



Hillside Primary School & Nursery Attendance & Punctuality Policy

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1. Introduction

Hillside Primary School is committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all its pupils and recognises this can only be achieved by supporting and promoting excellent school attendance for all. This is based on the belief that only by attending school regularly and punctually will children and young people be able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. High attainment depends on good attendance.

The whole school community – pupils, parents and carers, teaching and support staff and school governors – have a responsibility for ensuring good school attendance and have important roles to play.

The policy has been drawn up in consultation with the whole community and is based on current Government and Local Authority Regulation Guidance. The school will ensure that all members of the school community; Governors, staff and parents have access to the policy which will be available on the school website (www.hillsidecp.net/suffolk/primary/hillsidecp).

2. School's Roles and Responsibilities

All staff (teaching and support) at Hillside Primary School have a key role to play in supporting and promoting excellent school attendance and will work to provide an environment in which all our pupils are eager to learn, feel valued members of the school community and look forward to coming to school every day. Staff also have a responsibility to set a good example in matters relating to their own attendance and punctuality.

Attendance Champion

The Assistant Headteacher strategically manages the school's work in promoting regular and improved attendance and will ensure the Attendance Policy is consistently applied throughout the school. This person, known as the Attendance Champion, will also ensure that up-to-date attendance data and issues are made regularly available to all staff, pupils and parents (who will regularly be reminded about the importance of good school attendance) and a report is prepared for the Governing Body termly. They will ensure that attendance issues are identified at an early stage and support the class teachers and Phase Leaders in putting in place strategies to deal with any difficulties that arise from attendance matters.

Registration

The school is required to mark the attendance register twice each day; once at the start of the day and once during the afternoon. Classroom teachers are responsible for completing the attendance registers using the prescribed codes (see appendix 1).

The start of the school day is **8:45** for **ALL CHILDREN**.

The gates and doors to the school will be open from 8.28am and children are welcome to arrive between 8.30 – 8.45am and go straight to their classes.

To encourage punctuality the gates and doors from the playgrounds will be closed at 8:40, children who arrive between 8.40 – 8.45 will need to enter via the school office and will go straight in to their classes.

The registers will be taken by the class teachers promptly at 8.45am.

Lateness and Punctuality

Pupils are expected to arrive at school, on time every day. It is very disruptive to their own education and that of others in their class, if they are late.

Pupils who arrive **by 8.45am** will be marked as present (code /)

Pupils who arrive **BEFORE** the register closes (8.45 – 8.55am) receive a **late** mark (code L) in the register.

Any pupil who arrives **AFTER** the register has closed (8.55am) will receive an **unauthorised late** mark (code **U**).

Pupils arriving late should report to the school office. It is also important that pupils leaving the premises legitimately (eg for a medical appointment), or returning to school later in the day report to the school office and sign in.

Lateness and punctuality is taken very seriously as a result **6 sessions** of unauthorised late (U) or unauthorised absence (O) – this is where a reason for an absence is not given or accepted as valid will trigger a **Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) which is a fine of £60 per child, per parent** and any other adult whom has parental responsibility.

A **warning letter will be sent after 4 sessions** of any Unauthorised late (U) or unauthorised absence (O) marks. Therefore children must be at school on time and if they are absent for any reason you must inform the school by phoning the absence line (01473 601402 – then press option 1) or contacting us via email (office@hillsidecp.net) on each day of absence giving a reason for the absence.

Following an FPN if a child's attendance has still not improved and absences continue then the child's parents will be invited to a 'Fast Track' meeting with a school representative and the Local Authority Education Welfare Officer (EWO). At this meeting the EWO has the power to 'caution' a parent in

relation to their child's absences. An attendance agreement will be drawn up. Should a parent fail to meet the agreement then a parent can be prosecuted.

Lateness - A child who arrives between 8.45 – 8.55 is marked late – code L (this is an authorised absence). However should a pupil be regularly late to school then they will receive a 'lateness warning letter'.

Categorising absence

Any child who is not present at the time of registration will be marked with an unauthorised absence mark unless leave has been granted by the school in advance or the reason for absence is already known and accepted by the school as legitimate. Where a reason for absence is given and accepted by the school at a later stage, the register will be amended accordingly. The decision about whether the absence should be authorised or unauthorised rests with the Headteacher or the Attendance Champion (Assistant Headteacher) whom they have delegated to.

