



# **Attendance Policy**

January 2019

To read in conjunction with our:  
**Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**  
**Children Missing for Education Guidance**  
**Gloucestershire County Council Guidance 2018**  
<https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/schoolsnet/your-pupils/attendance/>

## **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

At Huntley C of E Primary School we believe that pupils need to attend school regularly to benefit from their education and achieve their potential.

This attendance policy sets out what is expected so that this may be achieved.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES**

Parents/carers should:

- Make sure their child attends school regularly and on time, appropriately dressed and equipped and in a fit state to learn.
- Let the school know if they are having difficulty with attendance so that any available help or support can be offered.
- Let the school know, by telephoning before 9:30 a.m., on the first day of absence from school, why their child is absent and when they are expected to return.
- Seek permission from school prior to any absence that is not medical.
- Not take their child on holiday during term-time.
- Notify school if they intend to remove their child permanently from the school for any reason.

School will:

- Make suitable arrangements for the safe, daily reception of children.
- Be consistent in their attendance practices.
- Keep and mark registers accurately.
- Follow up any unexplained absences.
- Notify parents/carers, at parent evenings, of their child's attendance level.
- Notify the Local Authority (LA) of pupils who have poor attendance, leave school to be educated at home, go missing or are excluded.
- Notify the LA and/or the Department for Education of absence figures for the school and, where necessary, individual pupils.

The Headteacher will:

- Ensure that everybody at school treats attendance as a priority
- Promote the importance of good attendance to pupils and their parents/carers.
- Be available to discuss attendance concerns with pupils, parents, staff and governors.
- Remind parents at least annually of attendance procedures.
- Analyse attendance data.
- Oversee attendance procedures.

Governors will:

- With the Headteacher, monitor, evaluate and review the attendance procedures regularly
- Report on attendance statistics when required.

## **SCHOOL TIMES**

At 8:55 a.m. the children will line up on the playground. We expect children to be in their classrooms by 9:00 a.m. in time for the start of morning registration. School finishes at 3:15 p.m. Children should be collected promptly unless they are attending an after school activity. Please inform the school office as soon as possible if you are going to be late collecting your child for any reason or if there is a change in your child's usual routine.

## **REGISTRATION**

School must keep attendance registers for all pupils on the school roll. The class teacher will call the register twice a day and every pupil will be marked as present, absent or engaged in an approved education activity away from the school site. It must be shown, by the use of approved codes, whether an absence is authorised or not.

Registration will take place between 9:00 a.m. and 9:10 a.m. for the morning session. Pupils arriving between 9.10 and 9.20 will be marked late.

Pupils arriving after 9.20 will be marked with an unauthorised absence mark unless there is an acceptable reason for lateness when they will be marked with an authorised absence mark.

Registers will be marked again during afternoon sessions.

The marking of registers will be in accordance with instruction set out at the front of the register.

Absence, legally, has to be recorded either as authorised or unauthorised and reported on to the DfE and in some circumstances to the LA. Only the school can decide whether an absence is authorised or not and does not have to accept the reasons given by a parent or carer.

## **AUTHORISED ABSENCE**

Is when a pupil:

- Is, in exceptional circumstances, absent with the prior permission of the school;
- Is too unwell to attend school or is attending a medical or dental appointment;
- Is away for a day set aside by their parent's religion for religious observance;
- Has suffered a family bereavement;
- Has been excluded.

## **UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE**

Is when:

- A pupil is absent and no explanation or an unacceptable explanation is offered;
- A pupil arrived after the registration period has closed without an acceptable reason;
- A pupil is away from school on a family holiday for a period not previously agreed with the Head teacher.

An approved educational activity is not recorded as an absence and will be marked when a pupil is on a school/educational visit, is attending an approved off-site activity or is receiving special off-site tuition.

