



*Huxley C.E. Primary School and
Utkinton St. Paul's C.E. Primary School*



“Developing confident children through creativity and choice within a Christian community”

Attendance Policy

“Enabling every child to fulfil his/her potential in a nurturing Christian environment”

Attendance Policy Statement

Good attendance is essential if pupils are to take full advantage of school and gain the appropriate skills to equip them for life. It is important to ensure that our most vulnerable pupils are given the same opportunities, which may mean extra support in certain cases.

The school aims to achieve good attendance by operating an Attendance Policy within which staff, pupils, parents/carers, local community and the Education Welfare Service can work in partnership. The school will monitor attendance and ensure quick and early intervention if a problem is identified.

All staff will encourage good attendance and will liaise with home and partner agencies as appropriate. Good attendance will be seen as an achievement in its own right and recognised as such by the school. The Attendance Policy is based on the premise of equal opportunities for all.

Roles and Responsibilities

Head Teacher: Lorna Pleavin – To monitor the attendance and welfare of children throughout the school.

Admin Officer: Jo Wright (Utkinton)/Jackie Lloyd (Huxley) - To monitor the attendance and punctuality of individual children. To alert the Head Teacher or Designated Safeguarding Lead of any concerns.

Governors: To monitor attendance records and targets on a regular basis.

Education Welfare Officer - Susie Sheasby: To support the school in achieving its objectives by following Local Authority Guidelines.

Aims

- To improve the quality of school life.
- To create a culture in which good attendance and punctuality is ‘normality’.
- To demonstrate to pupils, parent(s), carer(s) and staff that the school values good attendance and punctuality and to recognise that good regular attendance is an achievement in itself.
- To reduce the incidence of regular non-attendance/persistent lateness for a small percentage of pupils.
- To be consistent in the implementation of rewards and sanctions.
- To value the individual and be socially and educationally inclusive.

Objectives

- To involve children in improving and celebrating good attendance and punctuality.
- To improve communication with parents/carers about the need for, and benefits of, regular school attendance and punctuality.
- To recognise the important role that staff play in promoting and monitoring good attendance and punctuality.

Targets

- To have an effective means of collecting and monitoring attendance information.
- To ensure that attendance and punctuality data is available and used effectively by school leaders and staff in conjunction with the EWO.
- To agree specific targets for the whole school and report these to stakeholders.
- To target support where appropriate and within a reasonable time frame.

- To keep parents/carers, pupils and governors informed of policy and practice.
- To ensure that the school is aware of government targets which may have been set for vulnerable groups, such as Children in Care and communicate with agencies as appropriate, e.g. Welfare Call.

Procedure

- Children are expected to attend school for the full 190 days of the academic year, unless there is a good reason for absence. There are two types of absence:
 1. Authorised – where the school approves pupil absence.
 2. Unauthorised – where the school cannot approve absence.
- It is expected that parents/carers will provide an explanation if their child is absent on the first day that the absence occurs. This can be via letter, telephone call, use of teacher2parents, in person at the Office or by appointment.
- If contact to explain the reason for the child's absence is not made by the parent(s)/carer(s), then the Admin Officer will try to make contact via telephone call/text – this will be done on the first day of the absence. If contact cannot be made then the SLT will endeavour to do so (in extreme cases this may involve visiting the family home). This will be followed up by a letter after 3 days of unexplained absence – this contact should be recorded in the register.
- Following sickness children must not return to school until 48 hours after the last bout of vomiting or diarrhoea in line with NHS guidance.
- As a school, we follow the infection control guidelines from Public Health England.
- The Head Teacher will regularly remind parents/carers of the importance of good attendance and punctuality through the Monday Mail and end of term Newsletters.
- Parents/carers are required to sign the Home-School Agreement at the start of each academic year which sets out the school's expectations in terms of attendance and punctuality.

