

Cadland Primary School Attendance Policy



Rationale (Section 1):

For a child to reach their academic potential, a good level of school attendance is essential. We are committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all our children and endeavour to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome. Every child has a right to access the education to which he/she is entitled and parents and teachers share the responsibility for supporting and promoting excellent school attendance and punctuality for all.

It is our duty to consistently strive to achieve good attendance for all children - every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

To take full advantage of the educational opportunities offered, it is vital that your child is at school, on time, every day that the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. The routines that children develop around attendance and punctuality at school are the same as the expectations of any future employer in the world of work. High attainment, confidence with peers and staff, and future aspirations depend on good attendance.

Why is high attendance so important to a child's education?

- statistics show that pupils with attendance rates of less than 96% underachieve in school
- a child who is absent for 1 day of school per week misses an equivalent of 2 years of their school life
- 9 in 10 young people with attendance rates below 85% fail to achieve 5 or more good grades at GCSE
- poor attendance is also closely associated with crime in later life
- regular attenders make better progress, both socially and academically
- regular attenders find school routines, school work and friendships easier to cope with
- regular attenders are more successful in transferring between primary and secondary schools

Promoting good attendance (Section 2):

The foundation for good attendance is a strong partnership between the school, parents and the child. To help us all to focus on this we will:

- provide information on all matters related to attendance
- report to you on how your child is performing in school, and at least once every term, more when we have concerns, what their attendance and punctuality rate is and how this relates to their attainment
- celebrate good attendance
- reward good or improving attendance

Roles and responsibilities (Section 3):

A member of the senior leadership team will oversee, direct and co-ordinate the school's work in promoting regular and improved attendance and will ensure that the attendance policy is consistently applied throughout the school. This person will also ensure that attendance is both recorded accurately and analysed. They will ensure that attendance issues are identified at an early stage.

If absence is frequent or continuous, parents will be encouraged to keep absences to a minimum. A note or explanation from a pupil's home does not mean an absence becomes authorised. The decision whether or not to authorise an absence will always rest with the school.

Responsibilities of parents:

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is a parent's legal responsibility (Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act) and permitting absence from school that is not authorised by the school creates an offence in law. Parents will be required to:

- support the school with their child in aiming for +99% attendance each year
- make sure that any absence is clearly accounted for by telephone on the first day of absence
- avoid taking their child out of school for non-urgent medical or dental appointments
- only request leave of absence if it is for an exceptional circumstance
- ensure that they are honest about the reasons for their child's absence – the school system of authorising absences when a child is unwell works on a basis of trust between school and parents - any fabrications, particularly around undeclared holidays, will lead to the unauthorising of all future absences unless suitable evidence is provided.

Responsibilities of classroom staff:

- Ensure that all students are registered accurately.
- Promote good attendance with children at all appropriate opportunities.
- Liaise with SLT attendance leader on matters of concern regarding attendance and punctuality.
- Under guidance from SLT, communicate with parents where there has been a previous attendance or punctuality concern.
- Inform parents at each parents evening when attendance has dropped significantly and look for a way forward in partnership i.e. rewards, sticker charts etc.

Recording attendance (Section 4):

Legally, the register must be marked twice daily. This is once at the start of the school day, 8.35am, and again for the afternoon session.

Lateness/punctuality:

It is important to be on time at the start of school. If your child is late, they will miss learning or settling time with their class teacher and it will also cause unfair disruption to the lesson for others.

- The school day begins at 8:35am and all children are expected to be in school at this time.
- All lateness is recorded daily. This information will be required by the courts, should a prosecution for non-attendance or lateness be necessary.
- Arrival after the close of registration (8:50) will be marked as unauthorised absence and coded U in line with Hampshire County Council and Department of Education guidance. This mark shows them to be on site, but is legally recorded as an absence.
- Parents will be contacted to remind them of the importance of good time keeping.
- If a pupil is late due to a medical appointment, they will receive an authorised absence, coded M. Please be advised that, where possible, doctors and dentists appointments should be made outside of school hours or during school holidays.

