



HILLSGROVE
PRIMARY SCHOOL
SINCE 1950

Amadeus
Primary Academies Trust
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Limitless Learning Together

HILLSGROVE PRIMARY SCHOOL: ATTENDANCE POLICY



Introduction

Regular attendance at school is essential to ensure uninterrupted progress and to enable children to extend their 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 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%+	Excellent – Well done! 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.
94-95%	Average – Well done, strive to build on this.
93%-90%	Poor – Absence is now affecting attainment and progress at school. Please work with the school urgently to improve the situation. The Education Welfare Officer may become involved if school cannot resolve.
Below 90%	Unacceptable – your child would be considered a persistent absentee when attendance dips to 90% or below. It IS affecting attainment and progress and is disrupting your child's learning. Unauthorised absence of this level would have to be formally referred to the Education Welfare Service. We will work with you and the Education Welfare Officer [EWO] to improve your child's attendance.

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; they are reminded of this duty in the school prospectus.
- b) Prior to the engagement of the EWO, the school may issue letters to parents clearly defining the concerns within school regarding a pupils' absence. It is hoped that a quick response and change in levels of absence will prevent the need for EWO involvement.

Further details regarding roles and responsibilities is identified in the appendix to this policy.



Principles

All children should be in the school ready to register before 8.55 a.m. each day although children are entitled to enter the classroom from 8.40 a.m. when doors open. The register is taken twice a day. A day counts as 2 attendances. Morning registration ends at 9 a.m. If a child arrives after the registration period, he / she must report to the school office and will be marked in as 'Late'. Arrival after 9.15am is recorded as an unauthorised late mark.

Parental Responsibility

Throughout this policy the term 'parent' represents one parent, both parents/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 is discussed with each parent at consultation evenings, with the current percentage attendance being reported. 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.

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 endeavor to contact the parent/ 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 is 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 a vomiting bug 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 the school. However, if the sickness is a reaction to coughing for example, then this rule would not apply.
- e) For more than three days of absence the school require a written explanation of why the child was absent. The school office will request this if it is not produced.
- f) Medical certificates are required for absence greater than five days.

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

When it has become necessary to make a referral to the Education Welfare Officer [EWO], all further absences will be unauthorised pending investigation. The EWO liaises with the school regarding absences following contact with the parents.



Family Holidays/ Absence during Term Time

The Governors recognise that pupil absence during term time can seriously disrupt a pupil's continuity of learning. In accordance with the Department for Education guidance, absence during term time can only be authorised for exceptional circumstances. Holidays in term time are not authorised and may result in a Penalty Notice being issued by Bexley Council.

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 the school can make an absence authorised.

Unauthorised Absence:

An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the 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, i.e. birthdays, shopping trips.
- Truancy before or during the school day.
- Persistent lateness after the register has closed.
- Absences that have never been properly explained.
- Holidays.

