



Holy Trinity C. E. (A) Primary School, Cuckfield

Attendance Policy

Introduction

Regular school attendance is a prerequisite of a good education and securing it is a priority at Holy Trinity School. The damage and disruption caused by poor attendance and lateness affects not only the individual pupil but also adversely affects other pupils and teaching staff.

It is the parent's responsibility and their legal duty that their child attends school/receives agreed education. The majority of parents impress upon their children the value of punctual and regular attendance. We seek to work in partnership with all parents to encourage such values. Through good communication the whole school community should have a clear understanding of the school's policy and expectations regarding pupil attendance.

Legal Responsibilities

The legal framework is set by the Education Acts and their associated regulations governing attendance. In summary once a child becomes a registered pupil at a school:

- Parents have a legal duty to ensure that their child attends school regularly and punctually.
- The Local Authority (LA) has a legal duty to ensure that the parents carry out this responsibility.
- The school has a legal duty to record absence of registered pupils in compliance of the regulations.
- The governing body has a legal duty to ensure that the school register is kept in accordance with regulations and must publish figures in the Annual Report to parents and the school prospectus.

Keeping of registers

The register is a legal document and must be kept accurately and neatly. The register may be requested in a court of law as evidence in a prosecution for non-attendance. The register is a confidential document and care should be taken that information from it is not disclosed improperly to parents and children. The County instructions on register keeping are detailed clearly in its Attendance Registers.

The register should be completed by 9.00am in the morning and by 1.05pm in KS1 and 1.20pm in KS2 at the latest in the afternoon and sent immediately to the office both times.

Lateness is recorded in the register by entering the time the child arrived at school.

Absence from school

Parents are expected to contact the school on the first day of the child's absence to explain the reason for the absence and to establish an expected date of return. Parents should also provide an explanation when their child arrives late for school. If a message is not received, the school office will contact parents directly on receipt of the class register.

Notes, records of telephone calls, and medical certificates should be kept with the register. These notes are archived at the end of each year along with the registers, they are kept for six years then destroyed. Such documents may be required in legal proceedings.

If the child arrives late, but before the register is sent to the office, teachers should enter the arrival time in registers **every** time so that we can see a clear pattern and inform parents of our concerns. Children must always report to the office if they have arrived after the register has been sent. All late arrivals are noted in the late book kept in the office.

Any particular concerns about a child (including attendance/punctuality) should be mentioned to the head or administration officer so that the Local Authority can be informed. The school follows LA guidance in attendance matters.

The registers are recorded electronically. A printout of attendance can be given to parents when necessary and attendance data forms part of the Annual Summary Report to Parents.

Request for Absence During Term Time

The school and Governing Body consider that every day in school, in term-time, provides an essential and important learning opportunity for each individual pupil. We therefore expressly recommend that parents **do not** withdraw their children during school time for trips, holidays or visits etc as this will lead to loss of learning for their child. **There is no entitlement to holidays in term time being agreed by the school.** The school will only consider authorisation of requests, in writing, that are made prior to the booking being made and with a letter of confirmation from an employer, or other relevant professional body, regarding fixed date holiday entitlement. If the school does not agree, your child's absence will be marked as "unauthorised" in the school register. Parents may be issued with a penalty notice for unauthorised absences by the school, Local Authority or police. (see appendix)

Legal Action

If despite the best efforts of the school and the Education Welfare Service, a child is still not attending regularly, then court action may need to be considered by the LEA in order to try to move matters forward.

Reviewed and approved by Staffing, Curriculum & Spirituality Committee March 2012; March 2014; October 2015; October 2017

Appendix

Re: Withdrawal from Learning Request

Dear Parents and Carers

Some parents arrange family holidays, trips and treats during term time, which can lead to the following problems for your child:

- Your child's education suffers
- Lessons and extra-curricular activities are missed
- Continuity of learning is lost in all subjects, including topic and project work
- Often there is little opportunity for staff to find additional time to assist a child in 'filling the gaps' in their learning, on their return from holiday
- Classes and groups may be disrupted and other pupils may be affected
- Social interaction with friends is disrupted and reintegration can be difficult
- You may be in breach of your legal obligation to send your child to school

There is a common misconception that any pupil is allowed to take 10 days holiday during term time per academic year – this is not strictly true. Parents are allowed to request up to 10 days for leave of absence for an *annual holiday which **may** be authorised by the school.* (See Attendance Policy)

The school will only consider authorisation of requests, in writing, that are made prior to the booking being made and with a letter of confirmation from an employer regarding fixed date holiday entitlement. If the school does not agree, your child's absence will be marked as "unauthorised" in the school register. Parents may be issued with a penalty notice for unauthorised absences by the school, Local Authority or police.

If you are unable to avoid arranging your annual holiday during term time, then a Withdrawal from Learning Request Form must be completed and submitted with a supporting letter to the office, prior to booking the holiday. A response will be sent with 10 working days of receiving the request. If your request is refused and your child is still absent from school, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Any absence, authorised or unauthorised, can be damaging to your child's education, personal and social development. Please consider this matter very carefully before making a request for absence during term time. Thank you for your co-operation and understanding.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Ann MacGregor

WITHDRAWAL FROM LEARNING REQUEST

Important Information for Parents/Carers

- There is no entitlement to absence for a family holiday in term time
- Withdrawal from Learning Request should be sent to school prior to booking the holiday (eg no less than six weeks prior to the start of the holiday)
- The form should be accompanied by a supporting letter from an employer
- If a child is absent before request has been considered, this will be recorded as unauthorised absence

I wish to apply to withdraw my child from learning in school.

Name of Child.....

Class.....

Dates of proposed absence:

From.....

To.....

Reasons for proposed absence.....

.....

.....

I have enclosed supporting letter from employer

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Total number of days requested

Total number of days previously requested
(during this academic year)

Signature of Parent/Carer.....

Date.....

For School Use Only

Request form received with supporting letter

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Relevant information checked

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Withdrawal from Learning request

authorised/unauthorised

Signed (Headteacher)

Date.....

Copy to parents/carers within 10 working days