



Homefield Church of England Primary School

Whole School Attendance Policy 2017

Introduction

Homefield Church of England Primary School is committed to providing a full and efficient education to all pupils and embraces the concept of equal opportunities for all.

We will endeavor to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome.

For a child to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance is essential. We will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all children. 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

Each year the school will set attendance/absence targets.

The school will review its systems for improving attendance at regular intervals to ensure that it is achieving its set goals.

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

Promoting Attendance

The foundation for good attendance is a strong partnership between the school, parents and the child.

The Home/School agreement will contain details of how we will work with parents and our expectations of what parents will need to do to ensure their child achieves good attendance.

We will ensure that our pupils are made aware of the importance of good attendance and how this will benefit them.

To promote good attendance the school has many systems in place:

- The Attendance Race – Each half term classes compete to see which class can have the best attendance. Each week the results are announced and the winning class moves one space on the central display in the school hall. The winning class each half term receives a non-uniform day.
- Termly Certificates – Children who achieve 100% attendance in a term receive a certificate in the final Golden Assembly.
- The 100 Club – Any child who manages 100% attendance for the year is automatically part of the 100 club. Members of the 100 Club receive a free school trip within the final weeks of the school year. Children who have authorised medical appointments and return to school will be included in the 100 Club.

Leave of absence in term time

Leave of absence during term time will be discouraged. Parents will be reminded of the effect that absence can have on a pupil's potential achievement. The school will consider any application for leave of absence and will only agree to authorize the absence in exceptional circumstances; parents must apply in advance for permission for their child to have leave of absence.

The School uses the model Leave of Absence form from Norfolk County Council.

School Procedures

Any child who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity [attendance out of school]. Only the headteacher or a member of staff acting on their behalf can authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence will be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised.

The coding for any absences will be in accordance with the guidance provided by the Department of Education.

Registers

The School currently uses paper registers, completed by the class teacher and passed to the school office by 8.50am. Staff are to fill in their registers in red pen and place a pencil circle against any child who is absent at the start of a session.

Mrs. James (Mrs. Robson) is responsible for transferring the information from the paper registers to SIMS each morning and phoning the home of any absent child to seek reasons for said absence. This is to be completed by 9.20am.

Mrs. James and the Headteacher are responsible for reviewing attendance data each half term to track patterns of absence and work in collaboration to refer any cases to the Attendance Officer.

Lateness

Morning registration will take place at the start of school at 8.40am. The registers will remain open for 30 minutes. Any pupil arriving after this time will be marked as having an unauthorised absence unless there is an acceptable explanation i.e. school transport was delayed. In cases for example, where the absence at registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate authorised absence code will be entered.

The afternoon registration will be at 1.05pm.

Pupils arriving after the start of school but before the end of the registration period will be coded as late before registers close.

First Day Absence

On the first day of absence parents are expected to contact the school by 9.30am at the latest to inform the school office of the reason for the absence and to safeguard the children in our school.

In cases where this has not happened, the school will make a telephone call and endeavor to find out the reason as soon as possible. If contact cannot be made with parents the school will call those on the contact lists for each child.

The school office staff are responsible for making these calls on a daily basis.

Third Day Absence

If a child is still absent after three days and NO contact has been made with the parents or other contacts a letter is sent to the parents. The child's name is also passed to the cluster family support workers who may visit the family home.

Continuing Absence

If the absence continues a further letter will be sent to the family home and the cluster family support worker will visit the home again to seek clarification.

Ten Day's Absence

Any pupil who is absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive days will be notified to the Local Authority, by submitting a referral to the Children's Services Attendance Staff for the local area. The school will include details of the action that they have taken.

Absence Notes

Notes received from parents explaining absence should be kept for the remainder of the academic year. If there are attendance concerns about the pupil, that may require further investigation, then the notes may need to be retained for a longer period.

Medical Absence

If a child is required to be absent for longer than the designated quarantine period (guidance from NHS) for certain common childhood illnesses, medical evidence/certificate will be required as proof of the child's continuing absence. This may include surgical procedures or serious illnesses. Failure to provide this may result in the absence being recorded as unauthorised and passed to the Attendance Team at Norfolk County Council for further investigation.