Hillside Primary School recognises the clear links between attendance and attainment, and attendance and safeguarding children. It recognises that inappropriate authorisation of absence can be as damaging to a child's education as authorised absence, will potentially send a message to parents that any reason for non-school attendance is acceptable and can render children extremely vulnerable to harm. If absence is frequent or continuous, and except where a child is clearly unwell, staff at Hillside Primary School will therefore challenge parents about the need and reasons for their child's absence and will advise them to keep absences to a minimum. A note or explanation from a pupil's home does not mean an absence becomes authorised. The decision whether or not to authorise an absence will always rest with the school.

An absence will be authorised in the following circumstances at the discretion of the Headteacher and/or Assistant Headteacher (Attendance Champion):

- Where the school is satisfied that the child is **medically unfit** to attend (for example vomiting, diarrhoea. Other examples can be found in Appendix 2. For longer periods of illness the school will ask for proof of absence (prescription, appointment card or letter from the GP)
- Emergency medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time (school may ask for you to provide evidence of such appointment). Parents are advised to make these out of school hours. **Parents must return their child to school immediately afterwards – or send the child to school beforehand;**
- If the absence occurs on a day exclusively set aside for Religious Observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parent/s belong (one day authorised per Religious observance only, up to a maximum of 3 observance days per year will be granted. Any additional days taken will be marked as unauthorised.
- In an exceptional circumstance agreed at the discretion of the Headteacher (code C).

Except in the circumstances described above, **all other absences will be unauthorised.**

3. Collection and analysis of data

Attendance is monitored by class, year group, absence codes and where appropriate on an individual basis. English as an Additional Language (EAL) and other vulnerable groups e.g. Pupil Premium and Special Educational Needs (SEN) attendance is monitored closely. The Attendance Champion will ensure that attendance data is complete, accurate and analysed and reported on to a range of stateholders. Accurate attendance returns are made to the Local Authority, Active Learning Trust Academy and the Department for Education (DfE) within the stipulated time frame.

4. Systems and strategies for managing and improving attendance

Attendance has a high profile at Hillside Primary School and is promoted in the following ways:

- Termly attendance newsletter, pupil report cards, annual school report and on displays.
- Pupil's attendance is discussed during parent's evenings in relation to attainment and progress.
- Contacting parents/carers should their child's attendance become of concern.
- Celebrating improved attendance over the term.
- Celebrate weekly class attendance by displaying class achievements.

First-day contact

Hillside Primary School has in place a system of first-day contact. This means that parents will be contacted via phone call on the first day a pupil is absent without explanation to establish a reason for the absence. This helps to identify at an early stage pupils who do not have a good reason for absence or who may be absent without their parents' knowledge. Parents should always inform the school of an absence. Failure to contact the school to explain why their child is absent will result in an unauthorised absence mark.

Our aim is to deal with any attendance issues early and quickly so in the first instance Class teachers and Phase Leaders will speak to pupils and parents should an attendance issue be identified. If concerns around a child's attendance and punctuality remain then a warning letter will be sent and a Fixed Penalty Notice will be issued. Following this if a child's attendance is still causing concern then there will be...

An informal meeting - panel meeting

Parents will be invited into the school to meet with the Assistant Headteacher (and possibly the EWO) to discuss a child's absences. Following this meeting if a child's attendance is still causing concern then there will be...

A more formal meeting with parents – Fast Track meeting

If there is little or no explanation for the continued absences, the Attendance Champion will invite parents to a meeting with the Educational Welfare Officer - EWO to discuss the reasons for the absences. Plans will be put in place with the parents and pupil to resolve any difficulties and improve the attendance within a specified time limit – usually no more than 6 weeks. It will be explained to parents that any future absences will be unauthorised unless there is clear evidence to support the absences.

In some cases where a child's attendance is of growing concern or a parent fails to engage then the school will jump straight to a 'Fast track' meeting alongside the Educational Welfare Officer.

Fixed Penalty Notices

Hillside Primary School will ask the Local Authority to issue a fixed penalty notice in situations where unauthorised absence occurs in the following circumstances:

- **Where a pupil has 6 sessions of unauthorised absence** which includes being late after the register closes and all other unauthorised circumstances.
- **Where a pupil is stopped during a truancy sweep and the absence is not authorised by the school.**
- **Where pupils go on an unauthorised holiday or personal trip (of any length/duration) during school term time.**

The Penalty is £60 per child, per parent and those whom have parental responsibilities if paid within 21 days, doubling to £120 per child if paid after 21 days.

5. Leave of Absence

Hillside Primary School will consider every application individually, its policy is **NOT** to grant a leave of absence other than in the most exceptional circumstances which are still at the discretion of the Headteacher. Time off school is not a right and there is no automatic entitlement in law for a leave of absence. An application must be made in writing, with appropriate evidence, in advance of the intended leave of absence. Hillside Primary School will respond to all requests for a leave of absence in writing giving the reasons for the decision.

