

Horton CE VA Primary School

Attendance Policy

Horton CE VA Primary School is a church school where the core Christian values of forgiveness, compassion, honesty, and respect permeate throughout all aspects of school life. These are the values we teach and encourage the children to demonstrate and the values we expect to see demonstrated in all aspects of the wider school community.

Start Date	October 2019
Review Date	October 2022
Executive Head's Signature	
Chair of Governors' Signature	
Date ratified by Full Governing Body	

HORTON CEVA PRIMARY
ATTENDANCE POLICY

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INTRODUCTION

At Horton CEVA Primary School we believe that attendance at school is vital and that every day counts – your child should come to school every day. It is also important that children are punctual for school. The following policy outlines the reasons for and management of attendance at school

RATIONALE:

At the heart of everything we do at Horton Primary School is a child's learning, but children cannot learn if they are absent. We therefore aim to ensure that our children take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them and raise standards by promoting regular attendance and punctuality of pupils.

AIMS:

- To improve attendance and punctuality across the school.
- To create a culture that encourages regular attendance and makes attendance and punctuality a priority for all.
- To monitor and support children whose attendance is a cause for concern and work in partnership with parents and carers to resolve any difficulty.
- To keep parents and staff informed of their responsibilities for attendance and punctuality

GUIDELINES

Parental Roles and Responsibilities for School Attendance

Parents are legally responsible for ensuring their child attends school regularly and punctually. We expect the parent/carer to:

- Understand the importance of good attendance and punctuality and promote this with their child
- Provide up to date contact numbers and changes of address
- Notify the school when their child is unable to attend, with a reason, on the first day and every subsequent day of the absence
- Provide a letter, email or phone call indicating absence due to illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time or emergencies
- Ensure that their child arrives at school on time each day
- Let the school know if their child is going to be late, e.g. if a car breaks down; if an urgent appointment has been made

Staff Roles and Responsibilities for School Attendance and Lateness.

The School will:

- Give attendance and punctuality a high priority.

- Ensure all new parents are made aware of the Policy and information on attendance in the School Prospectus and through the website.
- Provide and promote a welcoming and positive atmosphere so that children feel safe and their presence is valued.
- Work to ensure that there is enjoyment and commitment to learning among the children.
- Encourage the children to have a positive attitude towards attendance and punctuality.
- Ensure that attendance is effectively monitored and any unexplained absences are followed up promptly.
- Contact individual parents where there is concern about their child's attendance or punctuality.
- Investigate whether there are any home or school factors (or both), which are affecting a child's school attendance.
- Report to parents on the child's attendance in the end of year.
- Share with parent/carers at parents' evening the children's attendance rates in Autumn and Spring, if they are causing concern.
- Reward good or improving attendance through letters home, and certificates in celebration assembly.
- Liaise with the Education Welfare Officer, and other agencies, when necessary to promote good attendance.

• **STATUTORY FRAMEWORK:**

Under Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act, parents have the primary responsibility for ensuring that children of compulsory school age must receive suitable education whether by regular school attendance or otherwise.

The school is obliged by law to differentiate between authorised and unauthorised absence. A letter or telephone message from a parent does not in itself authorise an absence. Only if the school is satisfied as to the validity of the explanation offered by the letter/message will the absence be authorised.

AUTHORISED/UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE:

It is vital that all staff apply the same criteria when deciding whether or not to authorise an absence.

Authorised

An authorised absence is where the school has either given approval in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be away, or has accepted an explanation offered

afterwards as satisfactory justification for absence (adhering to DoE Guidelines). This includes children being educated off site. Absences can only be authorised by the Headteacher. Parents are asked to telephone the school before 9:30am on the first day of absence. If we do not receive a telephone call, the office will telephone to establish the reason. It is anticipated that by making these first day calls, and following up on all absences, parents will get into the habit of calling the school to notify of any absences.

Absence can be **authorised** if:

- ◆ the pupil is away from school for a good reason such as illness or other unavoidable causes.
e.g. a day of religious observance, a family bereavement, the pupil is attending an approved off-site activity or special off-site tuition.