Children who are consistently late are disrupting not only their own education but also that of the other children. On-going and repeated lateness will be considered as unauthorised absence.

Children who have an attendance rate of less than 90% for the previous half-year period will automatically have all absences unauthorised unless suitable evidence can be provided – this is because we are concerned by the pattern of absence developing and cannot condone the absence under the reasons given by parents. The only exception to this will be where a child has a verified and chronic medical issue about which the school has been consulted and advised by medical professionals that absence patterns are unavoidable.

Parents of pupils who have concerning patterns of absence or lateness will be contacted to stress the importance of good attendance and time-keeping. If lateness or absence persists, and a child has 10 or more sessions (5 days) of unauthorised absence recorded in any 10-week period, Hampshire County Council can issue parents with a Penalty Notice in accordance with Hampshire County Council's Code of

Conduct (see Section 7 of this policy for further detail). Alternatively, they may pursue legal action through the court system.

The school has a duty and shall provide the local authority with the names and addresses of all pupils who fail to attend school regularly *or* have been absent for a continuous period of ten school days where their absence has been recorded with one or more of the codes statistically classified as unauthorised (G, N, O, and/or U).

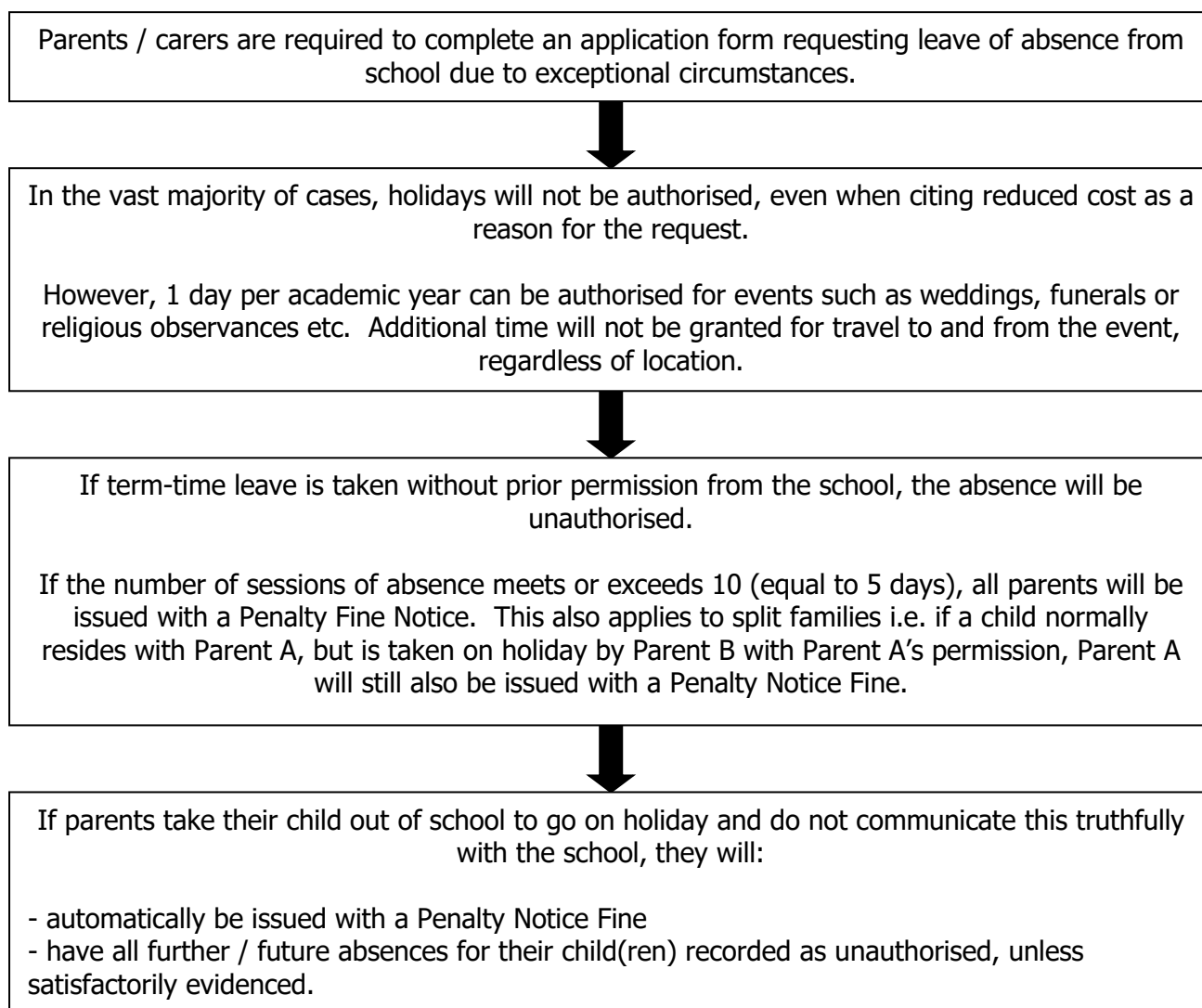
What to do if your child is absent? (Section 5):

