applies where a pupil’s travel to, or attendance at, school would be:

Against guidance from Public Health England and/or the Department of Health and Social Care relating to the incidence of coronavirus or its transmission

Prohibited by any legislation or statutory directions relating to the incidence or transmission of coronavirus

For example:

4.1 Pupil is not eligible to attend school and must stay at home

Pupils that do not fit into an eligible group (see section 3) must follow public health advice and not come into school.

4.2 Pupil due to attend school develops symptoms or lives with someone who develops symptoms

The pupil’s parent/carer must notify the school on the first day that their child needs to self-isolate. The pupil will stay at home until they or the symptomatic person they live with receives their coronavirus test result.

If the pupil’s test result is negative: the pupil will return to school when they feel well and no longer have symptoms similar to coronavirus. They should continue to stay at home if they remain unwell (e.g. with a different illness).

If the symptomatic person the pupil lives with tests negative: the pupil will stop self-isolating and return to school.

4.3 Pupil due to attend school or a ‘close contact’ of theirs receives a positive test result

The pupil’s parent/carer must notify the school about the positive test result as soon as possible.

Pupils who test positive must self-isolate for at least 10 days from the onset of symptoms (i.e. the day the symptoms started and the next 10 full days), and must only return to school when they no longer have symptoms (other than a cough or a loss of sense of smell or taste).

If a member of the pupil’s household tests positive, the pupil must self-isolate for 10 days from the onset of the household member’s symptoms (as above, the isolation period includes the day the symptoms started and the next 10 full days).

If a ‘close contact’ of the pupil tests positive, the pupil must self-isolate for 10 days from the day after the pupil last met with the ‘close contact’ who received the positive result (i.e. the isolation period includes the date of the last contact and the next 10 full days).

See the definition for 'close contact' in section 2 of this addendum.

4.4 Pupil due to attend school is required to shield

Shielding is in place during the national lockdown. Pupils who are clinically extremely vulnerable should not attend school.

5. Remote learning provision

The school will provide access to remote education for pupils not attending school for the scenarios included in the section above, or other examples that come under the category of 'not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus'.

Our approach and expectations regarding remote education are set out in our remote learning contingency plan/policy and through communication with parents and pupils via GSuite and email.

We will keep a record of, and monitor, pupil engagement with remote learning, but we will not track this information in the attendance register

6. Recording attendance of all pupils

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

Present

Attending an approved off-site educational activity

Absent

Unable to attend due to 'exceptional circumstances'

Not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus

See appendix 1 for the relevant absence codes and when we will use them.

7. Following up on absence

Where any child we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, we will:

Follow up on their absence with their parent or carer by telephone/email contact or in person if necessary

Notify their social worker, where they have one

Parents will not be penalised if their child does not attend school during this period.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed by the headteacher as guidance from the local authority or Department for Education is updated. Policy reviews will be approved by the full governing board.

Appendix I: pupil absence codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's [guidance](#) on restricting attendance during the national lockdown, and its [addendum](#) to the school attendance guidance for the 2020/21 academic year.

If not covered here, our normal attendance codes apply.

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)	Pupil is not eligible to attend school and is learning from home
X	Not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)	Pupil is a child of a critical worker (and therefore eligible to attend school) but is learning from home
X	Not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)	Pupil is a child of a critical worker attending school part-time, and not expected to attend this session
C	Leave of absence authorised by the school	Pupil is a child of a critical worker and expected to attend the session, but has not attended (and there isn't another authorised absence code that is more applicable)
C	Leave of absence authorised by the school	Vulnerable pupil is eligible for a place in school but their parent/carer wants them to learn from home
X	Not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)	Pupil due to attend school has to self-isolate because they have symptoms or live with someone who has symptoms, and are waiting for their test results
I	Illness	Pupil due to attend school remains unwell following a negative test result (i.e. with a different illness)
I	Illness	Pupil due to attend school has to continue to self-isolate because they tested positive
X	Not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)	Pupil due to attend school has to self-isolate because someone they live with tested positive
X	Not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)	Pupil due to attend school has to self-isolate because they are a close contact of someone who tested positive
X	Not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)	Pupil is required to shield