



HARVEY ROAD PRIMARY SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Harvey Road School aims to maximise attendance rates in order to ensure that all children are able to take the fullest advantage of the learning experiences available to them.

STATUTORY FRAMEWORK

Under Section 199 of the 1993 Education Act, a pupil is required to attend regularly at the school where he/she is a registered pupil. The following statements that could reasonably be relevant to this school have been taken from the Act and from Hertfordshire County Council policies.

AUTHORISED AND UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

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.

Absence can be authorised if:

- the pupil was absent with permission from the Head Teacher.
- the pupil was ill or prevented from attending by any unavoidable cause.
- the absence occurred on a day exclusively set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parent belongs.
- the school is not within walking distance of the Child's home, and no suitable arrangements have been made by the LA for any of the following:
 - the child's transport to and from school
 - boarding accommodation for the child at or near the school, and enabling the child to become a registered pupil at a school nearer to his/her home.
 - the pupil is the child of Traveller parents and the conditions as stated in paragraph 47 of the DCSF guidance (1994) are met.
- there is a family bereavement.
- the pupil is attending an approved off-site activity or is receiving special off-site tuition.
- the pupil is attending a Pupil Referral Unit.
- the pupil is participating in an approved public performance.
- the pupil is involved in an **exceptional** special occasion (e.g., if a pupil is attending the graduation of an older sibling).
- leave of absence is granted by the school for a family holiday of no more than two weeks (parents should be reminded that they cannot expect that, as of right, the school will agree to a family holiday during term time).

Absences are unauthorised if:

- no explanation is forthcoming.
- the school is dissatisfied with the explanation.
- the pupil stays at home to mind the house or to look after siblings.
- the pupil is shopping during school hours.
- the pupil is on a family holiday without permission or if the parents have failed to apply for permission in advance of the holiday.

PARENTS

Parents are responsible for ensuring that their child attends school regularly, punctually, properly dressed and equipped and in a fit condition to learn. If a child is prevented for any reason from attending, or is late, **parents are required to notify the school** between 8.15 and 8.50 a.m. - by phone call or in writing to the class teacher. On return to school after an absence the reason and dates of absence should be confirmed in writing. A pupil's absence from school will be considered as unauthorised until a satisfactory explanation is forthcoming from the parent. Parents will be informed of any concerns which may arise over a child's attendance. Parents should avoid, if at all possible, making medical/dental appointments for their child during school hours.

REGISTRATION

Registers will be called promptly at 9.00 am and at 1.20 pm and will close at 9.10 am and at 1.25 pm. If a pupil fails to arrive before the registers close, he/she will be marked as 'absent'.

Parents are reminded that if a child arrives in school after the registers have closed and an acceptable explanation is not forthcoming, the pupil has to be recorded as 'unauthorised absence' for that session.

A record of the child's authorised and unauthorised absences will be included on the end of year report. The report will also record the number of 'lates' during the year. The head will inspect all registers regularly in order to check children's attendance records.

HOLIDAYS

Parents are strongly urged to avoid taking family holidays during term time. Indeed, parents do not have the right to take their child out of school for such a holiday. Absence in term time can only be permitted in exceptional circumstances. If however, there are extenuating circumstances which mean that for work or personal reasons the holiday must be during term time, the school may grant up to two weeks term-time absence in any year to go on a family holiday. Requests for such absence must be addressed directly to the Head Teacher.

Occasionally, holidays of more than two weeks to visit family living overseas may be planned. Parents are urged to discuss with school staff, the most appropriate time of year and point in the child's educational career for such a visit to take place. This will help minimise disruption to the child's progress at school.

ATTENDANCE IMPROVEMENT OFFICER (AIO)

The AIO contacts the school every year or more often if the school's attendance is causing concern. The AIO is always available at other times to advise the Headteacher over any concerns. He/she analyses the registers and discusses any families with attendance issues and agrees a course of action with the Headteacher. This may include letters from the AIO or the Headteacher or a home visit from the EWO. Records of these are kept with the Headteacher and the AIO.

Attendance patterns are monitored by school staff on a regular basis. Families will be contacted by the school when attendance levels drop significantly.

APPEALS

The school's normal appeals procedure is available to parents.

N Rowlands
Headteacher

Date approved by Governing Body: February 2013

Date of policy review: May 2017