



Hamp Nursery & Infants' School

Attendance Policy 2016 - 2017

Review: Autumn 2017
Unless there is a significant material change at an earlier date

Attendance Policy

Registered pupils of compulsory school age are required by law to be in school. It is the responsibility of the parents/carers to ensure that their children attend school. It is the responsibility of the Local Authority and schools to promote good attendance at school and to have systems in place to keep accurate records of school attendance. Attendance at school must be maximised in order to raise the achievement of all pupils and improve their prospects in adult life.

AIMS

- Hamp Nursery & Infants' School expects regular attendance, even when recognising the problems of individual families and children.
- Where a pupil is absent without prior permission an explanation is required. If one is not forthcoming the absence will be treated as unauthorised.
- Schools are not obliged to accept parental notes where there is reasonable doubt as to the validity of the explanation.
- In accordance with statutory guidelines, absence as a result of holidays taken during school term time will not be authorised unless there are exceptional circumstances.
- Even where absence is authorised, Hamp Nursery & Infants' School will be alert to emerging patterns of absence which may seriously disrupt continuity of learning.
- In promoting regular attendance, this school works closely with our Education Attendance Officer.

PARENTS' RESPONSIBILITIES

Parents and those with parental responsibilities are required to ensure that children of compulsory school age receive efficient full-time education. This means that they are responsible for ensuring that children attend and stay at school unless alternative arrangements for their education are made.

They are also responsible for informing school of any absence as soon as possible, ideally on the first day of absence. They should state the nature of the illness and when the child is expected to return to school.

Telephone calls, letters or personal contact are all acceptable. We state our attendance policy at parents' meetings, in the prospectus and at other opportunities (when letters are sent home).

Hamp Nursery & Infants' School ensures that parents are:

- reminded of their statutory duties – to make sure their children attend school punctually and at the required times
- aware of our school's requirements as regards notification of absence

REGISTRATION

Pupils are marked present or absent on an attendance register at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session.

Registers are kept accurately as they may be used in evidence in cases where parents are being prosecuted for school attendance offences.

Consistency of registration practice is vital. All teachers within the school operate to the same rules. All teachers use the DfE's National Absence codes.

THE EDUCATION WELFARE SYSTEM

Local authorities are charged in law with enforcing school attendance. Somerset LA can implement fast track prosecutions, attendance orders etc.

Hamp Nursery & Infants' School has an effective working relationship with the Education Attendance Officer who comes into school every two weeks.

The Education Attendance Officer is informed of attendance problems. All continuous absences of more than 10 days are reported and reports are made on those pupils who fail to attend regularly, except where such absences are covered by a medical certificate.

CATEGORISING ABSENCE

Parents can be prosecuted under the Education Act of 1993 for failing to ensure their child's attendance at school with the following exceptions:

- the pupil was absent with permission from an authorised person within the school (eg. family holiday)
- the pupil was ill
- a medical or dental appointment
- family bereavement
- the absence occurred on a day exclusively set aside for religious observance by the religious group to which the family belongs
- fixed term or permanent exclusion

AUTHORISING ABSENCE

Only the school can approve absence, not parents. The school does not have to accept the parents' offered explanation as a valid reason for absence. If there is no explanation, the absence will be treated as unauthorised.

Illness, medical and dental appointments are all considered to be authorised, providing that the school is satisfied that the illness or appointments are genuine.

The school responds sensitively to requests for leave of absence to attend family funerals or associated events. Such absences are usually authorised. However, where a pupil is absent for more than the agreed period then early contact is made with the family.

The school will follow the amended statutory guidelines in respect of term time leave, and such absence will not be authorised unless there are exceptional circumstances. Parents/carers need to apply for term time absence before going on holiday and need to explain the specific exceptional circumstances for consideration by the headteacher. Parents will be notified that taking unauthorised leave/holiday may result in a penalty warning or fine being issued.

Where a pupil has been temporarily excluded he/she will remain on the school roll. This will be treated as authorised absence. If a pupil has been permanently excluded his or her absence should be authorised until after review. If the exclusion is confirmed, he/she should be taken off the school roll.

ARRIVAL AT SCHOOL IN THE MORNING - 'SOFT START'

We have extended our school opening times and introduced a 'soft start' for children arriving in the morning.

This means that children can come into school from 8.30 am – they will be collected from the playground as normal. One of the benefits we hope that will result from this is that numbers of children arriving late will reduce.

To help parents who have children attending the Jack & Jill Nursery, the morning sessions will start at 8.35 am and finish at 11.35 am, and the afternoon sessions will be 11.55 am until 2.55 pm. This will also help parents who have to collect from the Academy.

LATENESS

Lateness is discouraged. Class registers are kept open until 09.15. Where pupils miss registration and fail to provide an adequate explanation they will be marked as an unauthorised absence for that session. If a child arrives late and misses registration this must be noted for the purposes of emergency evacuation.

Registers are kept in Reception. All children arriving late must report to Reception where they will be entered into the register, either as late (before 09.15) or as unauthorised (after 09.15)

A table of late arrivals is kept in Reception and each month parents are notified if their children are consistently arriving in school after the bell. The Home/School Liaison Worker will then be in contact with the family in order to provide any support necessary in order to try to resolve the situation.

If the situation should continue the parent will be given an appointment to discuss any problems with the Headteacher.

ATTENDANCE DATA

Attendance data in respect of our pupils is recorded electronically, details of which we are required to provide for the DfE which monitors levels of attendance in all schools nationally.

