

Owner	Principal
Date Updated	April 2019
Review Date	September 2020
Audience	All



Attendance Policy

Our vision at Harrow Gate Primary Academy is to create a positive, welcoming and secure atmosphere where children, staff and parents/carers feel valued and where an exciting and stimulating curriculum is provided in an engaging and attractive environment. In order for children to achieve their utmost, full attendance is not only an entitlement but is vital.

Our approach and philosophy is that attendance is very much a partnership between home and Academy and we aim to work with our families to ensure the fullest possible attendance for all of our children. Support is available within the Academy through our school nurse and our Parent Support Adviser and we have also developed good relationships with local agencies.

Regular and punctual attendance is an essential prerequisite to effective learning. Attendance is clearly linked to achievement and attainment and research shows that poor school attendance has a detrimental effect on future prospects and the future learning potential of our children. Poor attendance can also have a detrimental effect on our children's well-being and personal development, by making it difficult for them to make and keep friendships and to be included socially within the Academy.

Harrow Gate Primary Academy aims to actively promote attendance and to limit and discourage absence.

Aims

Our consistent policy and practice on attendance will enable us to:

- ✓ Enable our children to take the fullest advantage of the educational opportunities which our Academy has to offer
- ✓ Increase achievement and attainment levels
- ✓ Avoid disruption to learning
- ✓ Enable our children to grow and develop personally and socially
- ✓ Value high levels of attendance and punctuality
- ✓ Reduce levels of unauthorised absenteeism and lateness
- ✓ Reassure parents/carers and the wider community that good attendance is a priority issue for our Academy
- ✓ Ensure our children are safe, as children who are not in school may be at increased risk
- ✓ Work in partnership to overcome the barriers or perceived barriers to attendance
- ✓ Monitor our data effectively to identify those most at risk
- ✓ Prepare our children for the time-keeping discipline of adult life

Parent/Carers' Responsibility

It is the responsibility of parent/carers to ensure that children of compulsory school age regularly attend their registered school. The Education Act 1966 clearly states

"If any child of compulsory school age, who is a registered pupil at a school, fails to attend regularly at the school, his or her parent/carer is guilty of an offence."

Parents/Carers are responsible for:

- Ensuring that their child/children attend school regularly
- Ensuring that their child/children arrive at school on time
- Ensuring that they collect their child/children on time at the end of the day
- Informing the Academy of their child's/children's absence on the first day of non-attendance by 9.30am

- Informing the Academy of any changes to their contact details
- Informing the Academy if someone other than themselves will be picking up their child/children
- Keeping the Academy informed of anything that might affect the child/children's attendance or punctuality
- Ensuring that they work with the Academy if attendance becomes a problem
- Trying to get medical, dental and optician appointments after the Academy finishes at 3.15pm
- Staying in touch

Every child becomes ill from time to time. If your child/children is/are absent, please ring the Academy before 9.30am to advise us of the reason for absence. If possible, please also state how long you anticipate your child/children will be absent.

We encourage parents/carers to try and make medical appointments such as GPs and dental check-ups after school or during school holidays. We recognise this is not always possible, therefore please ensure your child is only away from school for the minimum amount of time. Please bring your child into the Academy and collect them when appropriate, to allow time to travel to the appointment and return them to the Academy afterwards if possible.

We ask for medical evidence to be provided.

Keeping us informed

We are required to keep up to date pupil records. Please keep us informed of any changes to:

- Your child's name (birth name and other names)
- Address
- Phone Numbers – as we now use a text messaging service, it is vital that you inform us each time a mobile or home phone contact number is changed, or you may miss out on important Academy information
- Any change to contact details
- Parental responsibility or contact issues - keeping us informed is very important if your child/children should not have access to, or be collected by, particular adults.

Registration Times

Nursery: 8:40am – 11:40am

12:30pm – 3:30pm

Reception, Year 1 and Year 2:

8:55am – 3:10pm

Year 3, 4, 5, 6:

8:55 - 3:15pm

Registers close at 9.00, after which time your child is late and will be marked as an "L" in the class register. After 9.30, your child will be marked as "U", which is an **unauthorised** absence and does not count towards attendance. Late attendance is recorded on your child's report.

First day contact

If you have not informed the Academy of your child's/children's absence or potential lateness by 9.30, we will contact you by phone or text, asking you to contact the school.

If we are unable to contact you, we may, within the next 2-3 days, either:

- Make a home visit and/or
- Inform the Attendance Service

Reasons for absence

Parents/Carers cannot authorise absence; only the Academy can do this. The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, regulate under what circumstances school may grant leave of absence:

Attendance Codes

A set of standard codes are used consistently within the register. These codes are imputed into the electronic register as required twice daily, and are used to give an in-depth meaning to the register and provide statistical meaning to the absences.