Hillside Primary School will only consider authorising a leave of absence in '**exceptional circumstances**' even then this is still at the discretion of the Headteacher:

- Parents in the armed forces returning from overseas placement.
- Public Services such as Police, Fire and Health whose holiday is rostered and changes are unable to be made.
- A religious observatory (1 day of authorised absence per celebration, with a maximum of 3 days per academic year)
- A special circumstance (which we deem as being a wedding, funeral, graduation, christening, confirmation, visiting a sick or terminally ill relative) where it affects a child's immediate family

member (thus a child's Mother, Father or sibling) – 1 day of authorised absence will be granted where a child's attendance is at least good (97% or above).

A request for a leave of absence for the following reason will **not** be authorised although this is not an exhaustive list:

- Cost of the holiday/trip is less in term time
- Prolonged holiday
- Absent parent/grandparent taking the child on holiday in term time
- Holiday/trip with Grandparents or other family members.
- Absences during public examinations and during key testing/exam times.
- The trip is noted as being 'educational'.
- A trip for a child or their parent to receive overseas health care.
- Late back at the start of any term.

If a child is to be absent from school for more than 20 days the school can remove the child from roll. Should a child not return to the school from a trip or holiday they will be reported as a 'Child Missing in Education' (CME).

6. Parents' / carers' responsibilities

The prime responsibility for ensuring children receive an appropriate and full-time education rests with parents / carers (defined by the Education Act 1996 as those with parental responsibility and those who have the care of a child), who will be supported and encouraged by Hillside Primary School.

Hillside Primary School expects parents / carers will:

- Ensure their children attend the school on time and every day.
- Notify the school on the first day and each day of absence
- Only keep a child absent from school if they are medically unfit.
- Not take term time holidays or personal trips.

Parents will also be expected to:

- Bring their children to school every day and on time (unless they are medically unfit).
- Ensure their children arrive at school on time, with the correct school uniform and with the right equipment for the day.
- Work in partnership with the school, for example by attending parents' meetings and consultations, taking an interest in their children's attendance, work and learning;
- Contact the school without delay if they are concerned about any aspects of their children's school lives. Hillside Primary School will endeavour to support parents and carers to address their concerns.

7. Pupils' responsibilities

All pupils should be aware of the importance of regular school attendance. If they are having difficulties that may prevent them from attending school regularly, they should speak with their class teacher.

Pupils should attend school on time, ready to learn. Pupils also have a responsibility for following school procedures if they arrive late.

8. Governors' responsibilities

The Governing body of the school shall make arrangements for ensuring that their functions relating to the conduct of the school are exercised with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who are pupils at the school.

Reviewing the policy

The school will review this policy each year in partnership with the schools allocated Educational Welfare Officer.

Appendix 1 – Register Codes

Code	Description	Statistical Meaning	Physical Meaning
/	Present (AM)	Present	In for whole session
\	Present (PM)	Present	In for whole session
@	Do Not Use	Unauthorised absence	Late for session
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual reg)	Approved Educational Activity	Out for whole session
C	Other Authorised Circumstances	Authorised absence	Out for whole session
D	Dual registration (attending other estab)	Approved Educational Activity	Out for whole session
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence	Out for whole session
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence	Out for whole session
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed or days in excess)	Unauthorised absence	Out for whole session
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence	Out for whole session
I	Illness (NOT med/dental appointments)	Authorised absence	Out for whole session
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity	Out for whole session
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present	Late for session
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence	Out for whole session
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence	Out for whole session
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by other code)	Unauthorised absence	Out for whole session
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Educational Activity	Out for whole session
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence	Out for whole session
S	Study leave	Authorised absence	Out for whole session
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence	Out for whole session
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence	Late for session
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Educational Activity	Out for whole session

W	Work experience	Approved Educational Activity	Out for whole session
X	DCSF #: School closed to pupils	Attendance Not Required	Out for whole session
Y	Enforced closure	Attendance Not Required	Out for whole session
Z	Do Not Use	Authorised absence	Out for whole session
I	DCSF X: Non-compulsory school age absence	Attendance Not Required	Out for whole session
#	School closed to pupils and staff	Attendance Not Required	Out for whole session
*	DCSF Z: Pupil not on roll	Attendance Not Required	Out for whole session
-	All should attend/No mark recorded	No mark	No mark for session

Appendix 2 – How long should my child stay off school?

The school will use the attached guidance when making a decision whether to AUTHORISE an absence relating to illness.

