

HEATON AVENUE PRIMARY SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE POLICY 2020-21

1 Introduction

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 believe that the most important factor in promoting excellent attendance is the 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 excellent. We will also make the best provision we can for those children who, for whatever reason, are prevented from coming to school.

Under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995, the Governing Body are responsible for making sure the school keeps an attendance register that records which pupils are present at the start of both the morning and afternoon sessions of the school day. This register will also indicate whether an absence was authorised or unauthorised.

2 Partnership between parents and the school

At Heaton Avenue Primary School, we recognise that attendance is the responsibility of pupils, parents and school staff who will work in partnership to ensure excellent attendance so that pupils can reach their full potential.

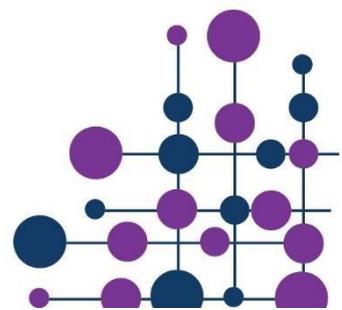
Matters pertaining to attendance will be mentioned and/or agreed upon:

- Within the home-school agreement
- On the school website
- In school newsletters
- In school reports
- Displays in school
- Parent/Carer Information Meetings
- Parent/Carer Consultation Evenings

3 Definitions

Authorised absence

- An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or guardian. For example, if a child has been unwell, the parent needs to telephone or email the school office on the morning of each day of absence with the reason. If your child has a stomach upset/been sick, they are required to stay off school for **at least** 24 hours. If possible, we request that parents try to make medical or dental appointments out of school hours or at the end of the day. If this is unavoidable, in order for this to be classed as an authorised absence, we request a form of evidence of appointment e.g. medical card, appointment slip etc.



- Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents and carers do not have this authority. Consequently, not all absences supported by parents and carers will be classified as authorised. For example, if a parent takes a child out of school to go shopping during school hours, this will not mean it is an authorised absence.

Unauthorised absence

- An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of the school.
- Therefore, the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason - even with the support of a parent.

4 If a child is absent

Parents should make every effort to make sure that their child attends school regularly and on time.

We request that parents/carers contact the school prior to the day of absence e.g. if a child has a medical appointment. Parents and carers should notify the school office by telephone call or email on the morning of every day of absence. Please email the school office on heatonavenue.office@sharemat.co.uk or ring on 01274 028613.

Parents and carers should also notify the school as soon as possible of when a pupil will be returning to school.

When a child is absent unexpectedly, the class teacher will record the absence in the register and will inform the school office staff who will endeavour to contact a parent or guardian to ascertain the reason.

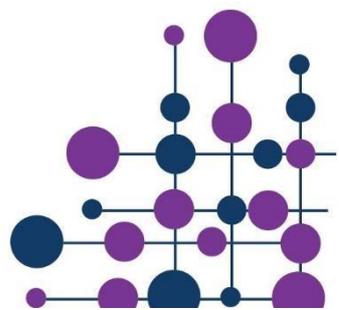
If there is any doubt about the whereabouts of a child, the class teacher will take immediate action by notifying the school office. The school will then be in contact straight away with the parent or guardian in order to check the safety of the child. If there are still concerns regarding the child, this will be referred to a member of the Senior Leadership Team as a safeguarding issue and the matter will be dealt with accordingly.

5 Punctuality

Punctuality to school is crucial. Lateness into school causes disruption to that individual's learning and to that of the other pupils in the class. It is paramount therefore that all pupils arrive at school on time.

For full time school pupils (Reception onwards), the school gates are open and the playground is accessible from 8:30 - 8:45am. Year 5 and 6 children are able to come in to the school building at 8.30am for extra reading and parents will be made aware of this by class teachers. Pupils who are not participating in these activities should remain supervised by a parent/carer until the start of the school day when Class Teachers will come to collect pupils from their respective playgrounds.

Please note: Class Teachers will collect children from the playground and doors to the school will close from 8:45am as the school day commences. Anyone arriving after this is asked to enter the building via the French House gate and



report to the back playground door (First door on your left hand side as you turn the corner). This is to reduce the disruptions caused in Reception on a morning.

A member of staff will be on hand to sign your child in as they arrive but it is essential that a parent/carer is present so that the late register can be completed accurately. Due to our Safeguarding and Fire Safety policies, this is an essential process which must be adhered to in order to ensure that school staff can account for all pupils onsite at all times. This will be in effect every day until 9am and if your child is to arrive any later than this, they should report to the Reception, again with the supervision of a parent/carer.