Unauthorised

All other absences will be treated as unauthorised, for example, shopping trips, holidays in term time, occasions where the school feels a child is being kept home without good reason or where a child is late a long time after registration has finished and the parent/carer fails to provide an acceptable explanation. In the event of no message being received on the first day of absence and after reasonable attempts by the school, where no explanation for an absence is received, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Absence will be **unauthorised** if:

- ◆ no explanation is forthcoming;
- ◆ the school does not consider the absence reasonable and for which no permission has been given.
e.g. the pupil stays at home to mind the house or look after siblings; the pupil is shopping during school hours

SCHOOL PROCEDURES:

Registration:

Registers are taken twice a day using the electronic register at 8:55 am and after lunchtime. Registers show whether any absence is authorised or unauthorised using the codes provided in SIMS (Schools Information Management System). The school office staff will follow up any missing marks in the electronic register as soon as this has closed to ensure parental awareness and the child's safety.

Punctuality:

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If a child misses the start of the day, they can miss learning and do not spend time with their class teacher getting vital information and news for the day. Late arriving pupils also disrupt lessons and this can be embarrassing for the child. Good time keeping is a vital life skill, which will help our children as they progress through their school life and out into the wider world.

- Pupils who arrive after 9:00 am and 1:10pm will be considered as late.
- Pupils who arrive after the registers have closed must report to the office
- Pupils who arrive after 9.20am and 1.20pm will be officially absent for the whole morning or afternoon session. This will be considered an unauthorised absence unless a satisfactory reason is given.
- Action to address lateness will be taken. A letter will be sent to parents and carers of children who are late on a regular basis.

Illness:

Parents/carers are asked to contact the school on the first day of absence to provide a reason for the absence. Where office staff are not made aware of the reason for a child's absence they will, wherever possible, contact parents or carers by telephone on the first day of absence. If the office are unable to make contact with parents/carers, they may phone other listed contacts according to priority stated; this is to ensure the well-being of our children.

Where illness is a clear reason for a pattern of absence with supporting information (for example repeat reference to medical aspects by young person, parent carer, prescription information, medical appointment cards, information from other health professionals) we will put in place an Individual Health Care Plan in line with our Managing Medical Needs Policy.

Medical or dental appointments:

Absence from school due to a medical or dental appointment will be considered as an authorised absence. Parents and carers are requested to inform the school office in advance of the appointment, providing an appointment letter or card where possible. Parents and carers are encouraged to make all medical appointments out of school hours.

Leave of Absence (including holidays) in term time:

Holidays in term time have had a significant impact on school attendance figures. This is an issue for all schools in South Gloucestershire. Adaptations were made in September 2013 to the Attendance Regulations (2006). A key change was the removal of a school's option to authorise holiday. Therefore there is no automatic

entitlement in law for leave of absence during term time. Authorisation for leave of absence can only be authorised in 'exceptional circumstances'. Please note the following points:

- All requests for 'exceptional circumstances' leave of absence must be made in advance in writing to the Headteacher, using the Request for absence form available from the school office.
- Absence will be authorised for religious observance to a body which parents/carers and the child belong.
- Requests will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. The nature of an exceptional circumstance will be at the Headteacher's discretion.
- South Gloucestershire council has stated that any unauthorised leave of more than 5 days recorded in 7 school weeks can result in the school requesting the Local Authority issue a penalty notice.
- The notice is a fine of £60 per parent per child if paid within 28 days of receipt of the notice; but rising to £120 if paid after 28 days but within 42 days.
- The payment must be made in full – part payments will not be accepted – details of how to pay are printed on the Penalty Notice.
- If the fine remains unpaid after 28 days, the Local Authority is required to commence legal proceedings in the Magistrates Court for the original offence of failure to ensure regular attendance at school.

In line with LA guidelines, holiday will NOT be approved during Terms 1 and 5 due to the importance of settling into a new school year in term 1 and National assessments in Term 5.

Any other absence:

Other absence from school will be considered on an individual basis and a decision will be made whether the absence will be authorised or unauthorised. Cases will be judged on their individual merits taking into account the following:

- 1) the nature of the event;
- 2) the frequency of requests;
- 3) the overall attendance pattern of the child.

These should be applied for using the 'Request for absence form' which can be obtained from the school office.

ATTENDANCE MONITORING

All absences, authorised and unauthorised, and lateness will be reported to the parent/carer at the end of the academic year within their child's report.

