



## Harmondsworth Primary School

### Attendance Policy

#### Aims

Harmondsworth Primary School aims to ensure our school environment promotes and maintains high levels of attendance for all our pupils so that they benefit fully from the educational opportunities available.

It is widely known that the link between a student's attendance and attainment is irrefutable.

#### The right to education

A child's right to education is set out in Every Child Matters (ECM):

- Be healthy
- Stay safe
- Enjoy and achieve
- Make a positive contribution
- Achieve economic well being

#### The Human Rights Act also identifies the following entitlement:

- The right to education, play, leisure and cultural activity
- The right to protection from work exploitation
- The right to special care and social integration for children and young people with disabilities
- The right to have a say in issues that affect them

#### Legal Framework

Harmondsworth Primary School works with the support of the Participation Team to enforce the legal framework as defined in The Education Act 1996, The Children's Act 1989 (section 36) and the Education Act 2004 . There are responsibilities on Parents and schools and the LA as outlined in this policy.

#### Attendance

Harmondsworth Primary School believes that attendance at school is an essential pre-requisite for a successful and fulfilling school career. Prolonged absence, irregular attendance and lack of punctuality can all serve to undermine educational achievement and result in considerable long-term disadvantage to children and young people. Pupils who do not attend regularly may be placed at considerable risk and, in some cases, may be drawn into patterns of anti social or criminal behaviour.

The DFE expects children to attend school at least 95% of the time.

#### Roles and Responsibilities

##### Parents/Carers



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- To ensure the regular attendance of their children
  - To ensure that their child arrives on time
  - To keep the school informed regarding their child's absences
  - To arrange holidays at times when the school is closed
  - To liaise with the school regarding requests for extended leave
  - To keep the school apprised of latest and accurate contact details including address and telephone numbers.
  - To arrange medical appointments out of school hours where possible

## **Role of the class teacher**

- To ensure that registers are marked regularly and accurately (am and pm)
- To encourage parents to notify the school regarding their child's absence, preferably in writing.
- To follow up unexplained absences with the Welfare Officer
- To liaise with the Welfare Officer in order to make sure that information about a child's attendance is up to date.
- To encourage and support pupil's regular attendance.

## **The School**

- To provide a welcome and safe environment
- To communicate with parents and carers
- To promote good attendance for all
- To keep accurate and up to date records on children's punctuality and attendance and to liaise with the LA regarding concerns over children's attendance
- To consider if absence is authorised or unauthorised.
- To target persistently absent pupils. (The DFE deems a pupil to be a persistent absentee if attendance is below 90%)
- To use our Family Support Worker to promote good attendance punctuality / in the Early Years
- To use our Family Support worker to meet with and support the parents of children with poor attendance/punctuality

## **The Role of pupils**

- To know the time of the school day
- To know that it is important to attend school on time
- To know that staff have a positive expectation of them regarding their work and behaviour.
- To do what they can to arrive at school regularly and on time

## **Role of the Governing Body**

- To ensure there is clear policy and guidance applied fairly by the Head Teacher
- To ensure that attendance data is published in line with legal requirements
- To ensure that attendance data is presented at Governing Body Meetings
- To appoint a governor with responsibility for attendance
- To request information on pupils with poor attendance and support the school in developing positive strategies for improving attendance



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- To ensure that attendance is evaluated and reported on in the Self Evaluation Form (SEF)

### **Role of Participation Officer**

- To provide the link between home and school concerning attendance and lateness issues
- To undertake the inspection of registers on a regular basis
- To evaluate the schools procedures and targeting of pupils
- To enforce the law on school attendance

### **Request for Exceptional leave**

Amendments to the 2006 regulations remove references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. The amendments make clear that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Headteachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

We recognise that there may be exceptional circumstances which can be considered by the Head Teacher for leave during term time. Parents must write to the Head Teacher to obtain authorisation during term time. Each request will be considered individually, taking account of the nature of the request. All exceptional leave will be logged on the student's record.

If leave is taken without authorisation a Fixed Penalty of £60 per parent per child may be issued by the Participation Officer. Parents must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days.

### **Procedures**

#### **Absence**

1. On the first day of absence the school asks parents to inform the school of the reason by means of a phone call or letter.
2. The absence letters/records of phone calls to explain absence are kept in the registers and the absence is recorded using the appropriate symbol.
3. The Welfare Officer and Family Support Worker monitor the registers on a daily/weekly basis and will send letters home to parents who have not contacted the school.
4. Parents/Carers will be invited into school to discuss on going attendance concerns.
5. The pupil will have an individual attendance plan



6. If absences persist the case will be referred to the Participation Officer. The DFE deems a pupil to be a persistent absentee if attendance is below 85%
7. Attendance Panel - If there is continued unauthorised absence (after writing to parents and meetings have taken place) the school will involve the Participation Officer who will initiate a Fast Track to Court Attendance Panel.

## **The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007**

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

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

Amendments to 2007 regulations will reduce the timescales for paying a penalty notice. Parents must, from 1 September 2013, pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. If the notice remains unpaid after 28 days the parent will be summoned to the Magistrate's Court and could be fined up to £1000.

This brings attendance penalty notices into line with other types of penalty notices and allows local authorities to act faster on prosecutions

## **Lateness**

1. If the child arrives after 8.50 and before the register closes a red L will be entered into the register. This will be an authorised late.
2. If the child arrives after 9.00 a black U will be entered into the register. This is an unauthorised late.
3. Parents of children who are regularly late will be sent a letter. The letters are staged and the third letter will involve a meeting at the school. Further lateness will be referred to the Education Welfare Officer.

## **Early Arrivals**

Parents of children who regularly arrive unaccompanied early (before 8.40 am) in the morning will be contacted.

## **End of the school day collection**

Parents must collect their children promptly at the end of the school day or after clubs.

## **Incentives**

Harmondsworth Primary School promotes good attendance:

- Weekly attendance cup awarded to the class with the best attendance
- Termly attendance certificates awarded to children with 100% attendance

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- Annual attendance aware for children with 100% attendance
  - Attendance is highlighted on newsletters to parents

The attendance policy will be accessible to parents and will feature on the school's website.

This policy will be reviewed annually.

Eleesa Dowding  
Headteacher  
Autumn 2016

Review Date: Autumn 2017