

HERON CROSS PRIMARY SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Heron Cross Primary School is committed to raising the achievement of all pupils. One of the ways we do this is by promoting good attendance and punctuality.

We expect our pupils to attend regularly so that they benefit fully from all the opportunities we provide for their education, progress, achievement and life chances.

PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

Under section 444 of the Education Act of 1996, parents or those who have parental responsibility of children of compulsory school age, are required to ensure that their children receive an effective full time education, by taking responsibility for their children attending school regularly and on time.

This responsibility also extends to ensuring that the children arrive to school on time, suitably dressed, nourished and in a fit condition to learn.

It is also the parents' responsibility to inform school of the reasons for their non attendance, as soon as possible, on the first day of absence.

PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING ABSENCE

By telephone - all parents have the school's number

By letter

In person

By showing an appointment card or letter

By filling a holiday request form (in advance)

By informing staff

AUTHORISED ABSENCE

The Headteacher has the ultimate responsibility for authorising absences and will do so only when a valid reason is given for the child's absence.

UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

An unauthorised absence will be given when a child does not attend school and a valid reason is not given for the absence or when the Headteacher refuses to authorise a holiday request.

MEDICAL AND DENTAL APPOINTMENTS

We expect parents to make medical and dental appointments for their children before or after school or during the school holidays. If this is not possible then authorisation will be given where confirmation for the appointment is received via one of the methods already listed. Children are expected to attend school prior to the appointment and parents are expected to return their children to school following the appointment whenever possible.

PROCEDURE FOR TAKING A CHILD OUT OF SCHOOL DURING THE SCHOOL DAY

Exit from school during school hours is only through the main entrance in Key stage 2 building. The absence is recorded in a book with the reason, time and whether the child is returning to school.

SPECIAL OCCASIONS

A request for a child to attend a special occasion during school time, e.g. family wedding must be made in advance and the Headteacher will make the decision as to whether to authorise the absence. Parents will be notified of the Head's decision.

BEREAVEMENT

The school is sensitive to family requests for a child's attendance at funerals or associated events. The Headteacher will offer the family advice over absence in this instance.

DAYS OF RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE

Attendance at a religious observance held by a religious body will be granted authorised absence. The Headteacher should be consulted in advance of the event.

FAMILY HOLIDAYS

The governing body requests that parents make every effort not to arrange holidays during school terms. In exceptional circumstances only and by prior application, the Headteacher, on behalf of the Governing body, may authorise requested absence. It is

however, vitally important for all children to attend school regularly to reach their full potential.

LATENESS

On both sites the children are expected to arrive punctually for the start of the school day at 8.45am. Registration is between 8.50 and 8.55am. Children arriving after 8.55am must report to the office where they will be registered via the late book, they will receive a late mark in their class register. Children arriving after 9.20am, without an adequate explanation from their parents, will be given unauthorised absence for this session. This is marked in the register as U. Families who regularly arrive late will be contacted by the Headteacher or the Home/School Link Worker. Education Welfare may become involved if the problem cannot be resolved quickly.

SCHOOL PROCEDURES

In managing attendance and punctuality of its pupils school will:

- 1 Keep appropriate attendance records: Registers are taken at the beginning of each am and pm sessions. Marks are regularly entered on to the computerised register on the office computer. Accurate information on attendance is available to designated employees and data gathered will be used to inform the appropriate Governing body of attendance and punctuality trends. This information will enable Governors and senior staff to effectively target attendance and punctuality as necessary.
- 2 Monitor patterns of attendance: the Headteacher, in liaison with Home/School Link Worker, administration staff and the Education Welfare Officer, will regularly review registers in order to work with families whose patterns of attendance or punctuality are unsatisfactory. All parents receive a copy of their child's attendance at the end of each term. They also receive a detailed breakdown of each classes attendance and the schools overall attendance percentage for the term. Information is also available regarding their child's attendance for Parents Evening and via the annual report issued at the end of the academic year.
- 3 Involve the Education Welfare Officer: The Headteacher, through regular meetings with the EWO and Home/School Link Worker, will discuss issues surrounding attendance and punctuality. If there is cause for concern the following procedures will be followed.
 - The Headteacher or Home School Link Worker will invite the parents of the child into school to discuss the matter.

- A letter may be sent home raising the concerns by either the school or the Education Welfare Service as is most appropriate.
- Parents are invited into school to talk to the Headteacher or Home/School Link Worker and EWO informally during a 'Drop in Session'. If informal intervention is unsuccessful then an official referral to the EWO will be made by the school. The EWO will be made by the school. The EWO will regularly discuss ongoing cases.

ENCOURAGING ATTENDANCE

There are a variety of reward schemes at each site to encourage and promote good attendance and punctuality:

- **Weekly celebration assembly:** During this assembly we celebrate all the classes with 95% or above. The top three highest attending classes receive a certificate. Classes receiving 100% receive an extra playtime.
- **Termly:** All pupils with attendance of 95% or above for the term receive a certificate. Pupils with 100% also receive a gold star badge. The three terms are broken down as follows:
 - ❖ Autumn
 - ❖ Spring
 - ❖ Summer
- At the end of the academic year, all pupils with 100% attendance receive a certificate and a gift voucher. Their names are then added to an additional prize draw.

The rewards scheme has been set up with consultation of the School Council. This consists of two representatives from each year from Key Stage 2 who bring the views of their class to weekly meetings. This rewards system is yearly.