



Attendance Policy

Twin Sails Infant School and Nursery And Hamworthy Park Junior School

Adopted September 2020

Reviewed September 2021

School Attendance, Absence and Covid -19.

The most up to date guidance from the Department for education states that it is 'vital for all children to return to school to minimise as far as possible the longer-term impact of the pandemic on children's education, wellbeing and wider development.'

With children starting to mix together again, it is likely that they are going to get seasonal colds and coughs but not all illnesses mean they must stay off school or self-isolate. COVID-19 symptoms are a **high temperature** (hot to touch on the back or chest), a **new continuous cough** (continuous cough is coughing consistently for a while and not just every now and again), a **loss of or change to your taste or smell**.

Unless the pupil is showing definite symptoms of COVID, then there is no need for them to be sent home and asked to get a test. If you feel that your child or a family member may have a symptom of COVID then we ask that you contact 111 for guidance. If 111 advise a COVID test then no pupil will be allowed to return to school until a negative test is acquired or the self-isolation period is over. Please notify the school when your child is required to self-isolate.

Please contact the school if you wish to discuss this further. Please see below for a link to self-isolating.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/self-isolation-and-treatment/when-to-selfisolate-and-what-to-do/>

School attendance is mandatory from the beginning of the autumn term 2020. School will be following the rules set out in the attendance policy including:

- All children who are not displaying standard COVID19 symptoms are expected to attend
- Parents responsibility to ensure their child attends a school where the child is a registered pupil
- Recording attendance using codes set out in this policy
- Following up absence using the first-day calling procedure and referrals to the named Local Authority School Attendance Worker Officer and School Family Support Worker if needed.
- Referring absences to Local Authority School Attendance Workers which may lead to fixed penalty notices being issued.

Where children are not able to attend school due to self-isolation or positive test results of Covid-19, support will be offered via the schools blended learning programme. Where parents have anxiety and concerns regarding children attending school, an appointment should be made with the a member of the Senior Leadership Team to discuss the concerns.

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Introduction

Twin Sails Infant School & Nursery and Hamworthy Park Juniors are 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 purpose of the policy is to clarify everyone's part in this.

The policy is based on current Government and Local Authority guidance and statutory regulations. The school will ensure that all members of the community know of the policy and have access to it.

School's roles and responsibilities

All staff (teaching and support) at Twin Sails Infant School & Nursery and Hamworthy Park Junior 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 Team

The Headteacher oversees, directs and coordinates the school's work in promoting regular and improved attendance and will ensure the Attendance Policy is consistently applied throughout the school. The administrative assistants will ensure that up-to-date attendance data and issues are made regularly available to the Headteacher, staff, pupils and parents.

The Deputy Headteachers work with teaching teams to help support identified children and families, when needed.

The Assistant Headteachers work more directly with the school's Pastoral Leads - Mrs H Henstridge (TSI&N) and Mrs A Brown (HPJ) where a family may benefit from more direct support and closer monitoring. This is known as Early Help. Barriers are identified and agreed actions put in place which are closely monitored and reviewed.

Each month reports are provided to the Headteacher from the different attendance teams, to identify those making improvements and those who remain below expectations.

The attendance team review families where attendance is causing concern and will refer them to the Local Authority for further support or challenge.

The attendance team will ensure that issues are identified at an early stage and that support is in place to deal with any difficulties. The Headteacher will share the importance of good school attendance via the school newsletters and report to the governing body termly.

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 session. Classroom teachers are responsible for completing the attendance registers using the

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electronic system and prescribed codes. The registers will be taken promptly at 8.50am and 1.05pm. A mark will be made in respect of each child at these times.

Children who arrive shortly after registers have been taken will be marked as a late arrival with the code L authorised late. If a child arrives after the close of registers, they will be recorded as absent with the code U-unauthorised late.

