



ATTENDANCE POLICY & PROCEDURES
Spring 2017

AIMS

Hamworthy Park Junior School is committed to providing a full and efficient educational experience to all pupils. In order to achieve this, good school attendance is essential.

In our school, all staff communicate to pupils that their contribution in school is valued; furthermore all staff endeavour to make school a fruitful and enjoyable place to be so that a positive attitude to school and learning is fostered.

Staff do all they can to ensure maximum attendance for all pupils. Any problems that impede full attendance are identified and addressed as a priority. Staff actively promote and encourage 100% attendance for all pupils. This is celebrated through assemblies with general attendance figures shared, so that children can see class level and year group level, as well as statistics for the whole school.

PROCEDURES FOR PROMOTING FULL ATTENDANCE

All teaching staff take an electronic attendance register daily and actively carry out the following activities:

- Are aware of the registration process including registration regulations and education law.
- Complete accurate registers at the beginning of each morning and afternoon sessions.
- Promote a positive attitude to attendance on a daily basis via the electronic registers 'daily statistic page'.
- Promote a positive attitude to pupils returning to school after absence.
- Complete the 'First Day Absence' proforma (Appendix 1) indicating any children absent during registration. This must be returned to the school office promptly after morning and afternoon registration.
- Pass on information or concerns about absence or punctuality immediately to the Office Manager so that an appropriate response can be agreed.

The following rewards are available for full attendance.

- i. A weekly top attendance class; a certificate is given to be displayed in the classroom (Appendix 2).
- ii. A certificate for 100% attendance (per child) during each half-term and term and an overall certificate for a whole year of 100% attendance. A trip will be organised for children who achieve 100% for a whole year. Special awards are given to any children who achieve 100% during their full 4 years at HPJS.

Our school regularly makes it clear to all parents/carers that the school should be contacted on the first day of any absence by 9.30am. This information is shared via our school prospectus, on our website and in our newsletters. A designated messaging service is available to any parent/carer reporting their child as absent.

The Office Manager or Admin staff contact parent/carers of any pupil who is absent and for whom no message has been received. If there is no response from a parent/carer we contact the next emergency contact on the list. This is to ensure the safety of all children. If, for any reason, the school is unsure of the reason for absence, we will call parents/carers to clarify the situation and at times will challenge the reason given. This, again is to ensure, that our school is doing all it can to safeguard the children within our school community. If we cannot ascertain the safety or whereabouts of a child we will inform other agencies including the Outreach and Attendance Team (in line with the 'Children Missing from Education' guidelines), Social Care or the Police.

Children who arrive late to school must be signed into school at the school office. A text is sent to parents/carers each day of any child who arrives to school late. The text alerts parents/carers to the lateness and asks parents/carers to leave earlier to ensure their child arrives on time.

All staff continually make suggestions and implement additional rewards for good attendance. Improved attendance is also rewarded on a regular basis.

The Office Manager monitors attendance daily, weekly and half-termly – both of individuals and overall.

PROCEDURE WHEN THERE IS CONCERN ABOUT ATTENDANCE

An audit of attendance is carried out by the Office Manager every half-term. The following actions are undertaken by the Office Manager during these audits:

- A standard letter is sent via post to any parent/carers whose child's attendance has dropped just below 95% The school will analyse the reasons and days taken as absence and will make a decision as to whether a letter is appropriate at this stage. (see Appendix 3)
- If attendance does not improve a more targeted letter is sent to parents/carers via post, clearly identifying the cause for concern and stating what is expected from parents/carers. This can include being asked for medical evidence from a GP for any absences thereafter.
- If attendance drops further or the school feel it is appropriate, parents/carers will be invited to a meeting in school with the Office Manager. During these meetings any agreed action will be recorded (again, this could include requesting medical evidence from the date of the meeting onwards) and a review date specified (if necessary).
- Any meetings arranged with the Office Manager, will be organised via liaison with the Head of School and where appropriate, the Pastoral Care Team or SENCo.

The above procedures are reviewed during a joint audit between the Office Manager and the Outreach and Attendance Team which takes place every half-term. During these meetings further action can be taken, whereby there may be intervention by the Outreach and Attendance Team. At any time during the academic year, the Office Manager will communicate with the school's assigned School Attendance Worker, if there is particular concern about a child's attendance.

