



HAMPSTEAD PAROCHIAL
Church of England Primary School

Pupil Attendance and Punctuality Guidance

November 2015

Our School Mission Statement

- To do everything we can to ensure that each child has the best education possible by providing excellence in teaching and learning
- To inspire in all children a love of learning and the desire to continue to learn
- To look after the safety and well-being of our children, in mind and body, by caring for each other and learning together
- To uphold and promote Christian virtues and beliefs by maintaining daily acts of Christian worship and teaching Christian spiritual and moral values
- To respect other religions and cultures and foster good relationships within the community
- To encourage good behaviour; to foster kindness and manners; and to help our children enjoy an organised, hardworking and disciplined approach to school and life

Aims

Our attendance policy aims to:

- support pupils and their parents/carers in the establishment of the highest possible levels of attendance and punctuality;
- ensure that all pupils have full and equal access to the best education that we can offer in order to increase learning;
- enable pupils to progress smoothly, confidently and with continuity through the school;
- encourage children to develop a respectful and disciplined approach to timekeeping and attendance;
- make parents/carers aware of their legal responsibilities;
- ensure attendance meets Government and Local Authority targets

This policy has been devised in consultation with Staff, Governors, Children and Parents and, as such, develops and supports our core Christian value of koinonia: a community united in purpose.

Being at school

School education lays the vital foundations of a child's life. Research clearly demonstrates the link between regular attendance and educational progress and attainment. Parents/carers and the school staff should work in partnership in making education a success and in ensuring that all children have full and equal access to all that the school has to offer.

As a school, we will encourage parents and carers to ensure that their child achieves maximum possible attendance and that any problems that prevent this are identified and acted on promptly. As parents, it is their responsibility to ensure that their children arrive at school and return home safely.

Expectations and responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the pupils to:

- attend school every day
- attend school punctually
- attend appropriately prepared for the day
- discuss promptly with their class teacher or school office any problems that may affect their school attendance.

It is the responsibility of parents and carers to:

- ensure regular school attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities.
- ensure that their child arrives at school punctually and prepared for the school day.
- ensure that they inform the school **daily** of absence or, if known in advance, the dates when their child will be unable to attend school.
- contact school promptly whenever any problem occurs that may keep their child away from school.
- notify the school of any home circumstances that might affect the behaviour and learning of their child.
- notify school immediately of any changes to contact details.
- not take leave in term time

It is the responsibility of the school to:

- provide a welcoming atmosphere.
- provide a safe learning environment.
- provide a sympathetic response to any child's or parent's concerns.
- keep regular and accurate records of AM and PM attendance and punctuality to monitor the individual child's attendance and punctuality. These records include reasons for absence when provided by a parent or carer.
- contact parents when a child fails to attend and where no message has been received to explain the absence.
- follow up all unexplained absences to obtain explanations from parents. Although parents may offer a reason, only the headteacher or deputy can authorise the absence. In the case of long term or frequent absence due to medical conditions, verifications from a GP or other relevant body may be requested by the school or the Educational Welfare service.
- encourage good attendance and punctuality through a system of reward and recognition in Friday assemblies.
- regularly inform parents of the % attendance of all pupils in the weekly newsletter.
- make initial enquiries regarding pupils who are not attending regularly.
- meet regularly with the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) to monitor and support school attendance and punctuality.
- refer irregular or unjustified patterns of attendance to the Educational Welfare service.
- notify the Local Authority (LA) after 15 days sickness.
- notify the Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) after 10 days unexplained absence or sooner if necessary (see note on FGM below).

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

If a teacher or other member of staff suspects that a student has been removed from, or prevented from, attending education as a result of FGM or in order to undergo FGM, a referral should be made to the local authority children's social care and the police.

<http://media.education.gov.uk/assets/files/pdf/f/fgm%20guidance.pdf>

It is the responsibility of the governing body to:

- request from the headteacher and senior leadership team regular reports on attendance and punctuality.
- support the headteacher and school staff in applying this policy.

Authorising Absences

There are limited reasons for authorised absences which are detailed below. While an explanation for absence may be offered by a parent or carer, it is the responsibility of the school to authorise an absence. In authorising an absence the decision of the headteacher or deputy is final.

Authorised absences:	Unauthorised absences:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • genuine illness of the pupil • hospital/dental/doctor’s appointment for the pupil • major religious observances • visits to prospective new schools • external exams or educational assessments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • shopping /day trip / visit to a theme park • a birthday treat; • looking after other children / other family member; • appointments for other family members.

Persistent Absences

Irregular or unjustified patterns of attendance will be referred to the Educational Welfare Service. The school’s dedicated Educational Welfare Officer may write to a family or meet with them to plan support to improve their child’s attendance.

Failure by the family to comply with the planned support set by the Educational Welfare service may result in further actions, e.g. a Penalty Notice, parental prosecution or an application for an Education Supervision Order.

