

# **Keir Hardie Primary School & Children's Centre**



## **Attendance Policy**

Reviewed:	Autumn 2017
Date of Next Review:	Autumn 2018

## **Attendance Policy**

**This policy was reviewed by the co-ordinator**

**Print Name** .....

**Signature** .....

**Date** .....

**This policy was reviewed by the Head Teacher**

**Print Name** .....

**Signature** .....

**Date** .....

**This policy was reviewed and agreed by the Chair of Governors**

**Print Name** .....

**Signature** .....

**Date** .....

## **Rationale**

This policy aims to give clear guidance to all staff about the management of attendance at Keir Hardie Primary School. The register is a legal document and needs to not only be accurate but applied consistently across the school.

Good school attendance is linked with positive attainment and pupil well-being. Regular school attendance is essential if children in our school are to achieve better outcomes in education and improve life chances. Our school consistently works towards a goal of 100 per cent attendance for all children in school.

Parents and carers of school-age children are required by law to ensure that their children attend school, and the Local Authority (LA) has a duty to take action against those who do not ensure their child or children are receiving a suitable education.

## **Responsibilities of the Class Teacher**

### **The Daily Attendance Register –**

SIMS E-registration (electronic) has to be completed via the computers and laptops, saved and submitted to the front office. In case of computer problems, paper copies will be circulated or can be found in the supply folder.

The school day begins at 8:45 and ends at 3:15. Registers must be completed in class between 8:45 and 8:50 in the morning and 1:00 and 1:05 in the afternoon. Those children who arrive after the register cut off time (between 9:00 and 9:15) should be marked as late with code 'L'. Children who arrive after the registers close (after 9:15) will be marked with a code 'U'. A late book is kept in the school office for those children who arrive in school after registration.

## **Management of Absences**

First day absence texts are made by the Office Staff or Learning Mentors where a parent has not already advised the school of their child's absence. Where a child's attendance is below 90% a phone call will be made on the first day of absence. A record of this is kept electronically (SIMs database) and in the school office on absence sheets. If informed of a reason for absence, the Class Teacher informs the Office Staff, who completes an absence sheet. Explanations for absence can only be accepted in writing or verbally from a responsible adult. A reason given orally by the child is not acceptable. If the school has had no verbal contact regarding a child's absence for five days on the fifth day a home visit will be conducted by the school.

## **Late arrival due to medical appointments**

If a child has a medical appointment/emergency in the morning, and cannot be brought to school before 11:15, then we expect the child to attend school for the afternoon session. They should be brought in at 1pm for registration. We will not accept children arriving to attend school between the times of 11:15 and 1pm.

### **What is expected of the parents:**

- To keep requests for their child to be absent to a minimum-exceptional circumstances only.
- To offer a reason for any period of absence, preferably before the absence or on the first day of absence.
- To provide Medical evidence if a child is off school for three days or more.
- To ensure that their child arrives at school on time, in school uniform, with the right equipment and in a condition to learn. A reason should be offered for any lateness. Lateness will be followed up if persistent.
- To work closely with the school Senior Learning Mentor to resolve any problems that may impede a child's attendance.
- To be aware of curriculum requirements and to be especially vigilant in regards to attendance during important academic times such as SATs, phonics sessions and screening, Maths and English sessions.
- To support their child and recognise their successes and achievements.
- For pupils with poor attendance – Medical evidence will be requested each time the child is off sick.

Examples of types of absences that are not considered reasonable and will not be authorised under any circumstances are:

- Going shopping with parents, Birthdays.
- Minding other younger children in the family.
- Staying at home because other members in the family are sick.
- Day trip and Holiday in term time that have not been agreed.
- If a parent/ carer has an appointment and they take the pupil with them.

The school will endeavour to provide an environment that is conducive to educating every individual pupil. School attendance will be positively supported, celebrated and rewarded every week.

Each week the Office Staff will print a four week view of each class register to enable Head Teacher to review absences and check for inaccuracies which the Attendance Officer will follow up. Once a term, a complete register is printed for checking.

### **Absences**

If the school office is informed of an absence they will initially record that absence on the absence sheets kept next to the phone in the school office or put onto SIMS in comment box. On a daily basis this information should be

transferred to the SIMS class register. Absences will be updated on SIMS daily and as we are notified.

### **Extended Holiday requests:**

Following the Department for Education guidelines, from September 2013 the school will not grant leave of absence during term time unless in exceptional circumstances. In exceptional circumstances, the Head Teacher will determine the number of days a child can be away from school. Once a decision has been made as to whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised, a letter will be sent to the parent.

### **Penalty Notices:**

Following the Local Authority guidelines, the following circumstances may result in the issue of a Penalty Notice:

- a) Where parents persistently fail to ensure their children attend school and attendance is 90 per cent or below of absence in a 12 week period (i.e. 12 or more sessions), with no acceptable reason, and no other legal sanctions are under way
- b) Term time leave of 3 days or more is taken without obtaining the agreement of the school and the parents have been warned that a Penalty Notice may result,
- c) Unwarranted delayed return from term time leave without school agreement resulting in a child missing the beginning of term or the school year, or the date set by the head teacher for return from an authorised leave of absence.
- d) Persistent late arrival after the registers have been closed (U code only) (10 sessions or more)
- e) Parents' or carers' failure to make arrangements to ensure that children who have been excluded from school due to misbehaviour are not in a public place at prescribed times during the first five school days of any exclusion, without reasonable justification.\*

The school may ask the Council to issue a Penalty Notice. A Penalty Notice carries a fine of £60, per parent, per child. If the fine is not paid within 21 days it rises to £120 per parent, per child, if paid within 28 days. If not paid at all, court action will be initiated.