Type of illness	Recommended period to be kept away from school, nursery or childminders	NHS Further advice/Comments
Athlete's foot	None	Athlete's foot is not a serious condition. Treatment is recommended
Chickenpox	Until all vesicles have crusted over	
Cold sores, (Herpes simplex)	None	Avoid kissing and contact with the sores. Cold sores are generally mild and self-limiting
German measles (rubella)*	Four days from onset of rash (as per "Green Book")	Preventable by immunisation (MMR x2 doses).
Hand, foot and mouth	None	Contact your local HPT if a large number of children are affected. Exclusion may be considered in some circumstances
Impetigo	Until lesions are crusted and healed, or 48 hours after starting antibiotic treatment	Antibiotic treatment speeds healing and reduces the infectious period
Measles*	Four days from onset of rash	Preventable by vaccination (MMR x2).
Molluscum contagiosum	None	A self-limiting condition
Ringworm	Exclusion not usually required	Treatment is required
Roseola (infantum)	None	None
Scabies	Child can return after first treatment	Household and close contacts require treatment
Scarlet fever*	Child can return 24 hours after starting appropriate antibiotic treatment	Antibiotic treatment is recommended for the affected child
Slapped cheek/fifth disease. Parvovirus B19	None (once rash has developed)	
Shingles	Exclude only if rash is weeping and cannot be covered	Can cause chickenpox in those who are not immune, ie have not had chickenpox.

Warts and verrucae	None	It is spread by very close contact and touch. If further information is required, contact your local PHE centre.
Diarrhoea and/or vomiting	48 hours from last episode of diarrhoea or vomiting	Verrucae should be covered in swimming pools, gymnasiums and changing rooms
<i>E. coli</i> O157 VTEC Typhoid* [and paratyphoid*] (enteric fever) Shigella (dysentery)	Should be excluded for 48 hours from the last episode of diarrhoea. Further exclusion may be required for some children until they are no longer excreting	Further exclusion is required for children aged five years or younger and those who have difficulty in adhering to hygiene practices. Children in these categories should be excluded until there is evidence of microbiological clearance. This guidance may also apply to some contacts who may also require microbiological clearance. Please consult your local PHE centre for further advice
Cryptosporidiosis	Exclude for 48 hours from the last episode of diarrhoea	Exclusion from swimming is advisable for two weeks after the diarrhoea has settled
Flu (influenza)	Until recovered	
Tuberculosis*	Always consult your local PHE centre	Requires prolonged close contact for spread
Whooping cough* (pertussis)	Five days from starting antibiotic treatment, or 21 days from onset of illness if no antibiotic treatment	Preventable by vaccination. After treatment, non-infectious coughing may continue for many weeks. Your local PHE centre will organise any contact tracing necessary
Conjunctivitis	None	If an outbreak/cluster occurs, consult your local PHE centre
Diphtheria *	Exclusion is essential. Always consult with your local HPT	Family contacts must be excluded until cleared to return by your local PHE centre. Preventable by vaccination. Your local PHE centre will organise any contact tracing necessary
Glandular fever	None	
Head lice	None	Treatment is recommended only in cases where live lice have been seen
Hepatitis A*	Exclude until seven days after onset of jaundice (or seven days after symptom onset if no jaundice)	In an outbreak of hepatitis A, your local PHE centre will advise on control measures
Hepatitis B*, C*	None	Hepatitis B and C are bloodborne viruses that are not infectious through casual contact.
Meningococcal meningitis*/septicaemia*	Until recovered	Meningitis C is preventable by vaccination There is no reason to exclude siblings or other close contacts of a case. In case of an outbreak, it may be necessary to provide antibiotics with or without meningococcal vaccination to close school contacts. Your local PHE centre will advise on any action is needed

Meningitis* due to other bacteria	Until recovered	<p>Hib and pneumococcal meningitis are preventable by vaccination. There is no reason to exclude siblings or other close contacts of a case. Your local PHE centre will give advice on any action needed</p> <p>Milder illness. There is no reason to exclude siblings and other close contacts of a case. Contact tracing is not required</p> <p>Good hygiene, in particular handwashing and environmental cleaning, are important to minimise any danger of spread. If further information is required, contact your local PHE centre</p> <p>Preventable by vaccination (MMR x2 doses)</p> <p>Treatment is recommended for the child and household contacts</p> <p>There are many causes, but most cases are due to viruses and do not need an antibiotic</p>
Meningitis viral*	None	
MRSA	None	
Mumps*	Exclude child for five days after onset of swelling	
Threadworms	None	
Tonsillitis	None	