



Hope Primary School Attendance Policy

Introduction

We aim for pupils at Hope Primary School to achieve their full potential both academically and personally. In order for this to happen they need to be in school on time for the maximum number of days per year, i.e. 190 days. We aim to work with parents/carers to ensure the children's attendance is as near to 100% as possible.

The Role of Parents and Carers

Parents have a legal duty under the Education Act 1996 to make sure that children of compulsory school age attend the school they are registered at on a regular, full-time basis. Allowing children of compulsory school age to be absent from school without good reason is an offence. Persistent absence may result in the matter being reported to the Derbyshire Education Welfare Service and subsequent fines. Any problems over attendance should be discussed with the school at an early stage. It is every parent's/carer's responsibility to ensure that their child attends school, arrives on time, is properly equipped, suitably dressed and has a positive attitude to learn. It is also the parent's responsibility to inform the school if their child is going to be absent and to provide an explanation for the absence.

The role of the School

The school has a responsibility to monitor every pupil's attendance and to report any half-day absences as either Authorised or Unauthorised.

FAMILY HOLIDAYS AND OTHER ABSENCES

Education (Pupil Registration - England) Regulations 2006, which came into force on 1st September 2013 state that Head teachers may not grant any leave of absence for holidays during the term time unless there are exceptional circumstances; in these cases it is the Head teacher who determines the number of days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

The Governors have agreed the following 'exceptional circumstances' which may be authorised by the Head teacher:

Types of holidays that MAY be granted due to exceptional circumstances:

- One or both parents in the armed forces and leave granted prior to deployment.
- Terminally ill close relative i.e. parent, sibling, grandparent. Family wish to have a final holiday together
- Family/carer funeral (1 day maximum)
- Weddings (immediate family only, 1 day maximum)
- Religious festivals
- Visits to the child's/children's or parents' country of origin.

Leave of absence will NOT be granted for reasons that are NOT considered to be special or exceptional. These include:

- Availability of cheap holidays and cheap travel arrangements
- Days overlapping with beginning or end of term
- Family weddings longer than one day
- Visiting relatives living in different parts of the country or overseas
- Holiday's won in competitions.

Parents needing leave of absence for exceptional circumstances should complete a form available from the school office or entrance hall at least two weeks before the anticipated start date. The reason for the request should be given in detail. Applications should be made before the leave is arranged as absences will not be granted retrospectively.

Parents who take their children on holiday without permission will incur an unauthorised absence for their child. These remain on the child's record and will be monitored for further action by the Education Welfare Service. The Education Welfare Service will work with the school to determine whether a further referral should be made to the Local Authority.

If absences are referred to the Local Authority, they will issue a fixed penalty notice. The penalty is £60 per parent per child per period of absence if paid within 28 days of receipt rising to £120 if paid after 28 days but within 42 days. The payment must be paid direct to the local authority. The parents can only be prosecuted if 42 days have expired and full payment has not been made. Penalty notices can be issued to each parent liable for the attendance offence or offences.

There is no right of appeal by parents against a penalty notice. If the penalty is not paid in full by the end of the 42 day period the local authority must decide either to prosecute for the original offence to which the notice applies or withdraw the notice.

Authorised absences are identified as:

- Medical/dental appointments
- Approved PE/sporting activity
- Days of religious observance in the religious body to which the parents belong
- Absence for theatrical/other performances following discussion with the Head teacher
- Sickness
- School educational visit
- Educated off site
- Music exams
- Special Family Circumstances i.e. bereavement or sickness of another close family member.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider 'reasonable' and for which no 'leave of absence' has been granted. This includes:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily i.e. to go shopping, birthday, day trips
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences which are not properly explained

- Holidays during term-time for which no leave of absence has been granted.

The school is responsible for referring problems over attendance/punctuality to the School's Education Welfare Officer in cases where difficulties cannot be resolved.

PROCEDURES

The school will apply the following procedures to manage attendance and punctuality.

- Registration will take place at the start of each morning and afternoon session.
- Registers will be checked 15 minutes after the start of each session. Where no explanation is available from home on the first day of an absence, the school will attempt to contact parent/carers on the contact numbers supplied by them. This will be done as soon after the start of the session as is possible.
- Attendance records will be stored on the school's Information Data Base.
- Parents/carers should inform the school on the first day of absence either by letter, e-mail or telephone. On the child's return a written confirmation of why the child was away should be sent, 'Reason for Absence' forms are available in the entrance hall. If no written reason is received, a slip will be sent home to be returned the next day. This is not needed if an e-mail, letter was sent on the first day of absence.
- Office staff will inform the class teacher of any known absence.
- On the second day, parents should contact the school again to detail the reason for continued absence. If this does not occur, contact may be made with home by the office staff.
- Pupils' attendance figures, including Unauthorised Absence, will be recorded on their annual report.
- The school will send details on attendance, both authorised and unauthorised to the Department for Education as required by current regulations.
- If a pupil arrives at school after the registration period, they will be regarded as 'late' and this will be registered by the School Administrator.
- The head teacher reviews the attendance termly and monitors any child whose attendance is less than 90% and a referral may be made to the School's Education Welfare.

Regular Late Arrival

Pupils who arrive late twice in one week without good reason will in the first instance be spoken to by their teacher. Subsequent occurrences will result in contact with parents/carers to try to resolve the problem. If lateness continues to be a concern, then a referral may be made to the School's Education Welfare.

Written: June 2017

Signed:

(On behalf of the Governors)

Date:

To be reviewed: This policy will be reviewed by the governing body every three years or when new legislation is introduced.