Completing the Register

- The twice daily requirement to register pupils is an opportunity for the school to receive children formally and serves as an introduction to sessions. At Huxley, registers are open from 8.45am and at Utkinton, 9am.
- Registers provide the daily record of the attendance and punctuality of all pupils – they are legal documents which may be required in a court of law, e.g. as evidence in prosecution for non-attendance at school.
- At Huxley, registers are taken each day by the Class Teachers in paper version and the Admin Officer is responsible for ensuring data is transferred onto SIMs. Pupil attendance is recorded with a black line and any known absences are recorded as a red 0 with the appropriate code (see Register Code Outline in the front of each Register) written inside in black ink.
- At Utkinton, Class Teachers complete their register directly onto SIMs.
- All absences should be supported by a note from a parent/carer and these should be retained in Registers until the end of term and then transferred by the Admin Officer to the pupil's individual file. A verbal 'reason' should be transferred to the verbal absence form (kept inside the Absence Book on the Admin Officer's desk). This applies to phone calls taken by staff in relation to absence. Forms must be completed in their entirety.
- Attendance data stored on SIMs is compliant with current GDPR and is overseen by our appointed Data Protection Officer.
- The Registers close at 9.10am (Huxley) and 9.25am (Utkinton) - Huxley's must be returned to the Office.
- The Admin Officer will check absences at 9.30am and endeavour to contact the parent if no absence has been communicated.

Lateness

School begins at 8.45am at Huxley and 9am at Utkinton. All pupils are expected to be in school for registration by this time. Pupils who arrive after 9.10am at Huxley and 9.25am at Utkinton must enter the school through the Main Entrance and be signed in by a parent/carer using the designated Signing In/Out Book.

Identification and Referral

- Cause for concern in relation to attendance and punctuality is identified by the Class Teacher or Admin Officer/Designation Safeguarding Lead and must be shared with the Head Teacher.
- A formal review of attendance is carried out on a termly basis, however, SLT/DSL may monitor attendance or punctuality on an informal, regular basis. If a pattern of absence occurs or if attendance falls below the National Average of 95%, parents/carers are notified by way of a letter to alert parents/carers to this and remind them about the importance of good regular attendance and punctuality (we will also encourage them to come in and speak to a member of the SLT if there are reasons for these absences, e.g. SEND).
- Following the letter being issued, there will be regular monitoring of a child's attendance and/or punctuality, and, if there is no improvement with half a term, a second letter will be sent out to invite parents/carers to attend a meeting with the Head Teacher and/or DSL, to discuss their child's absences and what needs to be put in place to enable improvement.
- Further persistent, unauthorised absence could result in an Education Supervision Order or parental prosecution.

Holidays during Term Time

In 2013, the Department for Education (DFE) announced important amendments to legislation surrounding the taking of holidays in term time.

As of 1st September 2013, the legislation which previously granted Head Teachers the discretion to approve up to two weeks (i.e. 10 school days) leave of absence during term time for the purposes of a family holiday in special circumstances has changed.

The Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006 (as amended) now state that a leave of absence during term time can only be approved by a Head Teacher/School Governing Body when:

- A written request is made in advance of the leave being taken and the circumstances of the requested leave are 'exceptional'.

There is no longer any provision for 'holidays' in the regulations.

Following guidance from the DfE the Head Teacher and the School's Governing Body on receipt of a written request for an absence of leave from a parent/carer will consider whether the circumstances of the request are 'exceptional' and communicate to the parent/carer if their request has been approved or not. A leave of absence during term time for the purposes of a holiday is not normally considered to qualify as exceptional.

If a leave of absence goes ahead after a request for approval has been declined, the absence will be recorded on the pupil's registration record as unauthorised.

Should an unauthorised leave of absence be of duration of 10 consecutive school sessions (i.e. five school days) or more, on the request of the Head Teacher or School Governing Body, the local authority will issue a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) to **each** of the child's parents/carers.

Penalties for unauthorised absence

The Education (Penalty Notices) Regulations 2007 (as amended) set out the amounts of and periods in which penalties are to be paid as follows:

Period for Payment of FPN

- Penalty Amount Paid within 21 days of the FPN being issued - £60 (per parent, per child)
- After 21 days but before 28 days of the FPN being issued - £120 (per parent, per child)

Parents/carers should not plan for their child to be absent without gaining prior permission. Requests for absences with exceptional circumstances should be made in writing to the Head Teacher using the correct form (Appendix 2). The Head Teacher cannot retrospectively authorise a planned absence.