Code	School Meaning	Statistical Meaning	Physical meaning
/	Present (AM)	Present	In for whole session
\	Present (PM)	Present	In for whole session
B	Educated off site (not dual registered)	Approved educational activity	Out for whole session
C	Other authorised circumstances	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session
D	Dual Registration	Present	Out for whole session
E	Excluded	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session
G	Family Holiday (Not Agreed)	Unauthorised absence	Out for whole session
I	Illness (not medical Appointments)	Authorised absence	Out for whole session
J	Interview	Approved educational activity	Out for whole session
L	Late (before register closes)	Present	Late for session
M	Medical / Dental appointment	Authorised absence	Out for whole session
N	No reason yet given for absence	Unauthorised Absence	Out for whole session
O	Unauthorised absence	Unauthorised absence	Out for whole session
P	Approved Sporting Activity	Present	Out for whole session
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence	Out for whole session
S	Study Leave	Approved educational activity	Out for whole session
T	Traveller Absence	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session
U	Late (After register closes)	Unauthorised absence	Late for session
V	Educational visit / trip	Approved educational activity	Out for whole session
X	DFE – School closed to pupils	Attendance not required	Out for whole session
Y	Enforced closure	Attendance not required	Out for whole session

!	DFE 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
*	DFE Z – pupil not on roll	Attendance not required	Out for whole session

Authorised absence

There is an expectation that every child attends school every day unless there is genuine sickness or a legitimate reason for them not doing so. Absence may generally be authorised for the following reasons:

- Illness
- Medical or dental appointments
- Family bereavement
- Days of religious observance

Absence may also be authorised for exceptional circumstances which must be discussed and agreed in advance with the Academy. Harrow Gate Primary Academy will **not** authorise excessive amounts of absence, particularly where children have a history of irregular attendance.

Family Holidays

Amendments have been made to the 2006 regulations in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013. These amendments, described below, came into force on 1st September 2013.

Term-time Holiday

HeadTeacher/Principals may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are **exceptional circumstances** as to why the holiday cannot be taken at any time outside of term time. These circumstances must be detailed on the leave of absence form obtained from the Academy office prior to the holiday, as retrospective consent cannot be given. Evidence in support of these circumstances must also be provided to the Academy when the leave of absence form is submitted - for example, a doctor's or health professional's certificate in support of a family crisis or a serious illness.

Penalty Notices

Amendments have also been made to the 2007 Regulations in the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013. These amendments, as described below, came into force on 1st September 2013.

The 2007 regulations set out the procedures for issuing penalty notices (fines) to each parent/carer who fails to ensure their child's/children's regular attendance at school or fails to ensure that their excluded child is not in a public place during the first 5 days of exclusion.

Parents/Carers must now pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days.

To ensure the consistent application of the penalty notice provisions, penalty notices will ordinarily be issued where the following criteria are met:

- Where there are 10 sessions (5 school days) recorded as unauthorised absence due to a holiday in term time

or

- Where a child has at least 20 sessions (10 school days) recorded as unauthorised absence during the previous 14 weeks and the pupil has failed a 15 day warning period

or

- Where a child who has been excluded is present in a public place during the first 5 days without reasonable justification

Penalty notices will only be issued within the terms of the Code of Conduct. The Attendance and Exclusions service is responsible for the administration and issue of penalty notices in the area of Stockton on Tees.

Unauthorised absence

Unauthorised absence is where no explanation has been given for the child's absence or where the explanation offered is considered by the Academy to be unacceptable or not genuine.

Absence will **not be** authorised in the following circumstances:

- Where no explanation has been offered by the parent/carer
- The explanation is unsatisfactory e.g. shopping, birthdays
- Family holidays which have been taken without prior consent
- Lateness after close of registers without a satisfactory explanation
- Any requests for authorised absence when the Academy does not agree that leave should be given

Lateness

When children arrive late at the Academy, it not only impacts on that child's education but also on other children in the class if teaching is interrupted. Registers close at 9.00, after which time your child is late and will be marked as an "L" in the class register. After 9.30, your child will be marked as "U", which is an unauthorised absence and does not count towards attendance. Our attendance policy should ensure that:

- Registration procedures are consistently applied by all staff
- We communicate our policy regularly to parents/carers
- We balance any sanctions with positive encouragement, as we would not wish to discourage a latecomer from attending at all
- We praise and acknowledge punctuality and latecomers who improve
- We follow up reasons for lateness and look for patterns or problems
- We have an effective system for monitoring lateness, including a text sent to inform parents
- We ensure that teachers set a good example by arriving punctually in classrooms for registration and for lessons
- We recognise that the responsibility for children failing to arrive punctually may rest with parents/carers rather than with the child

Regular unauthorised absence (persistent absence) (Red)

A child is deemed to be a persistent absentee if his or her attendance is less than 90%, regardless of whether or not the absences have been authorised.