This section should set out the school's expectations of parents in reporting any absence and sets out the school's internal procedures for responding to a child's absence. A child not attending school is considered a safeguarding matter; this is why information about cause of any absence is always required.

Request for leave of absence (Section 6):

Education Regulations state that headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

It is important to note that headteachers can determine the length of the authorised absence, as well as whether absence is authorised at all. The fundamental principles for defining exceptional are rare, significant, or unavoidable, which means the event could not reasonably be scheduled at another time. There are no rules on this as circumstances vary from school to school and family to family. There is, however, no legal entitlement for time off in school term time to go on holiday. Please refer to the below diagram outlining procedures for leave of absence.



Penalty Notices for non-attendance and other legal measures (Section 7):

In education law, parents/carers are committing an offence if they fail to ensure the regular attendance of their child of compulsory school age at the school at which the child is registered, unless the absence has been authorised by the school.

Hampshire schools and Hampshire County Council will use the full range of legal measures to secure good attendance.

The following measures will be used for pupils of compulsory school age who are registered at Cadland Primary School:

- Penalty Notice Fines (£160 per parent, per child)
- Prosecution
- Education Supervision Orders
- Referral to Children's Services if non-attendance constitutes neglect

Hampshire County Council will issue a Penalty Notice Fine for any unauthorised absence where the pupil has been:

- absent for 10 or more half-day sessions (five school days) of unauthorised absence during any 100 possible school sessions (fifty school days) – these do not need to be consecutive
- persistently late (coded U) for up to 10 mornings after the register has closed
- persistently late before the close of the register (coded L), but the school has met with parents and has clearly communicated that they will categorise as unauthorised any further lateness (code O), and where the threshold of 10 sessions has been met
- absent for any public examinations of which dates are published in advance

Below shows the steps taken by the school when attendance becomes concerning.

A pupil's attendance for the past half year period has dropped below 94%:

- Attendance is monitored more closely



Attendance for the past half year period has dropped below 93%:

- An orange warning letter could be sent out to parents explaining that if their child's attendance continues to drop to 90% or below, all further absences will be marked as unauthorised if satisfactory evidence is not provided.



Attendance for the past half year period has dropped below 90%:

- A red notice letter is sent to parents informing them that all further absences are now being recorded as unauthorised and that 10 further unauthorised absences will result in a penalty notice fine being issued. This letter will be classed as a penalty notice warning.



Attendance does not improve or worsens:

- Penalty Notice Fine issued or;
- Referral to HCC Legal Intervention Team (LIT) or;
- Referral made to HCC Child Services if absence constitutes Child Neglect

Signed:
(J.Nutbeam)

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Nutbeam', written in a cursive style.

Date: 3/9/2025

Next review date: September 2027