By law, schools must take a morning and afternoon register and record the attendance or absence of every pupil. When signing a child/children into school the parent/carer should give a reason for the lateness which will then be added to the register. The child will then be sent to their classroom.

Afternoon registration is taken at 12.45pm – Key Stage One and Nursery/Reception and 1.00pm for Key Stage Two. Pupil's attendance and punctuality is recorded on their report and will be passed on to future schools as necessary. Pupils who are consistently late are disrupting not only their own education but also that of others. Where persistent lateness gives cause for concern, further action may be taken via the school's Senior Leadership Team.

6 Requests for leave of absence/holidays

Absence from school affects the child's educational/social and personal attainment. The school, therefore, expects family holidays to be taken during school holiday periods.

We believe that children need to be in school for all sessions so that they can make the most progress possible.

As from 1st September 2013, the DfE introduced two changes – to term time holidays and to the timescales for Penalty Notices. The details can be found at:

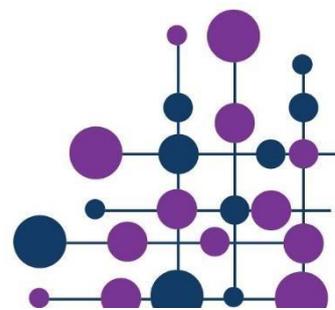
<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/pupilsupport/behaviour/attendance/a00223868/regulations-amendments>

The key points/changes are:

The removal of references to family holiday and extended leave, as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. The amendments make it clear that head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are **exceptional circumstances**. However, there is no exact definition of *exceptional circumstances*. The DfE states that the Codes H (authorised holiday) and G (unauthorised holiday) should be used, in order to monitor the impact of these changes;

From 1st September 2013, there is a fine of £60 issued, if paid **within 21 days** and £120 if paid **within 28 days**. **Fines may be imposed if children are absent for 10 or more consecutive sessions (two sessions in a school day).**

Any parent who intends to take their child out of school during term time **must** complete and submit an absence request form to the school office. A copy of



our absence request form can be found on our School website under the Policies and Documents tab.

7 Long term absence

When children have an illness that means they will be away from school for a number of days, a member of the Senior Leadership Team will attempt to make contact with the parent/carer. In addition to this, a member of the Senior Leadership team may also complete a home visit to offer further support and discuss the needs of your child in more detail. Where applicable and appropriate, the school will do all it can to send material home, so that the pupil can keep up with their school work. Please refer to our 'Managing Pupils with Medical Conditions' Policy.

If the absence is likely to continue for an extended period, or be a repetitive absence, the school will contact the support services, so that arrangements can be made for the child to be given some tuition outside school.

8 Repeated unauthorised absences

The school will contact the parent or guardian of any child who has an unauthorised absence. If a child has a repeated number of unauthorised absences, the school will send a letter regarding the absences. If these continue parents will be asked in to school to meet with a member of the Senior Leadership Team. These actions are in place to ensure that the parents or guardians understand the seriousness of the situation.

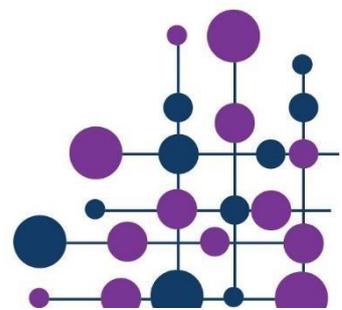
The governors supported by the SHARE Multi Academy Trust, reserve the right to consider taking legal action against any parents or guardians who repeatedly fail to accept their responsibility for sending their children to school on a regular basis.

9 Rewards for excellent attendance

All the children who have 100% attendance in any one term will receive an excellence certificate for attendance, awarded at an assembly at the end of the term. There are special awards for any child who has 100% attendance for the whole year. There is an honours list (attendance tree) display in the school hall and this is where children with excellent attendance are recognised throughout the academic year. 'ACE' attendance bear is used a way of celebrating excellent class attendance and this is awarded on a weekly basis with 'ACE' being placed in a class so that those children gain additional recognition for their achievement. On a weekly basis the Senior Leadership Team also gathers data on House attendance which incorporates all children across the school and recognises the House with the highest overall attendance. As a reward for this, the House is given additional points which are used in a whole school context to determine which House Team are given a reward at the end of each half term period.

10 Attendance targets

The school sets targets each year and this stands at 97%. Any pupil at or above 97% will also receive acknowledgment of their achievement. These are agreed by the Senior Leadership Team and governors at the annual target setting meeting. All attendance data has to be shared with the DfE. These targets are challenging yet realistic and based on attendance figures achieved in previous years which then sets the benchmark for the school honours list. The school considers carefully the attendance figures, in comparison with the national expectation.