Regular meetings and discussions are held in school between the Head of School, SENCo, Pastoral Care Worker and the Office Manager, to discuss children of concern across all areas of the school. The outcomes of meetings are shared with the Executive Headteacher who may invite parents to further meetings.

All attendance data including weekly attendance statistics and notes are kept on file by the Office Manager and are used as a basis for consultation with parents/carers, the Head of School, teachers and the Outreach and Attendance Team

All notes from meetings with parents/carers are typed onto a 'Contact Sheet' (Appendix 4) and shared with the appropriate members of staff.

Notes about individual attendance concerns each half-term are typed and shared with the Outreach and Attendance Team.

The Office Manager regularly provides feedback to the Executive Headteacher and Head of School in relation to all areas of attendance. At any time the Executive Headteacher and/or Head of School will call a parent/carer or ask to meet with parents/carers if there are concerns regarding attendance.

RECORD KEEPING TO AID RESPONSE TO ABSENCE

A record is kept of all contact with parents/carers over absence.

A record is kept of all absences and the reasons for absence.

All records including parental notes and notes from meetings are retained; parental notes are kept with 'First Day Absence' booklets and notes from meetings in the attendance file. All letters sent to parents/carers are also kept electronically. Staff and the Outreach and Attendance Team have ready access to each pupil's absence details, thus enabling an informed response.

COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS/CARERS

All parents are made aware of their responsibilities in law and of the school's expectations with regard to school attendance e.g. telephoning the school, sending a letter in on return.

Parents are contacted promptly if there are any concerns about attendance or punctuality.

REQUESTS FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE DURING TERM TIME

If pupils are to reach their potential they need to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. Regular, uninterrupted school attendance is a key factor in helping pupils reach their potential. Every effort should always be made to avoid disruption to a pupil's education.

Following amendments to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 which came into effect 1st September 2013, Head Teachers are only allowed to grant leave of absence from school in exceptional circumstances. The decision as to whether any request is considered as 'exceptional circumstances' rests solely with the Head Teacher.

The fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional' are rare, significant, unavoidable and short; 'unavoidable' should be taken to mean an event that could not reasonably be scheduled at another time.

In considering whether or not to authorise a request for exceptional leave of absence in term time the Head Teacher will look at each individual case and only grant authorisation if the circumstances are truly exceptional. Additionally, any request should be made prior to the leave of absence and should be submitted to the school using the Request for Leave of Absence form. Parents/Carers may be asked to provide additional information/evidence or meet with the school to discuss the circumstances.

Parents/Carers will be notified of the Head Teacher's decision at the earliest opportunity. If the circumstances are not considered to be exceptional then parents/carers will be informed of this and made aware that the Local Authority may be asked to issue a Fixed Penalty Notice.

ABSENCE RECORD

DATE 7th September 2015

CLASS

The following pupils are absent today:



Congratulations

Top Attendance Class

4??



100% attendance for
Monday 6th Sept - Friday 11th Sept 2015

Appendix 3

Date:

Dear Parent(s)/Carer(s)

Attendance Audit (3rd September 2015 – 18th December 2015)

All schools have a duty to monitor the attendance of its pupils and audits of non-attendance are routinely carried out both internally and by the Outreach and Attendance Team.

I am writing to inform you that at our recent half-termly attendance review, your child's attendance has dropped below 95%. As a school we aim for every child to achieve regular attendance of at least 95% every half-term; from experience a child will attain the very best they can during their time with us, if their attendance remains above 95%.

We understand that your child may have experienced illness during the last half-term and appreciate the need for absence for this reason. We hope that by writing to you and highlighting that your child's attendance has dropped below 95%, you will be able to work with us to ensure your child's attendance does not drop any further.

If your child is experiencing any problems, which are likely to cause absences from school, please contact the school office to make an appointment with myself, Mrs Landon (the school Office Manager) or your child's class teacher. Sometimes an underlying worry or concern at school can cause absences and we are keen to help in any way we can, to alleviate any concerns or worries your child may be experiencing.

We thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely

Mr D Hewitt
Executive Headteacher

Appendix 4

**Hamworthy Park Junior School
Contact Form**

Contact by (school rep): Jo Lundon

Contact with family/other:

Name of child:

Date of contact:

Reason for contact:

Outcome:

Discussion points/ Outcomes/Action (Home/school based).

Other Agency involvement or follow up.