

Horningsham Primary School



Attendance Policy 2015-2016



Attendance – Legal Summary:

You may be aware that the DFE (Department for Education) has set regulations with regards to Attendance that came into effect as of 1 September 2013. Details from our school policy can be found on the next page but here are the main areas of attendance guidance from Wiltshire Local Authority:

The Department for Education states: every day at school counts enormously and so does every consecutive day attended by pupils. Pupils need to be able to absorb new facts and knowledge, acquire new skills and consolidate before building further and progressing. They simply cannot do so if their structured school terms are disrupted by too many preventable absences.

Absence during Term Time

Parents do not have a legal right to take children out of school.

Headteachers may **not** grant any leave of absence during term time (unless there are exceptional circumstances).

Requests for Leave of Absence

A request for a leave of absence must only be considered if;

- The parent the child normally lives with applies in advance for the absence; and
- There are **exceptional circumstances** for the absence.

Exceptional Circumstances

Dictionary definition of **exceptional Adjective**

- unusual; not typical;
- forming an exception or rare instance; unusual; extraordinary.

What this means for us!

- No holidays can be authorised*.
- Parents must apply for a request for leave of absence in advance.
- Penalty notices will be issued by the LA for unauthorised absences that are equal to or exceed 5 whole days (10 sessions) – either consecutively or cumulatively.
- Penalties are issued to each parent for each child.
- Exceptional circumstances may be applied in some cases, but only in agreement with the Educational Welfare Officer and in accordance with the guidance from the DFE. This will mean that it will rarely be applied and other factors, such as their attendance history, the impact on their education and individual needs will be considered.

**unless there are exceptional circumstances and all other factors indicate that this will not be detrimental to their education.*

As you will hopefully see from the following overview of our policy in the next pages, we are keen to take a proactive approach to creating a positive culture for good attendance. As a school it is not at all pleasant for us having to refuse requests for leave or absence or follow up on poor attendance or breach of regulations with the LA. However, we do believe strongly that attendance is important and from experience have seen many times the short and long term impact of absence on individuals and their progress. With that in mind, we would still enforce a strict policy regardless of legislation, school targets and data as we are driven by what is best for your child's education, which we hope you will respect and value.

Attendance Policy Overview



The aim of this summary is to remind parents/carers of their responsibilities in support of the School's Attendance Policy and to clarify some of the main points.

We thought it would be helpful for parents to have an overview of our attendance policy; explaining the main points clearly, hopefully! We do believe that attendance is important and hope you understand that we have to adhere to strict national rules about authorising types of absence. The full policy is quite detailed and is available on our website.

Overall Policy Statement:

We expect all children on roll to attend every day, when the school is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. We do all we can to encourage the children to attend, and to put in place appropriate procedures. We recognise that there is a shared responsibility and aim to promote a partnership approach; supporting and encouraging parents to work with the school in ensuring good attendance.

Regular attendance is very important and has a direct impact on a child's development and raising achievement and attainment. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is development of positive attitudes towards school. To this end we strive to make our school a happy and rewarding experience for all children. We will reward those children whose attendance is very good. We will also make the best provision we can for those children who, for whatever reason, are prevented from coming to school.

It is important that parents inform the school immediately of any circumstances which may affect their child's attendance at school.

Expectations

All children across the country are expected to have **at least 95% attendance** over the whole year.

Responsibilities of Parents/Carers:

To support the school to develop a positive attendance culture and to ensure that your child arrives at school:

- on time. (School starts at 0850 hrs and finishes at 1505 hrs.)
- appropriately dressed.
- in a condition to learn. (i.e. not too tired, not too hungry, etc.)

The legal references which underpin the policy may be found at:

- Section 7 of the Education Act 1996
- Wiltshire LA Attendance Policy (2007)
- DFE School Attendance: Statutory Guidance and Department Advice (2013)

Authorised Non Attendance

Type:	Reasons:	Parents Responsibility
Approval given by school in advance for special circumstances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bereavement • Religious observance • Other* 	Request for leave of absence must be obtained
Non-attendance for educational reasons (not resulting in an absence on their record)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attending another school / tutor abroad by agreement • Attendance at another school (e.g. activity, interview, exam) 	School must be notified Approval and consent may be needed from school and the LA
A reasonable explanation is offered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Illness • Medical appointments – only in special circumstances (e.g. hospital where alternative time out of school is not possible) 	School must be notified on the day they are absent or authorisation requested in advance if an appointment

Other* - As you may know, holidays are not an entitlement in term time and action will be taken by the local authority for an absence occurring for this reason. Requests for a leave of absence must be made in advance to the Headteacher and will only be granted in exceptional circumstances in accordance with the new DFE legislation for schools 1 Sept 13

Unauthorised Absences

Type:	Reasons for unauthorised absences:	Consequence
An absence that has not been approved by the school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holidays • Appointment that could have been made out of school times (e.g. Dentist, GP) • Authorisation has not been requested • A child is kept away from school longer than agreed • Child arrives after 9.15am • Exams for out of school clubs (e.g. ballet, instrument) 	Local authority has to be notified and may follow up with a possible fine.

