



## THE FEDERATION OF HACKBRIDGE PRIMARY SCHOOL AND SPENCER NURSERY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY

### STATEMENT FOR EQUALITY

The Federation of Hackbridge Primary School & Spencer Nursery School is committed to gender, racial and disability equality in every part of school life.

The Federation of Hackbridge Primary School and Spencer Nursery School believe that good attendance is not simply a legal requirement but essential. Through regular attendance children can take full advantage of all that school offers and gain the educational and social skills necessary for life.

Good attendance at school is important for children's education and development and establishes a positive working ethos early in life, even for nursery aged children. It is essential that the school is informed of the reasons for absence as soon as possible. Under current government legislation, unauthorised absence for statutory aged children is regarded as truancy and all absence figures have to be reported to the Local Authority and the DfE and are recorded on a child's annual report.

It is also important that children arrive on time for school, as the start of the day establishes the learning activities for that day. Lateness is recorded in the register. We are legally bound to register a pupil's attendance at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session. Registers are closed at 9:15am (Hackbridge Corner/Spencer Nursery) and 9:30am (London Road) and any child arriving after this time is marked with an unauthorised absence for the morning session.

### The Family is responsible for:

- Making sure their child comes to school on time, every day to enable them to receive their entitlement to learning unless prevented by the child's illness or medical appointment;
- Letting the school know as soon as possible why a child is away. Providing medical evidence for absences of more than 2 days and providing surgery/hospital cards/letters for all medical appointments;
- Talking to the school as soon as possible about any child's reluctance to come to school so that problems can be quickly identified and dealt with.

### What to do if your child is sick?

When your child is unwell please email or call the school office on the first morning of absence by 9:30am and then each day thereafter. If your child has diarrhea, vomiting or has had a temperature it is important they stay at home for the specified time according to the school's policy.

### What to do for dental and medical treatment?

It is expected these are taken outside school hours wherever possible. Please let the school office, at your child's school, know in writing, in advance of the date and time of the appointment and when your child will be collected from and/or returned to school. Please provide either sight of or a copy of the appointment card/letter/text to the office to ensure the time is recorded as authorized absence.

### Thinking of applying for leave of absence during term time?

Amendments to the 2006 regulations remove references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten days. The amendments make clear that Headteachers may **not** grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Headteachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted and agree a return date. This change to legislation reinforces the recognised link between good attendance and good progress.

If you need to ask about taking your child out of school for a short term period a letter must be written to the Headteacher explaining the exceptional circumstances preferably one month prior to the date. The Headteacher *will consider the present level of attendance*

and the exceptional circumstances. Parents should know that failure to return by the agreed date may mean that their child's school place is at risk.

For children of statutory school age, a penalty notice may be issued for unauthorised leave of absence in term time. This will be issued to **each** parent in respect of **each** child not attending school.

The Governors are fully supportive of the school's policy and any action taken if a child is taken out of school for an unauthorised period of time.

**What does the School do when a child is absent with no reason given?**

- ◆ Phone or email the main parent/carer from 9.30 onwards
- ◆ If we have not heard from you by 9.30am we will call the contact numbers provided (there should be at least 4)
- ◆ If we have still not heard and have no reason for absence and do not know if your child is safe we will contact Children's service/police to investigate further
- ◆ Dependent on the length of time and frequency of the absence the Headteacher will discuss such cases with the School Attendance Officer

**What does the school do if a child has low attendance (refers to children of statutory school age - HPS)?**

*As per Government recommendations, good attendance is 96% or above.*

**The school's procedure for attendance falling below 96%**

Letters asking for medical evidence are sent out first once the child's attendance falls below 96%. If there is no improvement, we then invite parents in to meet with the Headteacher. There will be opportunities for the parent/carer to discuss reasons for absence and support to be given by the school with the aim to improve attendance. The school will ask for all absences to continue to be supported by medical evidence. This is a Doctor's note or proof of visit to the Doctor or a dated stamp in the child's reading record book (these are free and can be obtained from the Doctor's reception).

The school monitors all children whose attendance falls below 96%. If acceptable medical evidence is produced for all illness absences a fixed penalty fine should not be issued. The school understands that sometimes there are valid reasons for low attendance and will not move onto the next stage if this is the case.

If the attendance does not improve and Doctor's notes or dated stamps are not consistently produced, then a meeting will be arranged with the School Attendance Officer. If the attendance still does not improve, the School Attendance officer will arrange a final stage attendance meeting where fixed penalty fines will be discussed and may be issued.

Persistent failure of parent/carers to attend attendance support meetings may result in a penalty notice being issued if attendance does not improve.

