

Heathfield Schools' Partnership Attendance Policy



Rationale

At Heathfield we recognise that good school attendance is related to positive outcomes, improved well-being and success in later life. This policy outlines the systems, attitudes and responsibilities which promote regular attendance amongst all groups of children at Heathfield.

Parents and carers have responsibility for ensuring their child attends school regularly and on time, unless there are significant reasons for them not to attend. Some parents and carers require additional support from school and other agencies in order to achieve good attendance for their child.

The London Borough of Richmond upon Thames sets a target of 96% for all schools. Our aim is to meet or better this target for all groups within school.

Daily procedures:

- Electronic registers are marked by 9:10 (staff member to send the register electronically by 9:10, or as soon as all children are accounted for)
- Office staff check answer phone messages
- Office staff check all absences and start calling parents/carers after 9:10
- Office staff insert appropriate code once contact has been made with parent/carer
- A list of any children not accounted for is passed to the Family Liaison Worker by 9:45
- A list of all absences is sent to Senior Strategy Team, Family Liaison Worker and The Club Manager by 10:00
- Electronic registers are submitted again after lunch (Early Years 12:30; KS1 1:00; KS2 1:20/35)

Lateness:

Children are encouraged to arrive in school on time in order to start the day with their peers. Important learning and interactions take place from the very start of the school day. Children arriving in school between 9:10 and 9:30 are signed into the office and given a card to take to their teacher; these children are marked as L in the register. Children arriving in school after 9:30 follow the same procedure and are marked as U. Persistent lateness is monitored by the Family Liaison Worker, alongside absences.

Responsibilities:

Class teachers:

- mark electronic registers twice daily, in accordance with the above procedures
- pass any messages given (verbally or otherwise) by parents/carers to the school office
- alert the Family Liaison Worker to any concerns regarding attendance
- engage enthusiastically with any incentives aimed at improving class/group attendance

Admin/office staff:

- check all electronic registers at the start of the day and insert absence codes as necessary
- make phone calls to parents and carers on the first and any subsequent days of absence
- liaise with the Family Liaison Worker regarding any concerning absences
- submit attendance data to the Local Authority, in accordance with statutory guidelines

Family Liaison Worker:

- support the school offices with first day calling, where needed
- keep an up to date list of children for whom attendance is a concern (including all Persistent Absentees) and share this regularly with office staff
- prioritise calls to vulnerable children or those where there are safeguarding concerns; continue calling and/or make a home visit until contact has been made
- make links with families where there are attendance concerns
- introduce group incentives and support class teachers with promoting these

- collect children for school in exceptional circumstances by arrangement with the parent
- meet half termly with the Educational Welfare Officer (more frequently if necessary)
- provide data to Senior Strategy Team and governors as required regarding Persistent Absentees and attendance of groups
- work within the Safeguarding Team

Our Family Liaison Worker is: Nikki Dufosee

Senior Strategy Team:

- meet regularly with Family Liaison Worker to monitor the attendance of individuals
- report to governors on attendance data and strategies used to improve attendance
- prioritise attendance within the School Action Plan if it falls below national expectations
- meet with parents/carers where attendance continues to be a concern, following Family Liaison Worker involvement
- support the work of the Family Liaison Worker

Educational Welfare Officer:

- meet half termly with Senior Strategy Team and Family Liaison Worker to monitor PAs
- take action (including following legal processes) as necessary
- meet with parents where attendance continues to be a concern, following Family Liaison Worker involvement

Our Educational Welfare Officer is: Rachel Barnes

Authorising absences

All requests for holidays to be taken in term time must be addressed to the Head Teacher, or Deputy Head Teachers. In accordance with local and national policies, we do not authorise absences for holidays taken in term time, except for in exceptional circumstances. When holidays are repeatedly taken, or taken when children already have a low attendance rate, we will refer to the Educational Welfare Officer. If children do not return from a planned holiday on the stated date, the absence will continue to be unauthorised and Educational Welfare Officer will be informed.

Specific groups of children:

We recognise the possible links between attendance and safeguarding issues and make all staff aware that absence from school can indicate an underlying safeguarding concern. The attendance of Children Looked After and children on Child Protection or Child in Need plans is of high importance. We also recognise that PPG children and children with Special Educational Needs can have poorer attendance than their peers and that this doubly disadvantages them within school. In response to this, our Family Liaison Worker, Safeguarding Team, SENCos and PPG Champion monitor the attendance of these specific groups and act swiftly to address any emerging concerns.

Staff attendance:

As members of staff, we are role models for the children at Heathfield and make staff attendance a priority. We are committed to good staff attendance, avoiding unnecessary absences as this can have an unsettling impact on the children and cause disruption to the smooth running of the school. Please see Staff Handbook for procedures around staff absence reporting.

Please also see Safeguarding Policy for further information including Children Missing in Education)

Updated by Helen Child

Due to be reviewed November 2020