Parent/carers of children with persistent absence may incur a penalty notice but it is hoped that the preventative work that the Academy and outside agencies will undertake with families will help to secure improved and regular school attendance.

School Attendance Panel Meetings (Amber)

Should a child continue to demonstrate unexplained absences, they may be subject to fast track procedures in order to secure good attendance, including a school attendance panel. This is a supportive approach to explore and overcome any possible barriers to attendance. An action plan will be drawn up and targets will be set for any child involved. Other agreements may involve providing the Academy

with evidence of medical appointments and demonstrating co-operation with agencies involved. Failure to work with the Academy and other agencies may result in legal action being taken, such as the issuing of penalty notices, prosecution, an Education Supervision Order and a Parenting Order.

Removing children from the Academy roll and CME (children missing education)

It is important that families get the support they need to secure a child's education. Academies have a legal duty to inform the Local Authority if a child is leaving the Academy. Often this proves helpful to the family when trying to secure a new school/academy, especially when relocating to a new area. To help us in this process we encourage parents/carers to inform us as soon as they are aware of any impending departure and provide as much information regarding new address, forwarding school etc. Please contact the Academy if you are unsure of the procedure.

Monitoring and evaluation

Our registers will provide us with data which can then be used to support the monitoring and management of a whole Academy attendance issues. Data will be collected and analysed on a half-term basis within the Academy, followed by a monitoring meeting with our Education Welfare Officer. Data will be used:

- To facilitate and encourage early intervention
- To identify patterns of absenteeism
- To identify individual children and particular groups of children who may be at risk of becoming persistent absentees
- To look at attendance by individuals, vulnerable groups, classes, year groups and cohorts
- To match attendance with attainment
- To report attendance issues to parents and to share information

Monitoring process appendix A

Rewards and Incentives

Our system of rewards and incentives ensures that we have an emphasis on promoting and encouraging good attendance and on recognising improved attendance to offer further encouragement.

Who to acknowledge:

- 100% attenders, half termly, termly and annually
- Consistently good attenders – over 96%
- Poor attenders who show an improvement, including children who return after long-term absence
- Classes with consistently good attendance

Excellent or improved attendance will be acknowledged by a range of rewards or incentives, which may include:

- Congratulatory letters to parents
- Certificates
- Stickers
- Class Percentage Attendance charts displayed weekly
- Additional 5 minutes play for 100% attendance
- Personal congratulations by senior school staff
- Promotion of the Achievement Resilience and Trust ethos
- Assemblies, if possible with parents/carers present

- An annual prize draw for anyone who has achieved 96% or above over the year

Sanctions

Monitoring of attendance should not continue indefinitely but should have a clearly defined time limit of 6 weeks. After 6 weeks, a check will be made to identify those children who have failed to complete at least 1 week's full attendance with **no lates**. The parents/carers of these children will be contacted and made aware of the school's concerns. If there is no improvement, further appropriate remedial action can be initiated.

Children whose attendance **falls below 90%** will be given an attendance card or a sticker chart, which is completed either by themselves or by a parent/carer and signed each week. Improvement can therefore be acknowledged or a lack of improvement addressed. Some children may thrive when they are given attendance cards, as the personal interest taken in them by a member of staff and the sense of responsibility assumed by the child can combine to produce improvement. If by working together we are unable to secure a child's regular school attendance, we will ask the Education Welfare Service to support and in some cases enforce attendance.

The Attendance Service may use the following legislation to secure attendance, via the fast track, to securing attendance process.

- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007
- The Education (Parenting Contracts and Parenting Orders) (England) Regulations 2007
- Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The legislation allows the use of the following sanctions:
- Parenting contracts
- Parenting orders
- Education supervision orders
- Penalty notices

Role of the Principal

It is the responsibility of the Principal to create an Academy ethos which values and promotes excellent levels of attendance and punctuality and to ensure that the whole Academy attendance policy is implemented and reviewed regularly. This policy has been agreed by both governors and staff and also communicated to children, staff, parents/carers and governors. All parent/carers are given a copy of this policy on enrolment.

A copy will also be made available on the Academy website and in the Academy Policy File, which is available in the Academy office.



Attendance Flow Chart

All pupils attendance will be monitored in the penultimate week before each half term.

Actions

Children with between 96-100%
Spot prizes for parents and rewards for children.