Registers, Punctuality and Lateness

Punctuality to school is crucial. Lateness into school causes disruption to that individual's learning and to that of the other pupils in the class. It is paramount therefore that all pupils arrive at school on time. For pupils in years 5 and 6 the main playground is supervised from 8.30am. Pupils in years 5 and 6 can be left with playground supervisors at this time. The bell rings at 8.55am for registration.

- By law, schools must take a morning and afternoon register and record the attendance or absence of every pupil.
- Registration takes place at 8.55am and pupils who arrive after 9.00am will be recorded as late to school.
- Registers close at 9.15am and after this lateness is recorded as an unauthorised absence and can be subject to prosecution by the local authority.
- Afternoon registration is taken at 1.30pm.
- Persistent lateness by a pupil will be dealt with by a member of the Senior Leadership Team and may be referred to the Education Welfare Officer. If a child is marked late 10 or more times in a term their parents will receive a letter reminding them of the importance of punctuality. If a child is marked as unauthorised absence due to lateness 10 or more times in a rolling 10 week period the parents may receive a penalty notice.
- Pupil’s attendance and punctuality is recorded on their report and will be passed on to future schools as necessary.

Reporting to parents

When reporting to parents the following classification of attendance and punctuality are used:

Attendance Categories	97% - 100% attendance	Outstanding attendances
	95% - 96.9% attendance	Good attendance
	Below 95% attendance	Attendance requires improvement

Punctuality Categories	0 – 3 late marks in a year	Outstanding punctuality
	4-9 late marks in a school year	Good punctuality
	10 or more late marks in a school year	Punctuality requires improvement

Pupils Leaving During the School Day

During school hours the school staff are legally in loco parentis and therefore must know where the pupils are during the school day.

- pupils are not allowed to leave the premises without prior permission from the school.
- whenever possible, parents should try to arrange medical and other appointments outside of school time.
- parents are requested to **confirm in writing**, by letter or email, the reason for any planned absence, the time of leaving, the expected return time. Medical appointments should be accompanied by the relevant appointment card.
- pupils must be signed out on leaving the school and be signed back in on their return.
- where a pupil is being collected from the school, parents are to report to the school office before the pupil is allowed to leave the site.
- if a pupil leaves the school site without permission their parents will be contacted. *Should the school be unable to make contact with the family it may be appropriate, in certain circumstances, to contact the Police and register the pupils as a missing person.*

Pupils arriving and leaving school on their own

Parents of pupils in Years 5 and 6, who feel their child is responsible enough, may allow their child to walk to school and leave school on their own. Requests for this must be to the headteacher in writing. The headteacher will review the request and inform the parent if he/she feels this is appropriate.

If there are specific days in which a child needs to walk home alone, this must be clarified with the office staff and class teacher. For safety and security measures a child may bring in a mobile phone. This will also have to be confirmed in writing. The phone must be handed into the office as soon as the child arrives in school and can be collected at the end of the day.

Exceptional Leave of Absence

*Parents are asked to note that amendments have been made to the 2006 regulations in the **Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013**. These amendments, as described below, will come into force on 1 September 2013.*

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.

In the light of the **Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013** the headteacher will only authorise leave in term time in **exceptional circumstances**.

The governors of Hampstead Parochial School have defined examples of exceptional circumstances as follows and given direction to the number of school days a child can be away:

Authorised exceptional circumstance	Number of days
Family funeral in UK of a direct relation (sibling, parent, grandparent, aunt or uncle)	1 day or 2 days if travelling a substantial distance
Family funeral in Europe (non UK) of a direct relation (sibling, parent, grandparent, aunt or uncle)	2-3 school days
Family funeral in remainder of world (sibling, parent, grandparent, aunt or uncle).	up to 5 days
Genuine, recognised emergencies which prevent travel. Eg <i>volcanic ash cloud or natural disaster while on holiday</i>	up to 5 days or longer if deemed necessary by national and international organisations.
Other genuinely exceptional circumstances	To be determined by the headteacher

The governors have noted that the following circumstances are not exceptional and, under the *Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013* **cannot** be authorised

Examples of non exceptional circumstances
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural celebrations such as national days • Visits to the theatre and drama productions • Accompanying relations to the airport following a visit

- Where leave of absence in term time is due to exceptional circumstances as detailed above, an application form must be requested from the school office and submitted for consideration by the Headteacher on behalf of the school governors, at the earliest opportunity.
- The headteacher will take into account the child's normal attendance pattern.
- During Key Stage assessments for Year 6 the Headteacher reserves the right to limit the number of days absence so the child can complete their assessments within the permitted timeframe for a time-table variation.
- If leave is taken without prior authorisation by the school, it will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and the Education Welfare service will be notified.

Penalty Notices

Penalty Notices can be issued for unauthorised leave and may also be issued when a or if a parent / carer fails to ensure regular school attendance. Failure to pay a penalty notice within the timeframes may lead to prosecution by the local authority.

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, will come 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. Parents must pay £60 if they pay within 28 days; or £120 if they pay within 42 days.

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