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Hanley St. Luke's CE Aided Primary School

School Attendance Policy 2017/2018

Hanley St Luke's is committed to raising the achievement of all pupils. One of the ways we do this is by promoting excellent attendance and punctuality. We expect our pupils to attend school regularly, so that they benefit fully from all the opportunities we provide for their education, progress and achievement. We are particularly sensitive to issues of linguistic difference in matters of communication and of cultural differences in perception regarding attendance.

Hanley St.Luke's and parents all have crucial roles to play to achieve excellent attendance and the impact is greater if parents and schools work in partnership.

Parental Responsibility

Under section 444 of the Education Act of 1996, parents, or those who have parental responsibility for children of compulsory school age, are required to ensure that their children receive an efficient full time education. Children are required to attend and to stay at school. This responsibility also extends to ensuring that the children arrive to school on time, suitably dressed in school uniform and in a fit condition to learn. It is also the parent's responsibility to inform school of the reasons for their child's non-attendance before 09.30 on the first day of absence.

Procedures For Reporting Absence

- By telephone, no later than 09.30am on the first day of absence.
- By letter, no later than 09.30am, delivered to the office on the first day of absence.

- In person, no later than 09.30am at the office
- By showing an appointment card or letter in advance, at the office.
- By completing an application for leave of absence in exceptional circumstances in term time, which is available from the office.

It is requested that reasons for absence are not sent as a message via a child or another parent/carer.

Definition of Absence

"Authorised absence" is absence with permission from the Headteacher or other authorised representative of the school. This includes instances of absence for which an acceptable explanation has been provided (e.g. illness) by a parent or carer. It will not include instances which are explained, but considered by the school to be parentally condoned truancy e.g. shopping, treats etc.

"Unauthorised" absence" is absence without permission from the Headteacher or other authorised representative of the school. This will include all unexplained or unjustified absences as well as any holidays taken during term time and instances where the explanation provided is unsatisfactory.

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 whenever possible. If this is not possible then authorisation will be given where confirmation of the appointment is received via one of the methods already stated. Children are expected to attend school prior to the appointment and parents expected to return their children to school following the appointment whenever possible.

Request for Leave of Absence in Exceptional Circumstances

The law states that parents DO NOT have an automatic right to take their child out of school in term time.

By prior application, you may request a leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. This will be in line with Government and Local Authority guidance.

The parent/carer should complete a 'Request for Absence' form available from the school office. Parents/carers will be notified in writing of the decision.

The Headteacher is unable to authorise leave of absence if the request is for holiday during term time.

Where permission has been given for a leave of absence and it is later found that the child has spent the time at home, this will then be counted as an unauthorised absence.

If your request for leave during term time is unauthorised and you still choose to take your child out of **school** for a **holiday** or another reason, you may be issued with an offer to **pay** a fixed **penalty** of £60 per child per parent, rising to £120 per child per parent if not **paid** within 21 days.

Procedure for taking a child out of school during the school day.

Parents/carers report to the office. The child is collected from the class by the office staff. The absence is recorded in a book with the reason, time and time of return if applicable.

Special Occasions

A request to attend an occasion eg family wedding/funeral must be made in advance by completing a "Request for Absence" form which is available from the school office. Parents will be notified in writing of the Headteacher's decision.

Bereavement

Hanley St Luke's 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.

Lateness

Parents are expected to bring their children punctually to school for 08.55 for the start of the school day. Doors open at 08.45 for Reception, Key Stage 1 and 2. Registration is at 08.55.

Any children arriving after this time must report with their parents to the office where they will be recorded in the late book. The register will show a late mark. Children arriving after 09.25 am will receive an unauthorised absence for the session unless medical evidence is provided or prior authorisation has been approved. Families who regularly arrive late will be contacted by the Headteacher and/or Safeguarding Officer. Education Welfare will become involved if the problem cannot be quickly resolved.

Procedures

In managing the attendance and punctuality of its pupils, the school will:

Keep appropriate attendance records

Teachers are responsible for marking the register twice a day. This must be done at the beginning of each session. Morning registers close 30 minutes after the official start of the school day. Attendance is recorded by the class teacher and absenteeism is entered by the school office staff. Absence codes must accurately reflect the reason for absence.

Monitor patterns of attendance.

The Headteacher and Safeguarding Officer, in liaison with 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 will be informed, via the annual report, of their child's overall attendance.

Education Welfare Officer (EWO)

The Headteacher and attendance team, through regular meetings with the EWO will discuss issues surrounding attendance and punctuality. If there is a cause for concern, the following procedures will be followed:

- The Attendance team will speak to the parents of the child.
- A Letter may be sent home raising the concerns by either the school or the Education Welfare Service as is most appropriate.
- Parents may be invited into school to talk to the Headteacher and the EWO.

- If informal intervention is unsuccessful, then an official referral to the EWO will be made by the school which may lead to prosecution.

Throughout these procedures, the Headteacher, EWO and Attendance team will regularly discuss ongoing cases.

Strategies for Improving Attendance and Punctuality

A special assembly to celebrate good attendance is held each term, to which parents are invited. Children are awarded the following certificates and star badges:

Gold Certificate and Star	-	for 100% attendance
Silver Certificate and Star	-	for no more than 1 session absence (1/2 day)
Bronze Certificate and Star	-	for no more than 2 sessions absence (1 day)

In addition any child who receives 3 Gold certificates in an academic year (perfect attendance) will be awarded a special prize of a book token, and 100% attendance badge.

Both KS1/Foundation Stage and KS2 children with full attendance and no late marks for the week, are eligible for a prize draw, which takes place each Friday.

Review Date - September 2018

Accepted by Governors - September 2017