

Harlow Green Community Primary School

School Attendance Policy

August 2016

As a school we aim to:

- Improve attendance and punctuality of all our pupils
- To raise the level of attainment
- Maximise opportunities both in school and in later life
- Maintain parents and pupils awareness of the importance of regular attendance

Good attendance is important because:

- There is a direct link between poor attendance and underachievement
- Regular attenders make better progress, both socially and academically
- Regular attenders find school routines and school work easier to cope with

As a parent you can help us by:

- Ensure regular school attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities
- Ringing on the first morning of all absences with the reason and saying when the child will return – before 9.30am
- Only allow days at home for genuine illness
- Arranging dental and doctor's appointments out of school hours
- Bringing your child to school before and returning them after a hospital or other medical appointment
- Keeping us updated by telephone or letter if your child has an extended period of absence due to illness
- Talking to school as soon as possible about any child's reluctance to come to school so that problems can be quickly identified and dealt with
- Talk regularly with your child about school and how they feel about it. Children are more likely to attend if they feel supported and parents speak positively about their school and their class teachers
- Notify school immediately of any changes to emergency contact details or change in home address

As a school we will:

- Follow up on unexplained absences by phone calls, texts or by a home visit on the first day of a child's absence
- Remind parents and children of the importance of regular attendance and punctuality in newsletters, the school prospectus, the Home – School agreement and during assemblies
- Let you know if we have any concerns regarding your child's attendance
- Publish your child's attendance rate on his/her annual report
- Acknowledge and reward good attendance
- Inform parents/carers via series of letters or meetings regarding their child's punctuality and/or poor school attendance

Authorised absence

- Some absences are unavoidable and are known by "authorised absences". For example if a child is ill, family bereavement, religious observance
- We realise that there are rare occasions when there might be a particular problem that causes your child to be absent. Please let us know and we will endeavour to resolve this

Unauthorised absence

There are times when children are absent for reason, which are not permitted by law. These are known by "unauthorised absences". Examples of unauthorised absence are:

- Waiting for a delivery
- Going for a family day out
- Sleeping in
- Going shopping
- Because it's your child's birthday
- Unapproved holidays
- Parents are unwell (call us, we can help to get your child to school)
- No money for bus fare (Again call the school and we will help to get your child in)
- Where there is no explanation for the absence or where the explanation or reason is considered unsatisfactory.

Unauthorised absences have to be reported to the Local Authority. The legal Intervention Team may contact you and consider taking legal action.

Punctuality

- Morning registration is 8.50am. This is the time we bring the children into their classrooms, so you need to ensure that your child is in the playground by 8.45am.
- It is important to be on time as the first few minutes of the school day are often used to give out instructions or organise school work for the rest of the day
- If your child misses this short but vital lesson; their work for the whole day may be affected. Late arrivals are disruptive to the whole class and often embarrassing for your child.

For more information please refer to the Punctuality policy.

Parental request for Absence from School for Holiday

With effect from September 2013 the government abolished the right of headteachers to authorise absence specifically for holidays. Instead, headteachers will only be allowed to grant leave of absence if they are satisfied exceptional circumstances exist.

Attendance monitoring and review:

- The Family Support Worker (FSW) will keep an overview of class and individual attendance
- The FSW will contact families where concerns are raised about absence
- The FSW will inform the Headteacher on a formal and informal basis of patterns of poor attendance
- The FSW will promote good attendance and rewards during school assemblies
- The class teacher will keep an overview of class and individual attendance and share their concerns with the Family Support Worker

The Headteacher and the Family Support Worker will meet every half term to review the schools attendance and discuss concerns about individual children's attendance and decisions taken about the next stage of intervention.