11 Monitoring and review

It is the responsibility of the Governors to monitor overall attendance and they will request an annual report from the Headteacher. The Governing Body also has the responsibility for this policy and for seeing it is carried out. The Governors will therefore examine closely the information provided to them and seek to ensure that our attendance figures are as high as they should be.

The school keeps accurate records on file for a minimum of three years.

The individual rate of attendance will be reported on the children's annual report and rates of attendance will be reported on the school website (newsletters).

The school office staff and a member of the Senior Leadership Team will be responsible for monitoring attendance and for following up absences in an appropriate way. If there is a concern about a child's absence they will contact the parent immediately. Alerts will be raised when attendance and/or punctuality falls below the accepted standard.

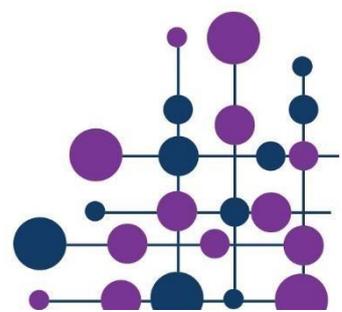
This policy will be reviewed by the Governing Body every two years or earlier if considered necessary.

12 Attendance monitoring procedures

The school recognises the link between poor attendance and safeguarding/child protection and SEND issues. Therefore, the member of the Senior Leadership Team allocated has an overview of all these areas. This provides continuity in ensuring the best opportunities for our most vulnerable pupils.

The SLT team will have half termly meetings to discuss individual children, interventions to be put in place and overall trends or patterns in the attendance figures. Letters are sent to parents from school if their child's attendance is below 90%. Persistent absentees of attendance below 90% may be asked to sign an attendance contract, be home visited by a member of SLT or invited into school for a meeting with the Head of Inclusion.

As a school we look closely for 'hot spots' e.g. repeated absence on a particular day of the week. The need to take into account the views of both parents/carers and pupils is recognised and opportunities to discuss any issues are encouraged whilst highlighting the importance of regular school attendance. School reviews the use of attendance codes in consultation with the DfE and chases up with parents/carers if school has not received any explanation regarding their child's absence.



Attendance Policy – COVID Addendum

This addendum will take effect from September 1st 2020 and will follow government legislation and guidelines set out on www.gov.uk.

Heaton Avenue Primary School is committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all of its pupils/students and recognises that this can only be achieved by supporting and promoting excellent school attendance for all. This is based upon the belief that only by attending school regularly and punctually will children and young people be able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them.

COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic has forced school to be closed for a number of weeks for the large majority of pupils. During the closure period, the attendance of key worker pupils has been reported to the Department for Education (DFE) on a daily basis.

From September 2020, the Department for Education has set out the expectation that school will now be open and mandatory for all pupils and usual attendance recording procedures will restart, alongside the daily reporting to the DFE. This means from this point, the usual rules on school attendance will apply, including:

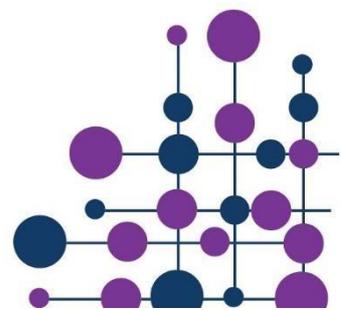
- parents' duty to secure that their child attends regularly at school where the child is a registered pupil at school and they are of compulsory school age;
- schools' responsibilities to record attendance and follow up absence
- the availability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices in line with local authorities' codes of conduct

Start and end of the School day

Pupils will be attending school in bubbles. These bubbles have staggered start and end times to restrict the number of people attending school site at one time. Pupils will enter the school premises at their specific allocated time and parents must drop children off within the zones set out for each class. Children and parents should socially distance on the way in to school, observing the markings and the one-way system on the playgrounds.

Start times of bubbles begin at 8.40am and stagger in 5 or 10 minute intervals to 8:50am. It is imperative that pupils arrive punctually. The register for the bubble will be closed 20 minutes after the start of that bubble. In accordance with the regulations, if your child arrives after that time, they will receive a mark that will indicate that your child is in the school building, but will be marked with a 'U' Code which is recorded as an unauthorised absence.

If your child arrives later than 9:00 and after the school gates have closed, parents will need to escort their child to our main reception where a member of our admin team will provide further instructions. The end time of the bubbles are also staggered. Pupils will be released from classroom doors to parents at staggered intervals between 2:50 – 3:00. Parents must wait at an appropriate distance from the classroom, behind the marked lines and within the classes allocated zones.



