



Hillocks Primary and Nursery School

Policy for Attendance Summer 2017

Aims

For all children to attend school as often as possible (97% or better).

For the average attendance to be above 97%.

Everyone in school has a responsibility to improve or maintain excellent attendance and adults in school should model these expectations as well as encouraging them (i.e. by not being late to class or to pick up the children from the playground).

Daily Actions

School starts at 8:50am (school gates open at 8:30. Doors open from 8:40 on Monday, Wednesday and Friday).

Registration is done online on Scholarpack as soon as possible after 8:50am.

School gates close as soon as possible after 8:55am. Any child arriving late needs to be brought to the main door so that they can be signed into the late register and the reason for their late arrival recorded.

Any child arriving in class after 8:55am should be given a late mark (L) in the register.

Any child arriving after 9:20am should be given a U mark denoting an unauthorised absence.

The school bell sounds at 8:50am. It is an expectation that all staff are out consistently at those times and are prompt in collecting and dismissing children.

If a child is absent, school should be informed as soon as possible so that the reason for their absence is known and can be recorded in the register correctly. If you are able to, you should give an expected date of return to school, otherwise please inform us each day of their continued absence.

If we do not hear why a child is absent by 9:20am, the school office will begin to make calls or send text messages to find the reason for your child's absence. It is vital we know that your child is safe with you or an appropriate carer and not in a situation that may endanger them as well as the reason for the absence.

If the class teacher is told directly they must put the correct code in the online register. The class teacher is responsible for the correct administration of the register and must put the correct code in wherever possible. Failure to complete the register correctly may result in disciplinary action.

During the phone conversation we may ask if there is any support or help we can provide to help your child attend school or any difficulties we should be aware of in the interests of your child's safety and attendance at school. If we feel it is appropriate, we have an obligation to suggest when a child should really be at school rather than keeping them off school. The school does not have to accept reasons given for absence and may ask for proof of doctors or other appointments. Even when provided with a reason or evidence we may record absence as unauthorised if we believe it to be the correct course of action.

For the afternoon sessions all these actions are done after 1:00pm.

At all times we will act in a fair and consistent manner, adhering to the principles within Nottinghamshire's Code of Conduct and their Attendance Toolkit.

Weekly actions

Every week attendance is totalled and the best class are presented with the crocodile. If a class has a child with very significantly poor attendance that child is excluded from the weekly totals so as not to discourage the rest of the class from competing for the crocodile.

Half termly actions

At least monthly, pupils whose attendance or punctuality is causing concern are identified and the parents contacted and sent letters (see below).

If appropriate, children with low attendance will take part in a group with Jan Hautenne to explore their issues around school and how they can improve their attendance.

Other actions

Children with attendance below 95% will be highlighted by staff at parents evenings (from a list given by the office). Staff are not meant to talk in detail about attendance but should point out the impact this will have on the child's progress. If the parent wishes to discuss attendance further at parents evenings they should come and talk to the head of school if available or make an appointment to meet with her as soon as practical.

Positive rewards

The rewards are listed in Appendix 1

Actions taken when attendance/punctuality is causing concern

Attendance is beginning to cause a concern when a child is absent for a number of sessions that would lead to attendance below 95% (which is below the national average), has an identifiable pattern of absence (e.g. most Fridays) or changes suddenly without explanation. For the Autumn Term we calculate how many sessions a child would have to miss in the entire term to end with 95% (7 sessions, 3.5 days) so that a very short absence at the start of the year doesn't automatically trigger absence procedures. For the rest of the year we use percentage absence to set the threshold and send letters out as appropriate.

At this point a letter (Letter 1) and a copy of the detailed attendance record will be sent home to parents to inform them of their child's attendance and how this may impact upon their learning. This letter also informs them that we will no longer be authorising any absence without appropriate evidence (appointment cards, prescriptions etc.).

We will then start monitoring their attendance and, if there are more than 6 unauthorised sessions absence within a rolling 6 week period we will issue a letter requesting the parents contact school to arrange a meeting to discuss attendance (Letter 2). At this meeting with the headteacher we will discuss the reasons for the child's absence and if the school can help with improving attendance in any way. At the meeting we will also give you a letter detailing possible further actions should attendance not improve or be evidenced where appropriate (Letter 3).

If the parents do not reply to the letter (Letter 2) then a further letter (Letter 3a) will be sent detailing the possible further actions that can be taken and informing the parent that a lack

of engagement will leave the school with no option but to refer to Early Help or issue a penalty notice (fine) unless they contact the school as soon as possible after receipt of the letter.

If there is no contact after the further letter (Letter 3a), then a final letter (Letter 4) will be sent notifying the parents that the school has requested the Local Authority issue a penalty notice. If the school has sent a referral to Early Help then the parents will be informed of that either verbally or in writing.

If, at any time, there are wider concerns about the child's welfare then safeguarding procedures should be started immediately in line with our child protection policy.

Fixed penalty notices

After issuing letter 3 or 3a, if attendance does not improve, the school may issue a fixed penalty notice. The first monitoring period will be up to 12 weeks after the issue of the warning letter. A fixed penalty notice will be issued as soon as 5 days (10 sessions) of unauthorised absence are recorded in a continuous 6 week period. After the 12 week initial monitoring period, monitoring will continue on a rolling 6 weeks basis for the rest of the academic year. If a child ends the year with attendance below 95% we may continue to monitor them closely the following academic year.

The school follows the "Nottinghamshire Local Code of Conduct for penalty notices issued in respect of truancy and excluded pupils" and this is available on our website and the local authority's website.

Home visits

It is the policy of Hillocks Primary School that staff only make home visits as a short term intervention, not a long term solution to a parent's inability to get their children to school. Home visits must never be undertaken alone.

If parents do not attend the meetings detailed in Letters 2 and 3a above then referrals will be made to Early Help requesting support for the family without parental consent.

Recording

All meetings will have notes taken and dated on our school management system (Scholarpack). Any contact with the parents regarding this matter will be noted and dated. All letters will be dated and signed and sent through the post, not handed to children. All these will be retained in the child's record and notes made on our school management system. If Early Help become involved the child will have a child protection folder kept in accordance with the school's child protection policy and the attendance documentation will be kept in there.

Appendix 1 Attendance Rewards

Weekly

F1/2

A raffle of all children's names who have been in school every day and arrived on time will be drawn. The child with the winning ticket will take home Allie the attendance alligator. Big Al will visit each Monday morning and draw the winning ticket.

KS1/Yr3/4

One dojo will be awarded for each day a child attends and is in class by 8.50. Any child getting all 5, will receive an extra 10 minutes playtime on Monday afternoon.

Yr5/6

Scholarpack to be used to identify all children who have attended and arrived on time each day. All children who have all 5, will receive an extra 10 minutes playtime on Monday afternoon.

All to be announced in Monday assembly by Big Al.

Termly

All children's names who have managed full attendance and been on time will be put into a raffle. A ticket will be drawn for a family day out.

The class with the highest number of children attending and arriving on time will receive a class reward.

End of year

Children with 100% attendance and who have arrived on time will be taken out for the day.