## **HOLIDAYS IN TERM TIME**

At Huntley C of E Primary School we believe that annual family holidays should not be taken in term time. If this is not possible and parents/carers still wish to apply for permission from the Head teacher a holiday form should be completed by the parent/carers, well in advance of the proposed dates. **Permission can only be given in exceptional circumstances.** The Head teacher will consider the request carefully and will look at previous attendance records, the pupil's age and stage of education and consider letters from employers stating whether parents/carers are restricted in terms of leave from their employment before notifying parents/carers whether she is

able to authorise the absence or not. Please note permission may not be given for holiday over statutory assessment times or at the start of a new school year.

## **APPOINTMENTS**

If appointments have to be made during school hours, school should be pre-notified. Parents collecting pupils from school mid-session should, for safety reasons, notify the office on departure and re-arrival. If present at registration no amendment to the register is necessary. If absent at registration the register should be marked with an authorised absence mark. Again, for safety reason, pupils should report to the office on arrival.

## **FREQUENT ABSENCES FOR MEDICAL REASONS**

When a pupil frequently misses school for medical reasons, medical services may be consulted and appointment cards will need to be provided. Where necessary a referral will be made so that an evaluation of the pupil's health and educational needs can be made.

## **LONGER ABSENCES**

Pupils who have been absent for a long period of time will be positively welcomed back and will be helped to catch up with missed work. Friendship groups will be monitored for a period to ensure that the pupil is happily settled back into school life.

## **SCHOOL PROCEDURES**

Where the register shows an unexplained absence and there has been no message received at school by 9:30 a.m. a phone call will be made to the parent/carer to find out the reason for absence and the date of expected return. All telephone messages will be dated and recorded in writing in the absence book.

If school have been unable to make contact by telephone a text will be sent as well. A written communication in the form of a letter, will be sent on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day of absence, requesting the reason for absence. If there is still no response the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

- Where the register shows 5 separate late during or after registration marks over a school term, school will contact parents in writing.
- Where the register shows 10 separate after registration marks over a 10 week period the LA may issue a fixed penalty notice.
- If a child arrives late at school the parent/carer will be requested to fill in and sign an entry in the 'late book'.

## **THE LAW**

The law says that:

- Parents of children of compulsory school age are required to ensure that their children receive suitable full time education;
- The LA must ensure that parents fulfil their legal obligations regarding their children's education;
- Maintained schools must allow the LA to inspect their registers;
- Schools must report to the LA pupils who fail to attend regularly. Gloucestershire's Penalty Notice protocol allows schools to notify the LA of any pupil having more than 5 days (10 sessions) of unauthorised absence in a ten week period, particularly when this absence is on account of:
  - Lateness after registration
  - Term time holidays without permission

In these instances the LA will consider issuing a fixed penalty notice of £60 per parent/per child per day after a warning has been issued by the school.

Unauthorised absence may lead to the LA taking full court action if attendance issues cannot be resolved.

Formal meetings (Attendance Improvement Meetings) will be held with parents whose children's poor attendance may lead to legal proceeding and Attendance Plans will be drawn up.

## **STRATEGIES**

To support our attendance policy we:

- Will treat attendance as a priority;
- Promote good attendance at every opportunity – at Parents' evenings, at Induction, in newsletters, in assemblies, etc;
- Always use first day telephone contact;
- Set attendance targets for the school (and for each year group if necessary);
- Keep parents/carers informed of their child's attendance level on a termly basis.
- Make good use of attendance data by specific analysis;
- Notify Governors at each full governing body of attendance levels;
- Provide a safe, happy, stimulating environment for children where they feel valued and welcomed and that their presence in school is important.

## **SUCCESS CRITERIA**

- We are meeting or exceeding our attendance targets.
- Our attendance is in line with, or exceeds that, of local comparator schools.
- We have positive feedback from outside agencies such as Ofsted, LA, etc.
- Everybody is clear about what to do if a child is absent from school.

## **Appendix 1**

### **School Attendance procedures**

1. Admin staff will provide regular lists of pupils falling below 95% attendance or where registers show 5 separate late marks during a term.
2. Pupils falling below 95% attendance will receive a letter from the Head teacher offering advice and support.
3. Pupils falling below 90% attendance will receive a letter from the Head teacher offering advice and support and Local Authority information about good attendance.
4. Pupils falling below 85% attendance will receive a letter from the Head teacher inviting parents to a meeting to discuss their child's attendance. Attendance Improvement Plans will be put in place and reviewed appropriately.
5. Attendance Improvement Meetings and Reviews will be documented.