Frequent Absence

Within the school it is the responsibility Mrs. James to be aware of and bring attention to, any emerging attendance concerns. In cases where a pupil begins to develop a pattern of absences, the school will try to resolve the problem as soon as possible.

Where the school has concerns regarding frequent absences, initial contact with the parents will be made by the office staff or the cluster family support worker. If the issues persist, contact will be made by the Headteacher. Where the school feels that the problem cannot be resolved in school, cases will be referred to the AIO for further consideration, this may include attendance panels or Fast Track meetings.

Persistent Absence [PA]

All pupils whose attendance level falls below 90% will be subject to a letter notifying them of the poor attendance from the Headteacher. An action plan to improve future attendance may be required in consultation with parents, the school's pastoral support worker and the Attendance Staff at Norfolk County Council.

The action plan will include engagement with all parties who can support the pupil's attendance. The school will follow the advice given by the AIO, this could include Fast Track meetings and the consideration of an FSP if further support services are involved with the family.

A Welcome Back

It is important that on return from an absence all pupils are made to feel welcome. This should include ensuring that the pupil is helped to catch up on missed work and brought up to date on any information that has been passed to the other pupils. This will be arranged by the class teacher, with support from the pastoral support worker where needed. If a child has been absent for a prolonged period inclusion in Wave Riders or Toast Time will be considered.

Categorisation of Absence

Any pupil who is on roll but not present in the school must be recorded within one of these categories.

1. Unauthorised Absence
2. Authorised Absence
3. Approved Educational Activity

1. Unauthorised absence

This is for those pupils where no reason has been provided, or whose absence is deemed to be without valid reason.

2. Authorised absence

This is for those pupils who are away from school for a reason that is deemed to be valid under the Education Act 1996.

3. Approved Educational Activity

This covers types of supervised educational activity undertaken off site but with the approval of the school.

Note Pupils recorded in this category are deemed to be present for attendance returns purposes.

This would include:

- Work experience placements
- Field trips and educational visits
- Sporting activities
- Link courses or approved education off site

If a pupil is receiving education off site or is attending at a school where they are dual registered with, the school will liaise with the other education provider to check on attendance.

The registration system

The following national codes will be used to record attendance information.

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
D	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)	Approved Education Activity
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorized absence
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
X	Untimetabled sessions for non-compulsory school-age pupils	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendances

Record preservation

We will ensure compliance with attendance regulations by keeping attendance records for at least 3 years.

Register Security

Registers or attendance marking sheets if used must be safely stored. The registers are kept inside the main school office which is locked during and after the school day. Old attendance records are kept in a locked cupboard within the school building.

Attendance Targets

The school will set attendance targets each year which will be recorded in the School Development and Improvement Plan (SDIP). The Local Authority suggests 95%, Homefield expect it to be higher. Whole school attendance will be monitored weekly by Mrs. James, who will produce fortnightly reports for the Headteacher. Reports will track the school’s performance in relation to the target, persistent absentees and vulnerable groups of children.

This policy was written in June 2017 and taken to Governors.

This policy will be reviewed in June 2018 unless government legislation requires an earlier update.

Signed: (Headteacher)

Signed: (Chair of Governors)

Appendices

1 The Law

The Education Act 1996 Part 1, Section 7 states:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable-

- [a] To his age, ability and aptitude and
 - [b] To any special needs he may have.
- either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

For educational purposes the term parent is used to include those that have parental responsibility and/or those that have the day to day care of the child.

The legislation that appertains to children who are of compulsory school age and are registered at school is contained within this Act.

Part V1 Section 444 contains the details of when an offence is committed if a child fails to attend school.

Register and Admission Roll keeping.

The legal requirements are found in:
The Education [Pupil Registration] (England) Regulations 2006

Attendance Targets

The legal requirements are found in:
The Education (School Attendance Targets)(England) Regulations 2007

Guidance documents on attendance.

The following DfE documents are used to guide attendance recording.

Absence and Attendance codes (Guidance for Schools and Local Authorities)

Keeping Pupil Registers (Guidance on applying the Education Pupil Registration Regulations)

These and other guidance documents are available on the DfE website.