As a method of keeping our families informed we have a traffic light letter system. At the end of the Autumn and Spring terms, coloured letters will be sent to the parents/carers of children whose attendance falls in each category confirming the percentage attendance they have had so far this year. Children's attendance is also then reported in their end of year report.



RED- Parents of children with attendance of 90% or below will receive a red letter and may be referred to the Education Welfare Officer, as if they have attendance below 90% they are judged as persistently absent.



AMBER - Orange: Orange letters will be sent for attendance between 90% and 92.9%.  
AMBER - Yellow: Yellow letters will be sent for attendance between 93% and 95.9%. Children's attendance will be monitored closely in this group as it falls below the government's 95% target.



GREEN- Children with attendance between 96% and 100% will receive a certificate as they are achieving the expected level of attendance of 96%. For pupils with 100% attendance, a special badge is awarded to them.

## **The School Attendance Officer (HPS)**

The School Attendance Officer visits regularly to check and monitor the attendance of pupils at Hackbridge Primary School. They carry out regular register checks to identify children with low attendance (below 90%). They work with the school to improve attendance and may issue penalty notices if attendance support meetings held by the school do not improve attendance. The School Attendance Officer can also complete Home Visits on behalf of the school for pupils who are Persistently Absent.

## **Attendance in the Early Years (HPS & SNS)**

At both schools we continue our tight focus on attendance and punctuality. We believe that establishing healthy attendance and punctuality habits from an early age can help to embed these routines throughout your child's school career and into their future. Children learn best when they attend school regularly (96% of the time). Due to this we continue to use the same process of monitoring and evaluating attendance as we do for statutory school aged children such as traffic light letters and meetings with the School Attendance Officer. Persistent poor attendance could result in your child's place being withdrawn.

## **Rewards for good attendance at HPS for Years R-6:**

- Pupils with 96% - 99.9% attendance for a whole term are presented with an excellent attendance certificate.
- Pupils with 100% attendance for a whole term will receive a special award. For one term of 100% attendance, pupils will receive a Bronze award, for two terms a Silver award and for three terms at a Gold award. This will mean that if a child unfortunately has an illness they can still achieve a termly 100% award and recognition, and not miss out for a whole year.
- Each week the class with the highest attendance in KS1 and KS2 will receive a 'mini treat'.
- The class in KS1 and KS2 that has won the most attendance, punctuality and improvement rewards each week will receive a class award each term.
- Individual children who make significant improvement are rewarded by special mention in assembly and a letter of congratulations is sent home.

This rewards system is constantly reviewed.

## **Lateness to school (HPS)**

All children arriving after the start of the school day, or their nursery session, should enter through the school office.

These times are as follows:

YR to Y6 Hackbridge Corner Site – the start of the school day is 8.45am

YR to Y6 London Road Site – the start of the school day is 9.00am

Caterpillars Nursery class, Hackbridge Corner – the start of the session is 8.45am

Honeybees Nursery class, London Road – the start of the session is 9.15am

Tadpoles Nursery class, Hackbridge Corner – the start of the session is 12.20pm

Children who arrive after these times are late.

When arriving late, parents/carers must report to the school office to sign their child in, detailing the reason for the child's late arrival and give their child's dinner option (if in YR to Y6). Late children will be scrutinised weekly by the school office, with persistent lateness being reported to the Headteacher and discussed with the School Attendance Officer. Being late to school can disrupt your child's start to the day and cause them to become anxious, as they are missing the class teacher explaining the timetable for the day.

<b>Minutes late every day</b>	<b>Amount of days lost each year</b>
5 minutes	3 days
10 minutes	6 days
15 minutes	10 days
20 minutes	13 days
30 minutes	19 days

## **Lateness to school (SNS)**

The school office will sign late children in. Parents or Carers are asked to ensure they let the school office know if their child is going to be late, to ensure that a school dinner is ordered for them. The School Business Manager will remind parents and/or carers of the importance of arriving for their session on time.

## **The Class Teacher/s (HPS) and Practitioners (SNS) are responsible for:**

- Ensuring that the registers are completed accurately at the beginning of each session;
- Ensuring that all absence letters are sent to the office;

- Monitoring the attendance and patterns of absence of the children in their class;
- Liaising with SLT with regard to any concerns regarding absence;
- Ensuring that the delivery of the curriculum is challenging, interesting and stimulating so that children want to attend regularly;
- Ensuring (in conjunction with their colleagues) that the ethos in class and school is supportive of good attendance.

**Agreed by Governors:** Autumn 2017

**This Review:** Spring 2020

**Learning and Attainment Committee**