



POLICY:	Attendance Policy
COMMITTEE:	Curriculum
MEMBER OF STAFF RESPONSIBLE:	Mrs C Hawkins
GOVERNOR RESPONSIBLE:	Chair of Curriculum
WRITTEN BY AND DATE:	Dec 2015
LAST UPDATED BY AND DATE:	Jan 2017 May 2018 December 2019 December 2020
REVIEW DATE:	December 2021

High Wycombe Church of England School

High Wycombe Church of England Combined School

POLICY ON ATTENDANCE

‘At HWCE we have an understanding that we are all made in the image of God, and that we are all valued and important.’

Introduction

We expect all our pupils on roll to attend every day when the school is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy to do so. We believe that the most important factor in promoting excellent school attendance is the development of positive attitudes towards school. We do all we can to encourage all children to attend and to put in place appropriate procedures. We strive to make our school a happy and rewarding place where every child feels valued and special.

To encourage children to have good attendance levels we celebrate good attendance by;
Certificates for good attendance each year

The governing body is responsible for ensuring that High Wycombe Church of England School keeps an accurate attendance register which records which pupils are present in the morning and afternoon sessions of each school day. The register will also indicate which absences are authorised and unauthorised.

Authorised absence

An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has been notified by a parent or carer e.g. a child has been ill and the parent has telephoned the school and also explained the absence in writing.

Only the school can authorise an absence. Parents do not have this authority. Consequently not all absences supported by parents can be authorised by the school. For example, should a parent decide to take a child out of school for a shopping expedition, this will not mean that the absence will be authorised.

Unauthorised absence

An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of both the school and a parent or carer.

Therefore, if a child is away from school without good reason, even if this is with the support of a parent, the absence is unauthorised.

If a child is absent

When a child is absent from school the class teacher will record the absence in the register. The school office will be informed and the parent or carer will be contacted.

If you know that your child will be absent from school prior to the day of absence (medical appointment etc) the school should be informed in writing in advance. If your child is unwell the school should be informed as soon as possible by telephone. Messages may be left at any time and the system will be checked by the office staff first thing every morning.

If any child is absent without explanation, the class teacher will inform the school office and staff will contact the parent or carer immediately to check on the safety of the child.

Requests for leave of absence

It is important that children attend school regularly and that parents do not take their children out of school in term time other than in exceptional circumstances. Research shows that absence from school of more than 7 ½ days has a significant negative impact on attainment,

especially in English and Maths. Holidays taken during term time cause a significant rise in pupil absence.

Holidays may only be taken in exceptional circumstances, and then only if agreed by the Governing Body of the school. This means that authorised leave of absence is not automatic and every request will be looked at individually by the Governors. If you choose to take unauthorised leave of absence, the school will inform the County Attendance Team who may issue a penalty notice. Requests to take family holidays during term time will not automatically be deemed as exceptional circumstances. Parents will need to make clear on their application the reasons why exceptional circumstances exist. Cheaper holiday costs do not constitute exceptional circumstances.

Repeated unauthorised absence

The school will contact the parent/carer of any child who has an unauthorised absence. If a child has a repeated number of unauthorised absences parents/carers will be asked to come into school to discuss the problem. If the situation does not improve the County Attendance Team will be contacted to ensure that parents/carers understand the seriousness of the situation.

The governors, supported by the County Attendance Team, reserve the right to take legal action against any parents or carers who repeatedly fail to accept their responsibility for sending their child to school on a regular basis.

Long term absence

When a child has an illness which means an absence from school of over 5 days, the school will do all it can to provide work for the child to do at home in order that they do not fall behind in their learning.

If the absence is likely to be for an extended period, or be a repeated absence the school will contact the support services so that arrangements can be made for tuition outside school.

Lateness

Registration takes place each day at 8.50 a.m. Any child arriving after this time must enter school via the main entrance and report to the school office where they will be marked as present in the register.

The register closes at 9.00 a.m. This means that children arriving after this time will be marked as absent. Latecomers will be recorded as being in school and the time they arrived. If the child is late for a valid reason e.g. illness or a medical appointment, this will be recorded as an authorised absence. Lateness for other reasons may not be authorised by the headteacher. This procedure follows the attendance guidance set out by Bucks County Council.

Attendance Targets

High Wycombe Church of England School sets attendance targets each year. These are agreed by the headteacher and Governors at the annual target setting meeting. The targets are also agreed with the local authority. The targets are challenging but realistic and are based on actual attendance over time. Our current target is 90%.

The attendance of every pupil is closely monitored. Attendance which falls below 90% will result in a letter from the headteacher and may be referred to the County Attendance Team.

Monitoring and Review

The governing body has the responsibility to monitor overall attendance.

The headteacher reports termly on attendance at each meeting of the full governing body. The Department Of Education receives attendance data.

The governing body is responsible for the attendance policy and for ensuring that it is carried out.

The governors will examine closely the information provided to them and seek to ensure that attendance figures at High Wycombe Church of England School are as high as they should be.

The school will keep accurate attendance records on file for a minimum of three years.

Class teachers are responsible for monitoring attendance in their own class and for following up absences in the appropriate way. If there is a concern about a child's attendance this will be reported to the school office. The headteacher will contact the parents/carers of any child whose attendance is a cause for concern.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the governing body.