Attendance of pupils

From September 1st, all pupils are expected to be in school and normal attendance procedures will apply (see our main policy for more details). Parents will need to follow usual procedures if they are unwell with symptoms not related to COVID-19. This includes contact being made with school, with a reason for absence at the earliest opportunity. Any absence will be followed up by school as per the usual policy.

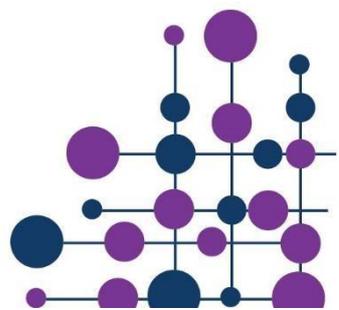
If a pupil or family member develops symptoms of COVID-19, or receives information that they have been exposed through contact tracing, they **MUST contact school immediately**. Pupils displaying symptoms of COVID-19 must not return to school until they have received a negative test result and no longer have symptoms following the government enforced self-isolation period.

Pupils and families will be requested to self-isolate if they have been in contact with confirmed COVID-19 cases and will not be able to attend school for this time.

Coding Attendance

Pupils may not have symptoms themselves but may be required to self-isolate if they are a close contact of someone with coronavirus (COVID-19).

The [NHS test and trace](#) guidance states that a person should self-isolate for 14 days if they have had recent close contact with a person who has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19). In the event of a confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) case in the school community, the local health protection team will provide advice on who this applies to, advising them to self-isolate for 14 days since they were last in close contact with the person that has tested positive when they were infectious. Code X should be used for these pupils during this period.



Attendance Policy addendum

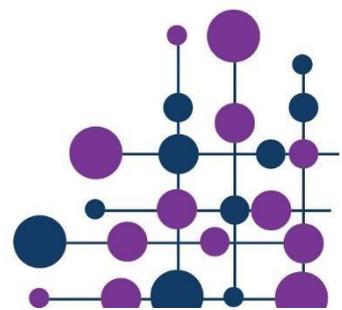
Attendance during national lockdowns or other emergencies requiring extended school closures

There may be times when pupils are asked not to attend school for extended periods of time; for example, if the government directs schools to close to stop the spread of a pandemic. In these circumstances, pupils may either be asked to work from home or continue to attend school, either on a rota or daily basis. Some pupils may be given priority or encouraged to physically attend school. This may include pupils with special educational needs and / or disabilities, who need additional support to access learning, or pupils under the supervision of a social worker. The school will share information about priority groups as soon as possible after closures are announced.

Pupils who are asked or required to attend school will be subject to all our usual attendance procedures.

Pupils who are asked to remain at home will be expected to continue to study remotely. When this happens, the following applies:

- Pupils should attend all 'live' lessons, i.e. lessons that teachers are delivering to classes over the internet. This is the best way for pupils to learn. The technology allows pupils to submit work and ask questions. Students are expected to remain in the lesson for the whole duration. Staff will check attendance throughout the lesson.
- Teachers will record attendance to every live lesson.
- Students are expected to 'arrive' to remote lessons within the first few minutes of it commencing, otherwise teaching staff may record a 'late' mark.
- If it is not possible to access a live lesson, for example if access to a suitable device is limited, pupils may access a recording of the lesson. They should submit their responses to any learning activities the teacher sets at the earliest possible opportunity. These responses will be tracked, to help confirm attendance.
- Sometimes, schools may not be able to deliver 'live' lessons. This may be because younger children struggle to access the technology or not enough pupils have access to the right resources. The teacher will then upload work electronically and track responses. Pupils' responses will be used to measure attendance.
- Families struggling to provide remote access may be eligible to receive support and should contact the school to ask for help.
- If it is not possible to access lessons remotely, the school will send suitable work home. It should be completed and returned to school at the earliest opportunity. In this case, a member of staff will make contact with the pupil from time to time, to check his or her welfare and whether there are any questions about the learning activities.
- Staff will keep attendance records and inform parents when remote lessons are missed or work is not submitted.





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- Parents should notify the school if a pupil is too unwell to engage in learning that day. The normal processes for informing school that a pupil is unwell will apply.
- Staff will contact parents if pupils miss lessons or fail to hand in work. The aim will be to agree with parents strategies for improving attendance.
- If a pupil persistently fails to engage with remote learning, we may need to take further action. Initially, this will involve a discussion with parents, to help overcome any barriers to engaging in remote learning.
- If pupils continue to miss lessons, staff have to be assured that pupils are safe and well, so our safeguarding procedures may apply. If we are unable to make contact with the child, the matter could be treated as a child missing in education and we may need to refer our concerns to other agencies, such as social services.

