



## Attendance and Punctuality Policy

*A good name is better than a precious ointment  
Ecclesiastes 7:1*

### Overview

Hurst Knoll St James' CE Primary School believes if pupils are to get the greatest benefit from their education in school, it is important that they have good attendance and arrive punctually. As children grow and prepare for their next stages of education and employment they need to see good attendance and punctuality as important qualities that are valued by others and employers. We will do all that we can to encourage good attendance and punctuality. Where children are not conforming to our high expectations for attendance and punctuality we will put into place effective strategies to bring about improvement.

We are committed to:

- Following the framework set in Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 which states that:  
*'the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him / her to receive efficient full time education suitable:-*

*(a) to age, ability and aptitude and*

*(b) to any special educational needs he/ she may have*

*Either by regular attendance at school or otherwise'.*

- Promoting and modelling good attendance behaviour.
- Ensuring equality and fairness of treatment for all.
- Implementing our policies within the Equality Act (2010)
- Early intervention and working with other agencies to ensure the health and safety of our pupils.
- Rewarding regular attendance.

## **1. Key roles and responsibilities**

- 1.1. The Governing Body has overall responsibility for the implementation of the attendance policy and procedures of Hurst Knoll St James' CE Primary School.
- 1.2. The Governing Body has overall responsibility for ensuring that the attendance policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including but not limited to ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- 1.3. The Governing Body has responsibility for handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's complaints policy.
- 1.4. The Headteacher will be responsible for the day-to-day implementation and management of the attendance policy and procedures of Hurst Knoll St James' CE Primary School.
- 1.5. Parents and carers will be expected to take responsibility for the attendance of their child/children during term-time.
- 1.6. Parents and carers will be expected to promote good attendance behaviour and ensure that pupils attend school every day.

## **2. Definitions**

- 2.1. Hurst Knoll St James' CE Primary School defines "absence" as either:
  - Arrival at school after 9.30am when the registers close.
  - Not attending school for any reason.
- 2.2. Hurst Knoll St James CE Primary School defines an "authorised absence" as:
  - An absence for sickness for which the school has granted leave.
  - Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time for which the school has granted leave.
  - Religious or cultural observances for which the school have granted leave.
  - An absence due to a family (immediate family) emergency.
- 2.3. Hurst Knoll St James CE Primary School defines an "unauthorised absence" as:
  - Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason.
  - Truancy before or during the school day.
  - Absences which have never been properly explained.
  - Arrival at school after the register has closed.
  - Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays.
  - Day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed.
  - Leaving school for no reason during the day.
- 2.4. Hurst Knoll St James CE Primary School defines "persistent absenteeism (PA)" as:
  - Missing 10 per cent (10%) or more of schooling across the year **for whatever reason**.

## **3. Pupil expectations**

- 3.1. Pupils will be expected to attend school every day and will sign a Home School agreement at the beginning of each school year.

## **4. Absence procedures**

- 4.1. Parents/carers must contact the school as soon as possible on the first day of absence and any following additional days.
- 4.2. Alternatively, parents/carers may call into school and report to the school office where arrangements will be made to speak to a member of staff.
- 4.3. A phone call/text message will be made to the parent/carer of any child who has not reported their absence on the first day that they do not attend school.
- 4.4. A letter will be send to the parent/carer of any child who has not made any contact with school regarding their child's absence.
- 4.5. If a child's attendance becomes a concern/issue arrangements will be made for parents/carers to meet with the Headteacher and Learning Mentor.
- 4.6. If the situation cannot be resolved and attendance does not improve, the local Attendance Officer has the power to issue sanctions such as prosecutions or penalty notices.

## 5. Children Missing in Education

- 5.1. School must inform the local authority of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more.

## 6. Contact information

- 6.1. Parents/carers must provide accurate and up to date contact details.
- 6.2. Parents/carers are responsible for updating the school if the details change.

## 7. Lateness

- 7.1. Punctuality is of the utmost importance and lateness will not be tolerated.
- 7.2. The school day starts at 8:50am and ends at 3.15pm.
- 7.3. Registers are marked by 9.00am. Pupils will receive a late mark if they are not in their classroom by this time.
- 7.4. The register closes at 9:30am. Pupils will receive a mark of absence if they do not attend school before this time.
- 7.5. Attendance after the register closes will receive a mark to show that they are on site, but will count as an absent mark.

## 8. Term time leave

- 8.1. At Hurst Knoll St James' CE Primary School, our aim is to prepare pupils for their future lives and careers. With this in mind, we require parents/carers to observe the school holidays as prescribed.
- 8.2. Following the September 2013 amendment to The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, headteachers no longer have the discretion to authorise holidays during term time.
- 8.3. Leave during term time will only be authorised in 'exceptional circumstances'. *The Governing Body believe 'exceptional circumstances' is defined as rare, significant, unavoidable and short. For example, absence to visit a seriously ill relative or for a bereavement of a close family member would usually be considered to amount to 'exceptional circumstances', but for the funeral service and travelling time only, not for extended leave.*
- 8.4. Any requests for leave during term time will be considered on an individual basis and the pupil's previous attendance record will be taken into account.
- 8.5. Requests for leave will not be granted in the following circumstances:
  - Immediately before and during assessment periods.
  - When a pupil's attendance record shows any unauthorised absence.
- 8.6. If term time leave is not granted, taking a pupil out of school will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and attract sanctions such as a Penalty Notice.

## 9. Monitoring

- 9.1. Hurst Knoll St James' CE Primary School monitors attendance and punctuality throughout the year.
- 9.2. Hurst Knoll St James' CE Primary School's attendance target is 97%

## 10. Religious Observances

- 10.1. Hurst Knoll St James' CE Primary School will take advice from local religious leaders of all faiths to establish the appropriate number of days required for religious festivals.
- 10.2. Parents must inform the school in advance if absences are required for days of religious observance.

## 11. Appointments

- 11.1. As far as possible, parents/carers should attempt to book medical and dental appointments outside of school hours.
- 11.2. Where this is not possible, a note and appointment card should be sent to school.
- 11.3. If the appointment requires the pupil to leave during the school day, they must be signed out by a parent/carer.
- 11.4. Pupils must attend school before and after the appointment wherever possible.

## 12. Young Carers

- 12.1. Hurst Knoll St James' CE Primary School understands the difficulties that face young carers.
- 12.2. Hurst Knoll St James' CE Primary School will endeavour to identify young carers at the earliest opportunity from enrolment at the school and throughout their time at the school.
- 12.3. Hurst Knoll St James' CE Primary School takes a caring and flexible approach to the needs of young carers and each pupil will be examined on a case-by-case basis, involving other agencies if appropriate.

### **13. Reward System**

- 12.1 Hurst Knoll St James' CE Primary School celebrates pupil's good attendance on a termly basis at a Celebration Assembly where pupils achieving 100% attendance receive a certificate and a medal (bronze)
- 12.2 Pupils whom achieve 100% attendance for the full academic year receive a certificate and medal (gold) at the End of Year Celebration Assembly.

**Revised and adopted by the Governing Body Autumn 2018**