

Henry Bradley Nursery & Infant School

Attendance Policy

Good Attendance

At Henry Bradley Nursery & Infant School we believe that good attendance is essential if children are to take full advantage of school and gain the educational and social skills which will equip them for life.

We aim to achieve good attendance by operating this Policy alongside our Action Plan within which staff, pupils, parents/carers can work in partnership. We monitor attendance and work to solve any identified problems.

The staff encourage good attendance and liaise with families and other agencies when this is appropriate. Good attendance is seen as an achievement in its own right.

The attendance policy is based on the premise of equal opportunities for all.

It is the parent/carers' responsibility to ensure that their child/children receive full time education. This extends beyond ensuring regular and punctual attendance and requires that the child is properly attired and in a condition to learn (Education Act 1994).

It is the Local Authority's responsibility to enforce attendance and offer support to school, parents/carers and pupils to promote a positive attendance culture. This is achieved through school working in close co-operation with the EWO.

Only the Headteacher and Governors can determine what constitutes authorised absence.

- We aim to:
 - Promote good attendance as the norm
 - Help every child to reach their maximum potential unhindered by unnecessary breaks in the school life.
 - Demonstrate that good attendance is valued by the school
 - Establish a pattern of monitoring attendance and ensure consistency in recognising achievement and dealing with difficulties.
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- To achieve this we:
 - Help children to be more aware of the importance of regular attendance and punctuality by class discussion and use of the attendance award system.

- Ensure early communication with parents of children whose attendance is beginning to give the school cause for concern
- Recognise and support the key role of all staff in promoting and monitoring good attendance.
- Monitor attendance using the schools computerised attendance system

Involving parents and pupils

Parents are given information on attendance via newsletters and our website on:

- What is considered good attendance
- What constitutes justifiable absence
- Procedures for informing the school of absence
- What constitutes poor and/or persistent absence

Rewards for good attendance:

- Through our weekly Golden Book assembly good attendance is highlighted and praised
- An attendance award is presented weekly to the class with the best attendance
- Each Derbyshire term the class with the best attendance receives a celebratory cake
- Children with a high attendance rate at the end of the year (99%+) are treated to a trip out to celebrate

Sanctions for poor attendance/ persistent absence:

- Parents whose children's attendance persistently remains below 90% will be contacted by phone or letter highlighting concerns and expected improvements
- Parents whose children's attendance falls below 90% and are considered persistent absentees will receive a letter outlining the serious nature of the children's attendance.
- If the attendance does not improve then intervention is escalated by the Headteacher.
- If the attendance does not improve significantly this could escalate to Social Care involvement and could also result in a penalty notice.

Sanctions for unauthorised holidays:

- It is expected that all parents/carers will use the school's absence request form (available from the school office and downloadable from the website) to ask for their child to have leave of absence from school for an extended period of time. Guidance is also given on types of leave that could be granted.
- If parents/carers do not apply for their children to have a leave of absence or decide to go against the school's judgement, then this could result in a penalty notice.

Penalty Notices

- It is important parents/carers understand that if they refuse to pay a penalty notice it could result in prosecution and ultimately a prison sentence.

Responsibilities

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- The attendance policy and organisation of a regular annual review
- The organisation of rewards for good attendance
- Supporting families and individual children in sorting out any problems working against good attendance and in helping set and achieve targets with regard to attendance.

The attendance co-ordinators (Headteacher & School Business Officer) are responsible for:

- Supporting staff in monitoring and dealing with attendance issues
- Monitoring the attendance and patterns of absence of the children
- Administering the reward system for attendance including the issuing of appropriate certificates
- Publicising facts and figures with regard to the school's attendance record

The class teacher is responsible for:

- Ensuring (in conjunction with their colleagues) that the ethos in the class and the school is supportive of good attendance.
- Ensuring that the registers are completed accurately at the beginning of each session
- Ensuring that all notes relating to absence are passed directly to the clerical assistant
- Liaising with the attendance co-ordinator over any concerns regarding an individual child's attendance
- Ensuring that the delivery of the curriculum is challenging, interesting and stimulating so that the children want to attend regularly

Parents/carers are responsible for:

- Making sure their children attend regularly and punctually unless prevented by illness or medical appointments
- Letting the school know as soon as possible why a child is away (preferably by telephone no later than 9.30am) and when they are likely to return
- Talking to the school as soon as possible about any child's reluctance to come to school so that the problems can quickly be identified and dealt with

The School Business Officer is responsible for:

- Ensuring staff are immediately informed of any reasons for absence
- Any child arriving after 9.00am will be marked 'late' by the clerical staff
- Ensuring that parents sign the late book before the doors are opened for the child to enter school (to be kept next to visitors book)

- Checking (and updating where necessary) that registers have been completed
- Acting as "first response" to unauthorised absences and subsequent follow-up actions required
- Phoning to find out the reason for absence if parents/carers fail to notify school by 9.30am
- Addressing all requests for leave of absence

Completing registers:

The register is a legal requirement and should be completed with care

- All children must have a 'present' or 'absent' mark
- Registers should be marked at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions
- Registers are formally closed at 9.30am and 1.25pm and should be sent to the office at 9.30am and 1.30pm
- Late children (after 9.00am but before the close of registration at 9.30am) will come to school via the Reception entrance and will be recorded as 'Late' but still 'Present' on the class register
- Children arriving after the close of registration at 9.30am will be recorded as an unauthorised absence
- Absence notes and leave of absence forms should be sent to the school office on receipt

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