Categorising absence

We would expect a parent to telephone the school on the first day of absence. If you do not phone us, we will endeavour to phone you. If we do not receive an explanation, or if the explanation is unsatisfactory, we will not authorise the absence, and this will be shown on your child's end of year report. An 'unexplained absence' form will be sent home when an N code has been recorded in the register. A mark will be made in respect of each child during registration. Any child who is not present at this time will be marked unauthorised absent 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 in such a way that the original entry and the amendment/ correction is distinguishable. The decision about whether the absence should be authorised or unauthorised rests with the Headteacher.

Twin Sails Infant School & Nursery and Hamworthy Park Juniors recognises the clear links between attendance and attainment, and attendance and safeguarding children. If absence is frequent or continuous, and except where a child is clearly unwell, staff at Twin Sails Infant School & Nursery and Hamworthy Park Junior School will challenge parents about the need and reasons for their child's absence and will encourage 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.

If no explanation about an absence is received by the school within 3 days, the absence will remain unauthorised. An 'unexplained absence' form will be sent home when an N code has been recorded in the register. Absences will be authorised in the following circumstances:

- a) where leave has been granted by the school in advance, for example –a pupil is to participate in an approved performance for which a licence has been granted by the Local Authority,
- b) where the school is satisfied that the child is too ill to attend;
- c) where there is an unavoidable cause for the absence which is beyond the family's control, e.g. extreme weather conditions;
- d) the absence occurs on a day exclusively set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong;
- e) the pupil lives more than two miles (if he/she is under eight) or three miles (if he/she has reached eight) and no suitable transport arrangements have been made by the Local Authority;
- f) the pupil is of no fixed abode, his/her parent is engaged in a trade which requires him/her to travel, the pupil has attended school as often as the nature of the trade permits and, having reached the age of six, he/she has attended 200 sessions in the preceding 12 months;
- g) in other exceptional circumstances (e.g. a family bereavement) and for a very limited period.

Except in the circumstances described above, absences will be unauthorised. Some examples of reasons for not authorising absence would be:

- no explanation has been given by the parent;
- the school is not satisfied with the explanation;
- the pupil is staying at home to mind the house;

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- the pupil is shopping during school hours;
- the pupil is absent because another sibling is unwell;
- the pupil is absent for unexceptional reasons, e.g. a birthday;
- the pupil is absent from school on a family holiday without prior permission;
- the pupil is staying at home to provide care for a parent, sibling or other relative;

Staff training

The Headteacher will ensure that all staff responsible for taking registers, including any temporary or supply staff, receives sufficient training to enable them to perform the task accurately.

Collection and analysis of data

The Headteacher, with support from the administrative team, will ensure that attendance data is complete, accurate, analysed and reported to the other members of SLT, parents and the governing body. The report should include commentary on the trajectory and the school target. The data will inform the school's future practice to improve attendance and prevent disaffection.

Attendance is monitored by the Headteacher who will look at reasons for absence and those who are vulnerable to poor attendance.

Systems and strategies for managing and improving attendance

Attendance has a very high profile at Twin Sails Infant School & Nursery and Hamworthy Park Juniors and is regularly discussed at assemblies and in classes. Teachers have access to live attendance data for pupils and their class. Regular monitoring by the administration attendance officers, the Headteacher and senior leadership team who will have timely conversations with class teachers to raise their concerns. Parents are regularly reminded in newsletters and school meetings about the importance of good attendance and its links to attainment, and excellent attendance will be displayed and celebrated prominently in school.

School Strategies to Tackle Absence

Where there is an emerging pattern of a pupil's absence the school will contact the parent to discuss the reasons for the absences. Plans should be put in place with the parents and pupil to resolve any difficulties and improve the attendance within a specified time limit. It will be explained to parents that any future absences will be unauthorised unless there is clear evidence of a good reason for them.

