



## Old Hutton CE Primary School

### Attendance Policy

#### RATIONALE:

The Governors and Cumbria Local Authority (LA) believe that attendance at school is important and that any absence can lead to poor progress and poor attainment, therefore **daily attendance at school is expected from all our pupils.**

#### SCHOOL AIMS:

**Support:** To ensure a broad and balanced curriculum that provides children with the best possible learning opportunities and experiences.

**Ethos:** To provide a welcoming, safe and caring environment in which each pupil is valued and supported.

**Partnership:** To build and maintain effective partnerships between the school and its parents, external support agencies and the wider community and church.

#### SCHOOL EXPECTATIONS:

From pupils:

- Attend school regularly
- Arrive on time, appropriately dressed and prepared for the day

From parents/carers:

- Encourage their children to attend school
- Contact the office as soon as possible, preferably by telephone, whenever their child is unable to attend
- Ensure their child is appropriately dressed, taking account of school dress code
- Ensure their child arrives in school well prepared for the school day with any homework completed

Pupils and parents can expect the following from school:

- Regular, efficient and accurate recording of attendance every morning and afternoon and time keeping, which is also monitored and quality-assured by our LA attendance/inclusion officer
- Contact from school (as soon as possible during the same day) when a pupil fails to attend without reason and no contact is made

- Early contact with parents when a pupil fails to attend without good reason or there is a pattern of absences or an excessive number of absences or lateness. The LA welfare/inclusion officers may also contact families causing concern, especially if a child's attendance falls below 85%
- Any unauthorised absence is reported to Governors and the LA
- Immediate action on any attendance problem notified to us, in confidence if necessary
- Positive measures to encourage good attendance, as follows:
  1. A high quality education with an exciting, relevant curriculum
  2. Registers will be completed accurately at the start of each day
  3. Daily monitoring by class teachers who will contact school administrator and Headteacher to raise concerns where appropriate
  4. Regularly monitoring by Headteacher on attendance and punctuality
  5. Praise and rewards for examples of good attendance and punctuality eg. certificates to pupils with annual 100% attendance in an academic year; weekly house points for year groups with a week's full attendance

#### ABSENCE DUE TO PUPIL ILLNESS/APPOINTMENTS:

Parents are requested to inform the school by telephone on the first day of absence due to illness. School should be informed by telephone, email or letter as soon as possible if a child is to be absent for attendance at a doctor, dentist or hospital appointment.

If a child becomes ill during school hours, we will contact parents at once. Parents must ensure that we have up to date details of home/work contact numbers, as well as an emergency contact person in case they are unavailable.

#### ABSENCE DUE TO HOLIDAYS:

From September 2013, the Department for Education requires Local Authorities to ensure that all schools implement the new law which gives **no entitlement to parents to take their child on holiday during term time**. Families taking holidays during term time is a cause of absence which has been highlighted nationally as a disruptive factor in pupil's educational progress, interrupting teaching and learning.

The Head teacher is able to grant leave of absence only in the following exceptional circumstances:

- For a day exclusively set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the parent/child belongs
- The family has service personnel returning from active deployment

- Where leave is recommended as part of parents' or child's rehabilitation from medical or emotional problems. Evidence must be provided
- When a family needs to spend time together to support each other during or after a crisis
- The parent can show that their trade or business requires them to travel, and their child has attended school as regularly as the nature of the trade or business allows, and their child has attended school for at least 200 sessions during the preceding twelve months

National Education Regulations state that should a parent/carer wish to take their child out of school for any of the above (or other) reasons, they must apply in advance directly to the Head teacher. We ask that parents apply in writing, preferably at least 3 months before the requested absence, if possible. The Head teacher will then consider the application, with reference to the LA for advice if necessary, and will make the final decision. **She will inform the parent/carer of her decision in writing.**

**If parents/carers decide to take their child out of school for the purpose of leave of absence in term time without the permission of the school, the absence will be coded as unauthorised.**

The LA is informed of all unauthorised absences and monitors them. The LA, not the Head teacher, will decide if the application of a Penalty Notice requesting parents to pay a fine is necessary, in line with the LA Enforcement Policy (Sept 2013). If a Penalty Notice is not paid, the matter may be taken to prosecution in the Magistrates Court. From 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013, if a Penalty Notice is given, both parents must each pay £60 within 21 days, or £120 within 28 days.

*Policy revised AMW, Sept 2014*

*Adopted by Governors Oct 2014*