



Attendance Policy

**Autumn 2020
Review: Summer 2022**

Agreed by Staff and Chair of Governors

The staff and governors of Hemington Primary School believe that children can reach their full potential only by receiving full time education through regular and structured attendance.

Expectations

We expect that all pupils will:

- attend school regularly
- arrive on time, appropriately dressed and prepared for the day

We expect that all parents/carers will:

- encourage regular school attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities
- sign the Home School Agreement to recognise their responsibility
- ensure their child is appropriately dressed, taking account of the school dress code
- ensure that the child/children in their care arrive at school punctually well prepared for the school day with homework completed
- ensure that they contact the school whenever the child/children is unable to attend school on the first day of the child's absence
- contact the school promptly whenever any problem occurs that may keep the child away from school (message can be left on the absence part of the answerphone or by direct phone call to the office).

We expect that school staff will:

- keep regular and accurate records of attendance for all pupils, at least twice daily
- monitor every pupil's attendance
- contact parents/carers as soon as possible when a pupil fails to attend where no message has been received to explain the absence
- follow up all unexplained absences to enable the absence to be coded correctly
- encourage good attendance
- provide a welcoming atmosphere, a safe learning environment and a sympathetic response to any pupil's concerns
- make initial enquiries of parents/carers of pupils who are not attending regularly, express their concern and clarify the school's and the LA's expectations with regard to regular school attendance
- refer irregular or unjustified patterns of attendance to the Education Welfare Officer

Encouraging Attendance

Hemington Primary School encourages regular attendance in the following ways:

- by discussing the importance of regular attendance, punctuality and prompt collection at the end of the day during the Pre-School Induction Meeting and Parents Evening.
- by providing a caring and welcoming learning environment
- by responding promptly to a child's or parent's/carer's concerns about the school or other pupils
- by marking registers accurately and punctually during morning and afternoon registration
- by the Headteacher regularly monitoring attendance and punctuality
- by publishing and displaying attendance statistics in the weekly newsletter, on annual reports and in the school prospectus
- by giving attendance awards at the end of each term to celebrate 100% attendance
- by giving attendance awards at the end of each year to celebrate 100% attendance

- by monitoring pupils' attendance and informing parents/carers in writing if attendance becomes a concern – a meeting may be arranged with parents/carers if necessary
- referring the family to the Education Welfare Officer to address, if irregular attendance continues.

Punctuality and Lateness

We lay a great deal of importance on the need to be punctual and to arrive in school on time. Not only does it make for a good start to the day but it shows consideration for everyone else in the class and avoids repetition of instructions and teaching.

- The school day starts at 8.45 a.m. The school registers are closed at 9.00 each morning. Children who arrive after the register has closed will be marked as absent for the morning session.
- If the door is closed after 8.45am, then late comers must 'buzz' the office. A member of staff will let them into school. Children should go into class quickly and the parent/carer must sign the late book and provide a reason for their lateness - this register is checked regularly by the Headteacher
- In the case of persistent lateness the Education Welfare Officer will be informed and may address the matter.
- If the school has been informed that the child will arrive late due to a medical /dental appointment (the appointment card/letter must be provided) then an attendance mark will be given on arrival. If the child misses more than half of the morning or afternoon session it will be recorded as an authorised absence in the register.
- For the calculation of 100% badges a hospital appointment will be counted as an authorised absence in the register but will not count towards the calculation of the badge if the child's attendance is normally outstanding, as the school recognises it is not the child's fault they have to have an appointment during the school day.

Responding to Non-Attendance

When a pupil does not attend school regularly we will respond in the following manner:

- On the first day of absence, if no message or telephone call is received from the parent/carer by 9.30 a.m. the school will endeavour to contact them by Teachers 2 Parents texting
- If there is no response, the school will continue to try to contact the parent/carer by telephone. If by the end of the second day, there has still been no contact made, the school will refer the matter to the Education Welfare Officer
- Failure to comply with the expectations set out by the Education Welfare Officer may result in further action such as a Fixed Penalty (fine), an application for an Education Supervision Order or Prosecution

Parental Requests for leave of absence during term-time

New government guidelines came into effect on 1st September 2013, which prevent Headteachers from granting any leave of absence during term time, unless there are exceptional circumstances. A request for leave of absence must be made in writing prior to the holiday being booked. A family holiday during term-time does not fall under the category of 'exceptional circumstances' and therefore will not be authorised. Should your

child have absences recorded as a result of an unauthorised family holiday, the matter will be referred to the Education Welfare Officer who will request the Leicestershire County Council issue a Penalty Notice.