## **Appendix 2**

Term time Absence request form

## **Appendix 3**

Sample letters for school use



# Huntley C of E Primary School

## TERM TIME ABSENCE REQUEST FORM

Please remember – Absence from school can seriously disrupt your child’s continuity of learning. Not only do they miss the teaching provided on the days they are away; they are also less prepared for lessons upon their return. As a consequence of this, there is a risk of underachievement, which together we must seek to avoid.

I would like to take my child(ren) .....

out of school from ..... to .....,

returning to school on .....

The reason this must be in term time is because (please give as much detail as possible, including copies of work schedules etc)

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

I understand that if my/our request for leave from school is granted, it will count as an authorised absence and will be included in my/our child’s attendance figure.  
This will only be granted if your child’s attendance, over the previous 2 terms, is 95% or above **and** in exceptional circumstances.

Signed ..... Date .....

This section will be returned to you.

Child(ren)’s name(s) Attendance over previous 2 terms

.....  
.....  
.....

This absence from ..... to .....

will be recorded as authorised/unauthorised

If unauthorised the reason is: .....

Signed ..... (Headteacher) Date .....



## Huntley C of E Primary School

Ross Road  
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GL19 3EX

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[admin@huntley.gloucs.sch.uk](mailto:admin@huntley.gloucs.sch.uk)

[www.huntleyschool.co.uk](http://www.huntleyschool.co.uk)

Headteacher: Mrs E Curtis

Attendance Letter 1

Dear

We have noticed that

's attendance has fallen below 95%.

If you require any support or have any questions regarding this matter please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Mrs E Curtis  
Headteacher





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Headteacher: Mrs E Curtis

## Attendance Letter 2

Dear

Please find a copy of \_\_\_\_\_'s Attendance Certificate which shows that he/she has missed \_\_\_\_\_ sessions during the last \_\_\_\_\_ weeks. Each school day has a morning and an afternoon session. His/her overall attendance has fallen below 90%.

If a child of compulsory school age who is registered at a school fails to attend regularly at that school then the parent is guilty of an offence under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996. There is a risk that if your child's attendance remains at the current level a referral may be made to the Local Authority who will start a legal process. I enclose a leaflet which gives more detail about school attendance.

Please make every effort to ensure that \_\_\_\_\_ attends school every day. If you require any support, or have any questions regarding this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Mrs E Curtis  
Headteacher



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## Attendance Letter 3

Dear

Please find a copy of \_\_\_\_\_'s Attendance Certificate which shows that he/she has missed \_\_\_\_\_ sessions during the last \_\_\_\_\_ weeks. Each school day has a morning and an afternoon session. His/her overall attendance has fallen below 85%.

If a child of compulsory school age who is registered at a school fails to attend regularly at that school then the parent is guilty of an offence under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996. There is a risk that if your child's attendance remains at the current level a referral may be made to the Local Authority who will start a legal process. I enclose a leaflet which gives more detail about school attendance.

The school office will contact you to arrange a suitable time to meet with me for an Attendance Improvement meeting, during which an Attendance Improvement Plan will be drawn up

Please make every effort to ensure that \_\_\_\_\_ attends school every day. If you require any support, or have any questions regarding this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Mrs E Curtis  
Headteacher



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Headteacher: Mrs E Curtis

Lateness Letter 1

Dear

We have noticed that  
school term.

has been late on 5 separate occasions over a

If you require any support, or have any questions regarding this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Mrs E Curtis  
Headteacher



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Headteacher: Mrs E Curtis

## Lateness Letter 2

Dear

We have noticed that \_\_\_\_\_ has been late on 5 separate occasions over a school term. I enclose a leaflet which gives more detail about school attendance. Your child's attendance will be closely monitored and further lateness will result in the Local Authority being notified and this may result in a penalty notice being given.

If you require any support, or have any questions regarding this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Mrs E Curtis  
Headteacher