Principal

K Laurie

K Laurie

Updated; January 23

Review Date January 25

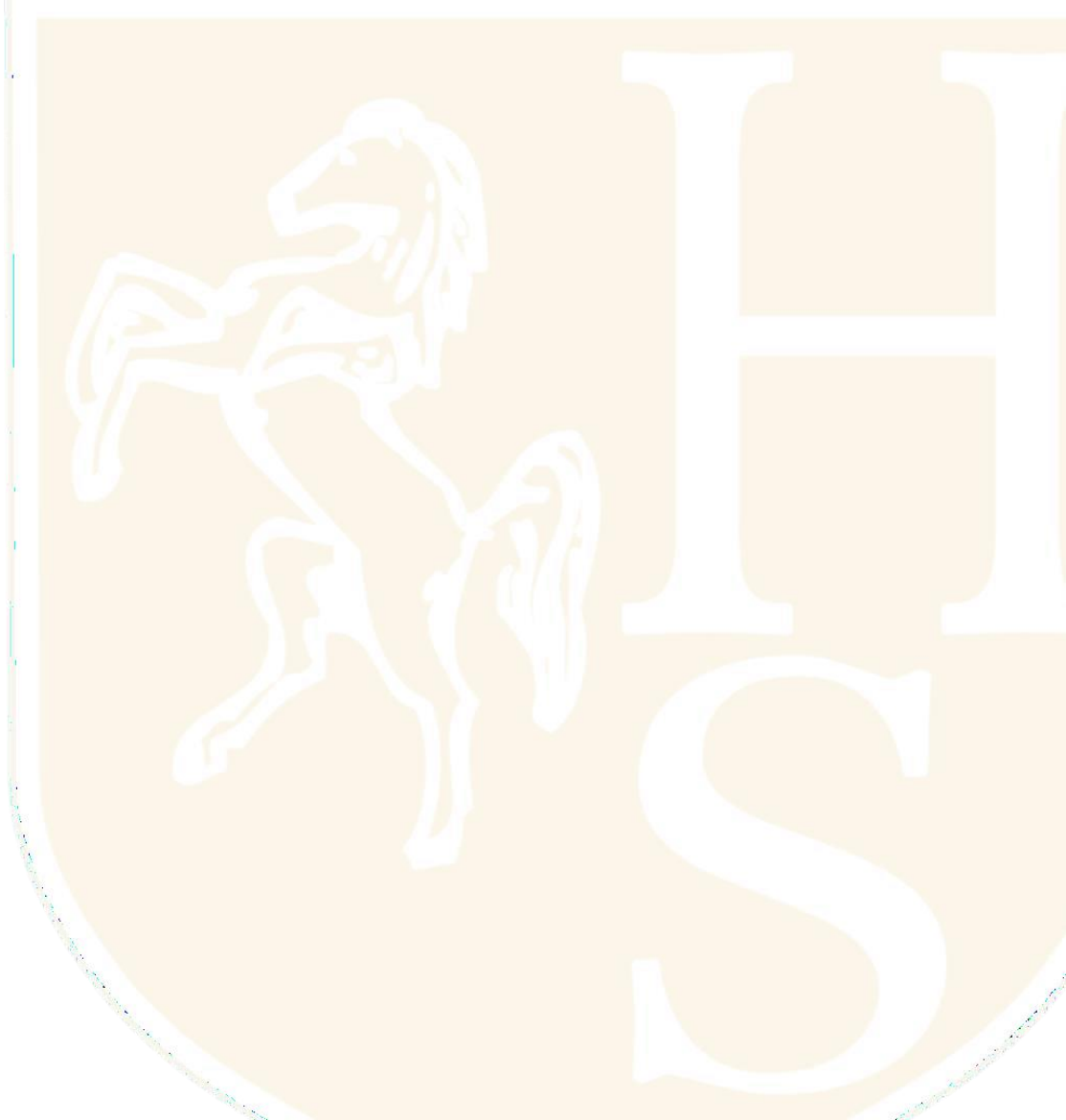


Appendix 1

Role	Responsibility
Principal	Operational management of the policy. Consider requests for authorised absence. Give approval in advance in appropriate circumstances, taking account of the child's attendance record. Authorise absence after it occurs when a satisfactory explanation is accepted. Ensure that anti-bullying and behaviour policies are followed and ensure action is taken in response to any difficulties reported and [e.g. bullying/behaviour] which impact on attendance. Consider the use of a Penalty Notice for unauthorised absence or lateness. Complete HT witness statements on pupil absence for court use. Take and follow all advice given from EWO to apply penalty notices
Family Liaison Officer	Oversee day to day attendance where there is cause for concern, working closely with parents and children to improve poor attendance.. Monitor pupil attendance monthly, report to the Headteacher and take action according to this policy. Analyse trends in attendance data to identify appropriate action. Investigate reasons for absence exploring any underlying cause either at home or in school. Liaise with the Education Welfare Officer and make referrals as necessary. Work with the EWO towards improved patterns of attendance for referred pupils identifying the course of action that should be taken. Make referrals to other agencies where appropriate. Work with Class Teachers to agree and implement strategies to reengage pupils with emerging attendance problems. Work with the Inclusion Leader to plan reintegration for pupils who have been absent for a period. With the Attendance Secretary, compile and update standard letters re: % attendance, notification of reasons for absence and lateness and send to parents when necessary.
Class Teachers	Prepare and deliver stimulating and enjoyable learning for all children. Registration of pupils at the start of morning and afternoon sessions. Alert the attendance secretary/FLO of any children who demonstrate an unsettled pattern of attendance or whose attendance pattern changes. Return registers to the designated place immediately after registration. Report percentage attendance at parent consultations; encourage regular punctual attendance; work to secure this. Ensure all absence notes are passed to the attendance secretary via the class register folder. Work with the DHT to agree and implement strategies to re-engage pupils with emerging attendance problems.
Attendance Secretary	Print weekly registers. Make calls to parents when first day of absence contact has not been made by parents. Accurately record attendance data daily using agreed codes. Record late arrival and reasons. Ensure reasons for absences are accurately recorded. Prepare standard letters requesting reasons for absence when this is unexplained. Prepare letters to inform parents when a child's attendance is giving cause for concern and is thus being monitored Collect absence notes and record reasons for absence. Meet with the Headteacher reporting monthly attendance monitoring and take agreed action. Provide attendance reports when requested and ensure DfE attendance returns are accurate.
Parents	Ensure their child attends daily and on time. Keep the school fully informed on all matters that might affect attendance and their child in school. Telephone school on the first day of any absence to inform school of the reason Provide a note confirming the reason for absence on the child's return to school. If attendance becomes a problem – work with the school to improve matters. Give serious consideration to whether it is appropriate or necessary to request term time absence. Make application for any term time leave of absence prior to proposed dates.