Monitoring

- The Head Teacher/DSL monitors each child's individual attendance and whole school attendance termly and issues letters/arranges meetings with parents/carers as appropriate. However, staff are encouraged to inform the Head Teacher/DSL of any unusual or concerning patterns of attendance within this time frame.
- Registers are inspected annually by an Education Welfare Officer who provides feedback.
- An attendance summary is provided to governors via the Head Teacher's report and is also an agenda item for committee meetings.

This policy was drawn up in November 2018 in consultation with staff, governors and the EWO, and should be read in conjunction with:

- The Home-School Agreement;
- Child Protection Policy;
- Safeguarding Policy.

Headteacher: *Gareth Coyne (Acting Headteacher)*

Governor (Huxley): *Stephen Ratledge*

Governor (Utkinton): *Simon Lewin*

Date: *November 2018*

Review Date: **Autumn 2020**

Appendix 1 – Information for Parents/Carers

What does the law say about non-attendance?

Under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996, parents or carers may be taken to court and prosecuted if their child does not attend school regularly and their absences are unauthorised for in other words, the school cannot or has not given permission for them to be off school).

Education Welfare Officers will do their best to help you and your child to improve their attendance prior to taking any formal action.

Before Penalty Notices are issued, you will receive a written warning which will explain the extent of your child's non-attendance and the possibility of you receiving a Penalty Notice if their attendance does not improve in 15 days. During this period, your child must not have any further unauthorised absences from school, if there is absence during this time you will be issued with a fixed penalty notice.

Some facts around school attendance

Did you know that 90% attendance means 4 whole weeks off school.

This level of attendance is not good. 90% means your child will struggle with their school work because they have the equivalent of 1 day off every fortnight.

17 days off school every year means your child will probably obtain a whole grade lower in their exams than they are really capable of.

If your child's attendance is above 96% you are giving them the opportunity to achieve and succeed...

...not just now but throughout their lives!

If your child arrives late they often feel embarrassed, struggle with class work and don't feel ready for the day.

Please ensure that your child arrives to school on time.

If your child arrives after the close of registration they will be

marked as unauthorised Late (U) and you

could be issued with a **Fixed Penalty Notice**

Warning which may result in a fine of up to

€120 per child.



DID YOU KNOW

5 minutes late each day = 3 school days lost!

10 minutes late each day = 6.5 school days lost!

15 minutes late each day = 10 school days lost!

20 minutes late each day = 13 school days lost!

30 minutes late each day = 19 school days lost!





LEAVE OF ABSENCE REQUEST

I have parental responsibility for the following student and I am requesting authorisation for them to be absent from school as detailed below:

NAME OF STUDENT: _____ CLASS: _____

ABSENT DATES: FROM ____ / ____ / ____ to ____ / ____ / ____ (Inclusive) TOTAL DAYS ABSENT: _____

PLEASE PROVIDE THE REASON THIS ABSENCE IS BEING REQUESTED:

SIGNED: _____ (PARENT/ CARER) DATE: _____

(PARENT/ CARERS PLEASE ALSO COMPLETE YOUR PART OF THE REPLY SECTION BELOW)

LEAVE OF ABSENCE REPLY

NAME OF STUDENT: _____ CLASS: _____

ABSENT DATES: FROM ____ / ____ / ____ to ____ / ____ / ____ (Inclusive)

HEADTEACHER'S DECISION

YOUR REQUEST IS AUTHORISED ON THIS OCCASION

YOUR REQUEST IS NOT AUTHORISED ON THIS OCCASION BECAUSE*:

*** Parent/ Carer may receive a Fixed Penalty Notice if you take your child out of school**

SIGNED: _____ DATE: _____

(If not the Headteacher's signature, then the person signing this form is authorised)