### **Following up Unexplained Absence**

On a daily basis and Monday afternoons, the Office Staff and Learning Mentors will check through the registers to –

- Ensure that parents are aware of their child's absence by following up either in writing or by telephone any unexplained absences for the previous week.

- Check for patterns in children's absence – For example a pattern of missing a number of days over a term or of missing a significant number of Mondays and/or Fridays over the same period.
- Check registers and absence sheets to ensure that school policy is being adhered to.

### **Monitoring of Lateness**

In respect of problems with **punctuality**, the Office Staff and Learning Mentors monitor the late book and identify persistent latecomers. They will meet with parents/carers to discuss reasons for lateness and to seek solutions. If lateness continues it is referred to the Attendance Management Service.

### **Late Pick Ups**

Any child who is picked up after 3:30 is considered as late. At that point children are then taken by their Class Teacher or TA to the phonics pod outside Butterfly class and handed over to the Learning Mentor. The Office Staff will make the relevant phone calls to parents. Parents will then need to collect their child via the front office and provide a reason why they are late.

### **Role of the Newham Primary Schools Attendance Service**

Newham Schools Attendance Service work with children and families alongside school staff to try and identify and help resolve difficulties and promote resilience, including problems impacting on attendance.

### **Liaising with the Newham Primary Schools Attendance Service**

The member of staff responsible for lateness will liaise regularly with the Senior Learning Mentor and will manage referrals to the attendance team.

### **School approach**

- Make attendance competitive
- Have an attendance target of 100% for all classes. Class that reaches target reward. i.e. Trip, extra play time
- Have an attendance board on the door of each class
- Weekly assemblies raise the issue of attendance with best class receiving the school attendance trophy
- Letters sent home to Parents classes where by attendance has improved
- Class teachers need to speak to parents whose attendance is becoming a concern
- Certificates and rewards for children with 100% attendance each term

### **The registration system**

The School will use a computerised system for keeping the school attendance records, except in the case of a technical fault, in which case paper registers are completed.

The following national codes will be used to record attendance information.

<b>CODE</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>MEANING</b>
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
<b>B</b>	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity
<b>C</b>	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
<b>D</b>	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)	Approved Education Activity
<b>E</b>	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
<b>F</b>	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
<b>G</b>	Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
<b>H</b>	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
<b>I</b>	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
<b>J</b>	Interview	Approved Education Activity
<b>L</b>	Late (before registers closed)	Present
<b>M</b>	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
<b>N</b>	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
<b>O</b>	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
<b>P</b>	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
<b>R</b>	Religious observance	Authorised absence
<b>S</b>	Study leave	Authorised absence
<b>T</b>	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
<b>U</b>	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence
<b>V</b>	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
<b>W</b>	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
<b>X</b>	Non-compulsory school-age absence	Not counted in possible attendances
<b>Y</b>	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances

## **Walking Bus**

As an additional support for pupils with poor attendance/punctuality, the school have developed the Walking Bus which escorts targeted pupils to school to improve their attendance/punctuality.

### **Aims:**

- To reduce persistent lateness
- To reduce persistent absenteeism
- To raise attainment through regular and punctual attendance at school
- To reduce number of referrals to Attendance Management Service, BAPHs and referrals to court
- To support families who are struggling to get their child/children into school because of circumstances beyond their control/crisis

### **Criteria for referral to walking bus:**

- Persistent absenteeism - attendance below 90% with minimal or no medical evidence provided
- History of persistent absenteeism
- Persistent lateness - 5%+
- History of persistent lateness
- Family in crisis
- Living within 10 minutes walk of school
- Child in Reception to Year 6
- Nursery child with older siblings in the school who would also be eligible for walking bus

### **Process for selection:**

- Identification via SIMs Persistent Absence record
- Confirmation of address
- Discussion at safeguarding (inclusion) meeting
- Meeting & discussion with parent
- Agreement with Attendance Management Service that walking bus will be trialled for specific period in order to raise attendance

### **Operational Protocols:**

- Children will be invited to join the walking bus scheme for a maximum of 1 term (possibly longer in exceptional circumstances, at the discretion of the Headteacher)
- Appropriate risk assessments will be carried out prior to the commencement of the scheme and updated as routes may change
- Parent/carers will sign a consent form prior to commencement of the scheme
- The service will be reviewed with each family after 4 weeks and impact will be assessed
- Impact will be assessed at the end of the term
- The service will be terminated should the family consistently fail to make use of the service and referrals to Attendance Management Services will be made as appropriate
- The bus will operate on a daily basis regardless of the weather

- The children will be collected at an agreed time between 8.10 and 8.40am, arriving at school by 8.50am.

**Safety guidelines:**

- 2 members of school staff will operate the bus on a daily basis
- Staff and children will wear hi-vis jackets
- Maximum of 10 children on any bus - ratio of adults to children 1:5
- Children will be collected from their home at a specified time each day
- Designated (risk assessed route) will be followed
- Roads will be crossed at appropriate crossing places
- Children will walk in pairs with 1 adult at the front, 1 at the rear - on narrow pavements children will walk in single file
- The school reserves the right to suspend the bus service for any child who does not behave sensibly and safely

**Guidelines for parent/carers:**

- Parent/carers will sign the consent form before commencement of the scheme
- Parent/carers will phone the school before 8am if their child will not be attending school that day
- Parent/carers will ensure their child is ready at the specified time; the bus will not wait
- It is the parent/carers responsibility to bring the child to school if the bus is missed
- Parent/carers will brief their child on the need for good behaviour
- Parent/carers will ensure that their child is dressed appropriately for the weather

**Guidelines for children:**

- Children will walk sensibly with a partner or in single file on narrow pavements
- Children will follow the adults' instructions
- Children will carry and be responsible for their own belongings
- Children will wear a hi-vis jacket