Education Welfare Officer	<p>Work closely with school and families to resolve attendance issues. Visit school for meetings at agreed times. Identify, with school, cases of unauthorised absence which necessitate action and advise on responses. Provide written reports to school in the form of consultation sheets.</p> <p>Complete regular register checks.</p> <p>On receipt of a written referral, take appropriate action, which may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• advice on strategies to improve attendance• assessment home visits• action planning• agreed time-limited intervention• attendance at school meetings• written record of work undertaken• verbal feedback where appropriate• written response to referral within 10 days• liaise with other agencies• onward referral to other agencies• liaison with other Local Authority departments• preparation of cases for prosecution including sending warning letters• preparing Witness Statements for Magistrates Court
Governing Body	<p>It is the responsibility of the governors to monitor overall attendance. The Governing Body also has the responsibility for Attendance 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 the school's attendance figures remain high.</p> <p>Attendance Policy will be reviewed by the Governing Body every three years, or earlier if considered necessary.</p>





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Appendix 2 Poor attendance letters

Child's name and DOB

RE: Attendance below 96%-97% (or schools attendance target)

Dear Mr and Mrs

We are concerned about (Childs name) attendance. Our records show that (Child's name) current attendance is **%.

As you are aware we want parents' support to improve attendance, so if there are any issues please get into contact with me, as we may be able to help and discuss any issues you may be having with getting (Child) into school.

As a result of (Childs) poor attendance, we have to initiate our attendance monitoring procedures. Please be aware that if this continues then we will have no other option but to pass this matter on to the Education Welfare Officer, who may invite you for an attendance panel. You are then at risk of a Penalty Notice for unauthorised absence. This is a fine of £120 per parent per child payable within 28 days. If paid within 21 days it is reduced to £60 per parent per child. If the fine is not paid by the 28th day then you will be summoned to court.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Yours sincerely,



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Attendance letter 2: Child's name and DOB

RE: Attendance between 92% to 90%

Dear Mr and Mrs

Following my previous letter sent on (enter date), we are disappointed to say that there has been no significant improvement in (Childs names) attendance.

Our records show that (Child's name) current attendance is **%.

It is important that children attend school regularly and on time. Here at Ruislip Gardens Primary School, our best interests are to ensure our pupils reach their full potential which can only be done when pupils attend school regularly. Once again, we are giving you the opportunity to discuss any issues you may be facing with getting (Childs name) into school.

We are offering a meeting on (enter date and time). Please get into contact with us if you cannot attend. Any future absences will need to be covered with medical evidence to be authorised.

Please be aware that if this continues then we will have no other option but to pass this matter on to the Education Welfare Officer, who may invite you for an attendance panel. You are then at risk of a Penalty Notice for unauthorised absence. This is a fine of £120 per parent per child payable within 28 days. If paid within 21 days it is reduced to £60 per parent per child. If the fine is not paid by the 28th day then you will be summoned to court. Please contact me if you have any questions.

Yours sincerely



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Child's name and DOB

RE: Attendance BELOW 90%

Dear Mr and Mrs As stated in our previous letters, (child's name) attendance has not improved and we therefore have no other option but to refer this matter to the Participation Team.

Our records show that (Child's name) current attendance is **%. Any absences will now be recorded as unauthorised until we receive medical evidence.

The Participation Team may invite you for an attendance panel where you are then at risk of a Penalty Notice for unauthorised absence. This is a fine of £120 per parent per child payable within 28 days. If paid within 21 days it is reduced to £60 per parent per child. If the fine is not paid by the 28th day then you will be summoned to court. Please contact me if you have any questions.

Yours sincerely