PLEASE NOTE THESE DO NOT CLASS AS ABSENCES:

Visits to a new school (e.g. for transferring or induction)

Exams only those set by a school or through the school

Educated abroad (by agreement with LA) at a school/with an approved, qualified teacher

Attendance Reporting and Awards

We value good attendance highly and understand and see first-hand the negative impact regular absence can have on a child. Sometimes absence is of course unavoidable but it is important that parents avoid any unnecessary time off from school (e.g. through doctors/dentist appointments, long weekends, private club exams etc). Through our new learning platform, eSchools, parents will be able to access their child's attendance data online. In addition we will send home reports each term and issue awards to those children with good attendance. The school will arrange informal meetings to chat with parents if they are concerned about persistent low attendance levels (i.e. Below 95%) and work with parents to see how best we can support them and their child.

First term achieving 100%	Certificate + bookmark		<p>We are really keen to commend good attendance and so have 100% attendance awards for each of the six terms.</p> <p>There are 6 little gifts to collect, so if one term attendance is below 100% they can still try and earn one the next term.</p>
Second term achieving 100%	Certificate + pencil		
Third term achieving 100%	Certificate + rubber		
Fourth term achieving 100%	Certificate + ruler		
Fifth term achieving 100%	Certificate + enamel badge		
Sixth term achieving 100%	Certificate + trophy		

All children in the UK are expected to have at least 95% attendance over the year.

Regular attendance is important and has a direct impact on a child's development and raising achievement and attainment. Evidence indicates that persistent attendance below 90% during primary years can slow a child's progress resulting long term in them achieving at least one grade lower at GCSE.

Working together to create a positive culture towards school attendance



Absence due to Illness: Guidance

We hope you find this overview useful. Guidance for schools from the Public Health England is as follows:

Condition:	Recommendations
Chicken Pox	Exclusion from school until all vesicles have crusted over
Colds/Flu	Child can attend school providing child's temperature is normal and they are feeling OK in themselves. If temperature is high, keep child at home until temperature returns to normal.
Conjunctivitis	Child can attend school as usual
Diarrhoea and/or Vomiting	Minimum of 24 hours exclusion from school from the last episode. If child is well within this 24 hour period, they can return to school at the end of the 24 hours. If child is feeling unwell within this 24 hour period (e.g. has a high temperature) and if other contacts at home are experiencing symptoms, child should be kept away from school for 48 hours from last episode. Exclusion from swimming for 2 weeks following last episode.
German Measles (rubella) *	4 days exclusion from school from onset of rash
Glandular Fever	Child can attend school as usual
Head Lice	Child can attend school as usual Treatment is recommended where live lice have been seen. Regular detection combing should be carried out at home
Impetigo	Exclusion from school until lesions are crusted and healed or 48 hours after start of anti-biotic treatment
Measles *	4 days exclusion from school from onset of rash
Mumps *	5 days from onset of swollen glands

Please notify the school of any of these conditions as in some cases we will have to inform the school community (eg. Slap Cheek – as can affect anyone pregnant)

Condition:	Recommendations
Ringworm	Exclusion from school until treatment commenced
Scarlet Fever *	24 hour exclusion from school after commencing antibiotic treatment
Slapped Cheek (Parvovirus B19)	Child can attend school as usual
Threadworms	Child can attend school as usual Treatment is recommended for the child and household contacts Ensure good toilet and hygiene practices and child always wear underwear
Tonsillitis	Child can attend school as usual providing temperature is normal and there are no other symptoms which warrant exclusion
Vomiting and/or Diarrhoea	Minimum of 24 hours exclusion from school from the last episode. If child is well within this 24 hour period, they can return to school at the end of the 24 hours. If child is unwell (e.g. has a high temperature) and if other contacts at home are experiencing symptoms, child should be kept away from school for 48 hours. Exclusion from swimming for 2 weeks following last episode
Whooping Cough * (Pertussis)	5 days exclusion from school from commencing antibiotic treatment or 21 days from onset of illness if no antibiotic treatment

***The School must notify the Health Protection Agency**

For any other conditions not listed here, please telephone the school for guidance.

FLU VACCINATIONS – children in Y1 and 2 will be offered flu vaccinations this year in Wiltshire via their GP. We would ask for appointments to be made out of school time but if this is not possible we will of course authorise this absence.