Attendance awards

At the end of each term certificates are presented to all children with 100% attendance for that term in an assembly. Children with 98% or better attendance are also congratulated in these assemblies.

The class who have had the best attendance in a term will be celebrated in an assembly. At the end of the year an award will be presented to the child/ren in year 6 who have had outstanding attendance during their time at Horton CEVA Primary.

Threshold for parent contact

The school monitors the attendance of all pupils on a termly basis. Action will be taken to engage with parents:

- Where a child's attendance has fallen below 95% over a term
- Where there has been 4+ broken weeks in one half term.
- Where there has been repeated late or U code marks with or without other attendance concerns

Note: A broken week is one where there is at least one absence or very late arrival.

Engagement with parents will include the following stages:

	Threshold	Action by school
Stage 1	Year to date attendance less than 95% More than 4 broken weeks in a half term. Repeated lates or U codes	A letter offering support
Stage 2	No improvement in attendance figures after one month. Continued broken weeks and/or lates.	Meeting with Executive Head <ul style="list-style-type: none">• discuss impact of missed learning• investigate reasons for absence and solutions• set attendance targets

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> fining or Individual Health Care Plan creation discussed
Stage 3	<p>No improvements in attendance figures after one month. Continued broken weeks and/or lates.</p> <p>A child finishing the academic year with attendance under 90%.</p>	<p>School Attendance Meeting with Executive Head and EWO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> discuss impact of missed learning investigate reasons for absence and solutions set attendance targets Set review period
Stage 4	<p>Repeated termly attendance continues to be of concern and School Attendance Meetings have not brought about improvement</p>	<p>Following School Attendance Meeting review, meeting held with Executive Head and EWO:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advise parent/carer that a panel meeting will take place. School Attendance Panel meeting takes place (Letter sent to arrange)
Stage 5	<p>If there is no improvement after 4-6 weeks and further unauthorised absence has occurred.</p>	<p>School completes a request for an Attendance Panel review chaired by a Local Authority representative.</p>

SAFEGUARDING

First day of absence call

We will regularly request updates of parent/carer contact information. Adults who have day to day care of a pupil are legally responsible for ensuring regular attendance. We will contact parents/carers on the first day of unexplained absence. Where absences are of concern and all attempts to engage have failed we will refer to the Access and Response Team for further investigation.

Removal from roll

There are strict grounds as to when schools may remove pupils from their admissions register. These are outlined in Regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006. Regulation 12(6) states that when a school has decided to delete a pupil's name from their admission roll they must notify their Local

Authority as soon as the ground for removal is met and no later than the time at which the pupil's name is removed from the register.

If the pupil has left the school without explanation and there are concerns about the pupil's welfare we will contact the local Access and Response Team immediately.

If there are concerns that a pupil may be at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) or radicalisation we will contact the Access and Response Team immediately.

If the school is told that a pupil is leaving to attend another school, staff at the school of departure will establish the pupil's new address, the name and address of the new school and the date the pupil will start there. Once the school has confirmation that the child has started at the new school they will update SIMs. Whenever a pupil leaves a school a Common Transfer File (CTF) must be completed.

If the school is concerned about any aspect of a transfer or if a pupil has 'disappeared' the school will complete a Child Missing Education form with the Local Authority and the matter will be brought to the attention of the Access and Response Team

Part-time timetables

All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In exceptional circumstances there may be a need for a part time timetable to meet an individual pupil's needs; this decision is made by the Head Teacher in consultation with external agencies. A part time timetable is time limited, must not be treated as a long-term solution and can only be made with parental agreement. This will be reviewed every two weeks within the time limited period. The school will mark the sessions where the pupil is not expected to attend as authorised absence. (Code C).

APPENDIX 1 - SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

The school recognises and embraces the cultural heritage of the Showman families. In order to accommodate the unique lifestyle of Showman families and to support them to ensure children from these families achieve the best educational outcomes the school has consulted with these families and the Local Authority to establish the following:

- Attendance for children from Showman families needs to be at least 100 days a year. Distance learning, where there is regular contact with the school, will be recorded using the B code and will count towards overall attendance.
- Where 10 or more unauthorised sessions are recorded the situation may need to be referred to the Education Welfare Officer.