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Committee:       Pupils and Curriculum

Signed:           \_\_M Knight\_\_

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Website:         Yes

Heron Hill Primary School

## **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

### **Aims and Principles**

The Governors and Staff of Heron Hill School view attendance as fundamental to progression, achievement and the enjoyment of the process of education. We work very hard to achieve the aims of our school and pupils need to attend regularly if they are to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them by law.

The vast majority of our children are eager to learn and are happy and contented to be in school. They respond positively to the secure and enriched environment we provide and the child centred approach to learning.

The procedures for registration at the beginning of each session and dismissal at the end are important, not only to foster an understanding and appreciation of punctuality, but also to promote a sense of belonging to the school family. By monitoring attendance and rewarding high attenders (termly and whole year attendance certificates) we promote a positive attitude towards arriving on time.

Parents are primarily responsible for ensuring that children attend and stay at school. By communicating as often as possible with parents and developing a close home-school partnership the children achieve a sense of responsibility and ownership of attendance and punctuality.

## **Roles and Responsibility**

The headteacher and the business manager have an overview of and a responsibility for attendance. The governing body has delegated responsibility to the headteacher for the management of leave of absence in term time.

It is the role of the business manager to keep an accurate record of attendance and to monitor attendance registers and registration periods to the agreed standards of Cumbria Education Authority using a standard marking system (Appendix 1).

In the event of an absence being reported by a parent, it is the responsibility of the person taking the absence message (usually the office assistant) to record the absence in the register.

Children who are late or have been absent without authorisation are reminded of what they have missed and, if old enough, should be made aware of their responsibility to attend school on time.

It is the responsibility of the parents however to ensure the attendance and punctuality of their children. Children who are registered and are of compulsory school age are required by law to be in school for every session the school is open. For that reason and for reasons of child safeguarding, we urge parents to notify school of any absence and the reason for the absence. This is clearly stated in our school prospectus and often included in our termly newsletters. When a child begins to be absent frequently without authorisation then the Attendance Inclusion Officer will be requested to investigate the matter further.

## **Leave of Absence in Term Time**

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 have been amended with changes that have now come into effect. Headteachers were previously allowed to grant leave of absence for the purpose of family holiday during term time in special circumstances of up to ten school days leave per year and also grant extended leave for more than ten school days in exceptional circumstances.

From 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013 amendments to the 2006 regulations remove references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. The amendments make clear that headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances and headteachers should also determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

Permission for leave of absence in term time will only be granted where it is deemed there are exceptional circumstances.

The school requires a minimum of four weeks' notice for the request of leave of absence in term time. The request must be put in writing and include the exceptional circumstances to be considered for the leave of absence and further evidence provided where applicable ie letter from employer. In considering a request, the headteacher will also take into account the child's age; the time of year of the absence; the nature of the visit; the child's stage of education and progress; the child's overall attendance record. A written response from the school will be made within ten working days. The school will also investigate all leaves of absence taken without permission or where an unauthorised leave of absence is suspected.

## **Monitoring Non-Attendance and Lateness**

On a daily basis the office assistant will monitor the children's individual attendance. Parents are requested by the headteacher to inform school of pupil absence between 8.00 am and 9.30 am on the day by telephone or send a note with a sibling; office staff will check registers and contact parents regarding pupil absence not accounted for **as soon as possible** after 9.30 am. Where a child is absent during the week and a verbal telephone message or letter has not been received from the parent and contact cannot be made the business manager will send out a school absence letter to find out the reason for the absence.

On a regular basis the business manager will monitor the whole school attendance and a note will be made of any unauthorised absences.

The business manager will also collate leave of absence in term time requests; these requests will be considered by the headteacher in line with the school's policy and a written response will be made to parents within ten working days. All documentation will be kept on file in the school office. Where permission for leave of absence is granted, the code 'C' (authorised absence) will be used and where it is refused but still taken the code 'O' (unauthorised absence) will be used. If a leave of absence is requested for holiday, the code 'H' (authorised holiday absence) will be used when it is granted; if it is refused, the code 'G' (unauthorised holiday absence) will be used.

Children not present at registration because of medical appointments (doctor/dentist/hospital) will be marked as an authorised absence - 'M' in pencil - if notification has been received from the parent (either in person, in writing or by telephone). If the child arrives at school before the formal closing of registers at 9.30 am the mark will then be amended to /<sub>m</sub> and the child will be counted as present for the session. If the child arrives after 9.30 am he/she will be recorded as absent if a period of more than one hour of the session has been missed - 'M' in black pen. The school will also request the parent to provide evidence of the medical appointment, ie hospital letter, text.

The same procedure applies if a pupil is late using the symbol 'L' (registers will be open until 9.30 am). The business manager will also monitor lateness on a half-termly basis and parents will be informed in writing if children are regularly arriving late for the morning session.

Where a pupil is present for registration but has to attend a medical appointment during the school day then the pupil will be recorded as present, unless the absence is for the majority of the session. This procedure will also apply if a child is sent home due to illness.

A book will be maintained by the office staff for the purpose of recording pupils leaving and returning to the school premises. On collecting or returning children to the school site parents must report to the school office so that the period of absence may be recorded by the office staff who will amend the registers if required.

## Register Codes

Code	Brief Description	Statistical Meaning	Legal Meaning	Physical Meaning
/\	Present / = am \ = pm	Present	Present	In for whole session
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Educational Activity	Attending approved educational activity	Out for whole session
C	Other authorised circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised Absence	Absent	Out for whole session
D	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)	Approved Educational Activity	Attending approved educational activity	Out for whole session
E	Excluded (No alternative provision made)	Authorised Absence	Absent	Out for whole session
G	Family holiday (not agreed or days in excess)	Unauthorised Absence	Absent	Out for whole session
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised Absence	Absent	Out for whole session
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised Absence	Absent	Out for whole session
J	Interview	Approved Educational Activity	Attending approved educational activity	Out for whole session
L	Late (before registration closed)	Present	Present	Late for session
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised Absence	Absent	Out for whole session
N	No reason yet provided for Absence	Unauthorised Absence	Absent	Out for whole session
O	Unauthorised Absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised Absence	Absent	Out for whole session
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Educational Activity	Attending approved educational activity	Out for whole session
R	Religious observance	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session	Absent
S	Study leave	Authorised Absence	Absent	Out for whole session
T	Traveller Absence	Authorised Absence	Absent	Out for whole session
U	Late (after registration closed)	Unauthorised Absence	Absent	Late for session
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Educational Activity	Attending approved educational activity	Out for whole session
W	Work experience	Approved Educational Activity	Attending approved educational activity	Out for whole session

Code	Brief Description	Statistical Meaning	Legal Meaning	Physical Meaning
X	Non-compulsory school-age Absence	Not counted in possible attendances	Absent	Not required to be in school
Y	Forced and Partial Closure	Not counted in possible attendances	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances or not attending because the pupils have a different school year to other pupils in the school.	Not required to be in school
Z	Pupil not on roll	Not counted in possible attendances	Pupil not registered at the school	Not required to be in school
#	School closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendances	No session held	Not required to be in school