Children with
between 90-96%

Children with
between 85-90%

Children with less
than 85%

If a child incurs 10 unauthorised
absences in one go. (One full week out
of school). Which would also include a
holidays.

Outcomes

Parents will receive a letter offering
medical advice for common childhood
illness alongside weekly attendance texts
and possibly phone calls.

Parents incur a meeting. An action plan
will be completed alongside weekly
attendance texts and possibly phone
calls.

Parents incur a meeting where an Early
Help Assessment will be completed
alongside weekly attendance texts and
phone calls

Results

Monitoring and texts
continue until the
attendance is above 96%

Percentage continues to fall
and attendance escalates to an
Amber plan.

Monitoring and texts
continue until the
attendance is above 96%

Percentage Continues to fall
and attendance escalates to
a Red plan.

Percentage
continues to fall

Referral to Stockton Council is made for
legal proceedings.
Reception children are kept on record
and referred after their 5th birthday.
Nursery children lose their place.

Amber Attendance Action Plan

Child's Name: Current Attendance percentage:	Attendees:	Date:
<i>A copy of the child's current attendance certificate is shared with parents. Record of parents and teachers comments.</i>	Agreed protocol with parents; <ul style="list-style-type: none">On the morning of further absences, you must make Sam (not the class teacher) aware of the reason for absence. This can be via the <i>schoolgateway app</i> messaging service or by phone 01624 673984.Parents must send their child to school when they feel it is within the minor illness category, allow, and trust the staff to send the child home if we feel they cannot continue their learning.Provide medical evidence for appointments during a standard school day (please see medical evidence, to see what is accepted). You do not have to have a GP appointment for this type of evidence.Make non-emergency appointments out of the school times on school days.A sibling being absent, or a parent's illness or appointment will not be recognised as a reason for a child being absent from school and will automatically receive a non-authorised absence mark on the register.	<u>Medical Evidence:</u> This can be photographed and send to office administrator (not the class teacher) via Class dojo or alternatively can be brought into school in person. <u>We accept:</u> Appointment cards Appointment letters Screenshots of NHS appointment texts Photo of the electronic booking in machines (hospitals and Doctors). Photo of the medication label A pharmacist visit receipt Or a pharmacist visit note or appointment card

Punctuality and Attendance procedures and responsibilities

Teachers and Teaching Assistants will:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete all registers accurately • Insist on an apology from late children • Teach the importance of punctuality and attendance as part of the HGA curriculum • Ask children where they've been for either late or absence and note on the register (SIMS) any reply. (Make sure you click history and mark it on one of the absent days).
School Office will:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authorise the N mark text messaging service every morning. • Accept any reasons back from the service onto SIMS • Make changed to the marks on SIMS (e.g. N to an I). • Mark on SIMS any reasons for absence and late a parents provide verbally. • Send out weekly texts to attendance groups. • Take a picture of any medical evidence and place into children's attendance folders on the network
Education Welfare Officer will:	<p><u>Daily- after 10am</u> Monitor children on red attendance plans. If absent follow with a phone call or home visit if you feel the recorded reason to be inadequate. Record these phone calls in the weekly attendance call log, and home visits on the weekly home visit log.</p> <p><u>Weekly</u> Monitor the attendance mark book every Monday morning. Phone any parents of children in in an amber attendance category and have had an amber or red weekly update. If you feel the recorded reason to be inadequate. Record these phone calls in the weekly attendance call log, and home visits on the weekly home visit log. Every Friday Send the attendance message update via School Gateway</p> <p><u>Half termly</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor children's attendance the penultimate week (Monday) before every half term break years 1-6 Generate relevant amber and red attendance letter via SIMs. Send the relevant attendance letter home to children (Tuesday). • Place a copy of the letter in all children's file on the network • Hold amber plan meetings with Attendance senior leader- make an action plan with parents for the following half term • Place all action plans in children's attendance folders, on the network • Provide all teachers with a list of children on attendance plans • Complete all new referral paperwork • Place all paperwork received back from LA into children's network folders.
Attendance Senior Leader will:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor children's attendance the penultimate week (Monday) before every half term break nursery and reception • Send the relevant attendance letter home to children (Tuesday)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Place a copy of the letter in all children's file on the network • Hold amber plan meetings with Education Welfare office- make an action plan with parents for the following half term • Place all action plans in children's attendance folders, on the network • Provide all teachers with a list of children on attendance plans • Send letters for children losing their place.
Principal will:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor the attendance of any children in child serves. • Finalise the paperwork of referrals. • Take a copy and place all holiday and leave requests into children's attendance folders on the network • Hold meetings with Education Welfare Officer of any children on a red attendance plan • Make final decision of any nursery child losing their place.