Referral to the Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Early Response Team

If there continue to be unauthorised absences by the end of the specified time (or sooner) if the pupil is failing to attend school at all), the matter will be referred to the Borough of Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole 5-19s Team. Regulations (Education Pupil Regulations 2006) require schools to inform the LA of every pupil who has been continuously absent without a good reason (i.e. the absence is unauthorised) for 10 school days or more. Schools must also inform the LA of every pupil who fails to attend regularly which is interpreted to mean those pupils who have patterns of unauthorised absence without amassing 10 continuous absences.

Lateness and punctuality

Pupils are expected to arrive at school, and be in the correct room for registration, 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 after the register officially closes will be marked absent for the whole session (a session being a morning or an afternoon). This absence will be unauthorised unless the school is satisfied that there is a legitimate reason for the pupil to be late.

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A pupil who is persistently absent, by reason of lateness, will be dealt with in the same way as other pupils with an emerging pattern of absence. If the matter is not resolved quickly, it will be referred to the School Attendance Worker. For health and safety reasons it is important that the school knows who is in the building. After 8.45am (HPJ) and 8.50am (TSI&N), parents will need to bring their child to the school office, based at Twin Sails Infant School and Nursery. For the same reason it is important that if a child is leaving the premises legitimately (e.g. for a medical appointment), or returning to school later in the day, parents need to report to the school office, to sign the child in or out..

Term time holidays

The school's policy is that anyone found to have taken an unauthorised term time holiday will be liable to be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice. (Appendix A) We greatly value the positive relationship between home and school and we do not want the issue of holidays to create a conflict in this relationship. It is important for parents/carers to note that once Twin Sails Infant School & Nursery and Hamworthy Park Juniors have requested that the Local Authority issue a Fixed Penalty Notice for a period of unauthorised leave in term time, you will not have an opportunity to discuss this matter further with the Local Authority. Any queries or discussions should be had prior to, or at the time of requesting the leave.

Extended leave of absence

Any extended leave of absence is at the discretion of the Headteacher. The absence will be unauthorised unless exceptional reasons are given. If an extended leave of absence is taken without prior authorisation from the Headteacher, a pupil could be removed from the school roll.

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). As part of our Home-School Agreement parents commit to supporting their child to attend school, and as a school we commit to supporting and encouraging attendance.

Twin Sails Infant School & Nursery and Hamworthy Park Juniors expects parents/carers will:

- ensure their children attend the school every day, on time whilst striving for 100% attendance;
- not expect the school to agree any requests for absence, and not condone unjustified absence from school;
- notify the school federated office on the first day of absence by phone, followed up by a letter or email explaining reason for absence on the first day of return;
- ensure their children arrive at school on time, properly dressed and with the right resources for the day;
- work in partnership with the school, for example by attending parents' meetings and consultations, taking an interest in their children's work and activities;
- contact the school without delay if they are concerned about any aspects of their children's school lives.

Pupils' responsibilities

All pupils should be aware of the importance of regular, punctual school attendance. If they are having difficulties that may prevent them from attending school regularly, they should speak to their class teacher. Pupils also have a responsibility for following school procedures if they arrive late.

Governors' responsibilities

The governing body will play an appropriate role in challenging and supporting the school in promoting attendance in line with National Average expectations. Two Governors share the responsibility for attendance and ensure

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regular visits and reviews are made with the Headteacher. The Headteacher reports to the Full Governing Body, each term, the attendance information for both schools, year groups, and identified groups such as pupil premium or SEND. The safeguarding governor is Mrs D Brett, will have an awareness and monitor attendance which places children in a safeguarding or Early Help stage. whilst Inclusion Governor, Mrs C Toon, will have an awareness and will monitor attendance of the most vulnerable children.

Contact Details

Administration Officers for Attendance: Mrs S Old and Mrs J Edwards 01202 672377

office@hamworthyprimaryschools.co.uk

Headteacher: Mrs Susannah Hill

Inclusion Governor: Mrs Chris Toon

Safeguarding Governor: Mrs Debbie Brett

Policy Review The school will review this policy each year.

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