



Hustwaite and Sessay CE Primary Federation Attendance Policy

At the Hustwaite and Sessay CE Primary Federation **in order to improve the overall attendance of pupils in school we aim to:**

- Make attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with the school including pupils, parents, teachers and governors.
- Develop a framework which defines agreed roles and responsibilities and promotes consistency in carrying out designated tasks.
- Develop a systematic approach to gathering and analysing attendance related data.
- Implement a system of rewards and sanctions.
- Provide support, advice and guidance to parents/carers and pupils.
- Further develop positive and consistent communication between home and school.
- Develop effective partnerships with supporting services and agencies through the Local Authority.
- Recognise and address the needs of the individual pupil when planning reintegration following significant periods of absence.

Definitions

It is the Executive Head Teacher's discretion as to whether a child's absence is recorded as authorised or unauthorised.

Authorised absence:

- An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or carer. For example, if a child has been unwell, the parent telephones the school to explain the absence.
- Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents do not have this authority. Consequently, not all absences supported by parents will be classified as authorised. For example, if a parent takes a child out of school and gives the reason that it was to go shopping for school shoes, this will not mean it is authorised absence.

Unauthorised absence:

- An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of both the school and a parent.
- Therefore, the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent.

Persistent absence (PA):

- The DFE define a 'persistent absentee' as a pupil who, at any point in the year, has accumulated absence at **10%** or more of the available sessions regardless of whether or not any of it is authorised. The PA status may change as the terms progress but these pupils are at particular risk of achieving poor outcomes at school and beyond.

Registration:

Codes:

There are a series of codes which are used to denote authorised and authorised absence (see 'School Attendance' DFE May 2022).

It is the school's responsibility to ensure the correct codes are recorded and that patterns and trends in children's absence are analysed.

Late Pupils:

Pupils who arrive before registration closes at 9:00 are marked using the normal '/' code. Pupils arriving after 9:00 but before 9:15 will be marked using the 'L' code. Pupils arriving after 9:15 will be marked with the U code which indicates that a child arrived after 9:15 and that this was unauthorised by the school.

Medical appointments

Children will be marked as M for a medical appointment.

Requests for leave of absence:

We believe that all children need to be in school for all sessions, so that they can make the most progress possible. For this reason, as a general rule, we do not authorise leave of absence (including holidays) in term time.

The Executive Head Teacher has the discretion to make exceptions to this rule and can authorise leave of absence for special circumstances, when the leave of absence is for no more than 10 days (Using Code H: Family Holiday Agreed). Special circumstances may include:

- Service personnel and other employees who are prevented from taking holidays outside term time if the holiday will have minimal disruption to the pupil's education.
- When a family needs to spend time together to support each other during or after a crisis.

Religious Observance:

The DCSF recommends the use of Code R when children are absent from school to take part in any day set aside exclusively for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong, including religious festivals. Parents should be encouraged to give advance notice.

This is interpreted to mean that if the parent's religious organisation sets the day as a religious festival, then the school must authorise the absence. Where necessary, schools should seek advice from the parent's religious body about whether it has set the day apart for religious observance.

If the religious body has not set the day apart there is no requirement for the school to approve the absence or grant a leave absence. Additional holidays and days off linked to the religious festival but not "exclusively set aside for religious observance" by the religious body are not marked using Code R.

Roles and responsibilities:

All members of the school community have roles and responsibilities in promoting and ensuring good attendance and punctuality

Role of the pupils:

Pupils have a responsibility to themselves and others to play a positive role in the life of the school and to make the most of the education opportunities available.

All pupils will:

- Ensure that they attend school regularly and on time.
- Be aware of their current attendance record and targets.
- Be aware of the consequences of poor attendance or truancy.
- Arrive to lessons punctually.
- Not leave school without permission.
- Follow correct procedures for known absences.
- Respect themselves and others.
- Encourage friendship and a sense of belonging.
- Be happy and encourage others to feel happy
- Inform a trusted adult if they feel that they are being bullied or feel unhappy in school.

Role of parents:

Parents have an essential role in ensuring their child's good attendance.

We ask parents to:

- Establish good attendance habits by acting as a role model and showing the children that good attendance and punctuality is important.
- Praise and reward good attendance, even small successes, e.g., getting ready quickly, even if resisting going to school.

- Talk regularly with their child about school and how they feel about it. Children are more likely to want to attend and learn if they feel supported and their anxieties are listened to.
- Contact the school by phone, text, email or letter as soon as possible to say why their child is absent, and when they are expected to return.
- Only grant days at home for genuine illness.
- If appropriate, arrange for a friend to take a child to school if a sibling is sick.
- Avoid taking holidays in school time.
- Ensure that wherever possible, medical appointments are made outside of the school day.
- Know routines of the school day to avoid issues, e.g., ensuring children have their P.E. kits on the right days.
- Establish a good bedtime routine, so that their child can sleep well, get enough sleep and make mornings less of a struggle.

Role of the Class Teacher:

We ask teachers to:

- Encourage good attendance.
- Ensure that registers are correctly and promptly marked.
- Set a good example in matters of attendance and punctuality.
- Provide a safe and secure environment in which to learn.
- Provide engaging and worthwhile learning experiences that encourage students to regularly attend lessons.
- Ensure that children are informed of their current attendance record half termly.
- Listen to and value children's views.
- Make initial contact with parents when concerns arise.

Role of the School:

As a school we:

- Create a school ethos that pupils want to be part of.
- Give a high priority to punctuality and attendance.
- Develop procedures that enable the school to identify, follow up and record unauthorised absence, patterns of absence and parent condoned absence with effective monitoring and intervention.
- Develop a range of effective strategies to follow up intermittent and long term absenteeism and promote good attendance.
- Encourage open communication channels between home and school.
- Develop procedures leading to the formal referral to the 'Advice, Assessment and Early Intervention Service' (see below).
- Adequately provide for pupils with difficulties, within the bounds of the resources available, and ensure that appropriate delivery of the curriculum.

Role of Governing Body:

Under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995, the governing body are responsible for making sure the school keeps an attendance register that records which pupils are present at the start of both the morning and the afternoon sessions of the school day. This register will also indicate whether an absence was authorised or unauthorised.

Role of the Local Authority:

The Local Authority provides an 'Advice, Assessment and Early Intervention Service'. The LA may also support the school with legal action to tackle poor attendance where appropriate.

Intervening with Attendance Concerns:

Where we have concerns around a pupil's attendance, we may intervene in one or more of the following ways:

- The Executive Headteacher and School Business Manager will review the attendance of all the schools pupils on a half termly basis and any pupils identified as a cause for concern or less than 90% attendance on a more regular basis.
- A letter may be sent to the parents of any pupil identified as having attendance problems, informing them of the school's concerns and offering support to resolve any problems that may be impeding a child from attending.
- Where patterns are identified a conversation with the Executive headteacher may take place to discuss the pattern and resolve any issues preventing attendance.
- The pupil's attendance will be closely monitored and recorded as a cause for concern.

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