The parent(s)/carer(s) of any child who has absences recorded as a result of an unauthorised family holiday may each be fined £60 which must be paid within a 21 day period. Failure to pay the fine(s) within this timescale, will result in the fines being doubled to £120 which will need to be paid within 28 days of the original fine being issued. If the fine(s) remain unpaid after the full period of 28 days has expired, parents/carers may face legal action under section 444 of the Education Act 1996. If found guilty of an offence under this Act, parents/carers will receive a criminal record and could be fined up to £1000.

When a pupil is withdrawn during term time there is disruption to the learning process that can result in the pupil falling behind their peer group. There is a belief amongst some parents/carers that this time can be made up by the school providing 'work' for the pupil to complete during the holiday period. However, this does not have the desired effect since the pupil will have missed out on quality teaching time. Therefore, we will not provide your child with work during the period of absence. Instead the teacher will endeavour to make up the work when your child returns to school. On return to school the pupil will be encouraged to work hard to compensate for the gap in their education. This may require the completion of additional work following teaching input.

Holiday Request Letters can be found under "Key Information: Letters" on the website.

It is hoped that you will take serious consideration of the information outlined above and reconsider your plans to take a family holiday during school term-time.

Changing Schools

It is important if families decide to send the child/children in their care to a different school that they inform the Hemington Primary School Head Teacher as soon as possible. A pupil will not be removed from this school roll until the following information has been received and investigated:

- the date the pupil will be leaving this school and starting the next
- the address and telephone number of the new school
- the new home address and telephone number if it is known or is applicable

The pupil's school records will then be sent on to the new school as soon as possible. In the event that the school has not been informed of the above information, the family will be referred to the Education Welfare Officer.

Travelling Families

Several different groups are covered by the generic term "Traveller Families" however many prefer to be known by their ethnic group - Roma, English or Welsh Gypsies, Irish or Scottish Travellers, Showmen (Fairground or Circus), Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers.

There is a Showman's site in our catchment areas. Some families remain on site all year round, but some families move around the country at certain times of the year. There is also a Travellers' site in the catchment area of the school. Some pupils remain on site for most of the year, but others travel out of area for longer periods of time.

Latest Government Guidelines require that any pupils who travel and do not attend school all year round need to be in school for a total of 100 days or 200 sessions to obtain the "T" code in the register . Appendix A shows a copy of the letter that is sent to families at the start of each academic year. Whilst they are away, pupils should also complete home/school packs (created by school staff), which should be returned to school. These packs should be collected and returned to school in person and the parent should also fill in a calendar to show how long they will be away.

Parents will be required to sign a form to say they have collected or returned packs to school (see Appendix B). This form also allows parents to indicate when children have attended another school or setting, with contact details so school can discuss pupil's learning. This would then count towards the 100 days attendance. If a pupil does not complete 100 days in an academic year, then they will be given the unauthorised absence code and families may be liable to prosecution.

Responsibility

- The Headteacher and Governing Body are responsible for setting annual attendance targets
- The class teacher should be alert to early signs of disaffection which could culminate in non-attendance and to report these concerns as soon as possible to the Headteacher

In order for this Attendance Policy to be successful, every member of staff must make attendance a high priority and convey this to the pupils at all times. Parents/carers need to support these views in the home to ensure that children are receiving corresponding messages about the value of education.



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Dear.....,

I write to remind you that, from August 2017, we will follow the good practice below. In order to use the code “T” on the register, all pupils from travelling backgrounds will need to attend school for 100 days each the academic year.

GOOD PRACTICE FOR TRAVELLING FAMILIES*

In order for the school to code absences for children from the traveller community* as “Travelling” (T), the follow criteria should be met:

- A child should have 100 days attendance (200 sessions) in an academic year
- Parents should provide the school with notification of travel, (dates, destination, length of time and evidence of parents work commitment)
- School to provide work packs for children to complete when travelling, (schoolwork packs may sometimes contain work children have already done as well as a diary). Parents must collect and return completed packs to the class teacher. Packs must be signed for on collection and return.
- School will provide parents with printed calendar of the academic year for them to log periods of travel. Parents must give the school notice of travel for the absence to be coded with a “T” Notice must include dates for departure, destination and return dates.
- Parents must where possible provide school with evidence (work/employment/rent papers) with regards to travel for the absence to be coded as “T”
- Parents must update the school of any changes to contact details such as phone numbers and addresses.
- Parents must inform the school if their children are unable to attend school because of illness or appointments, (doctors, hospital, dentist, opticians).
- Parents must inform the school if their children will be late to school or if they have any concerns regarding their children when at school.

The Education Welfare Officer is – Paula René, she addresses any attendance concerns the school may have. She can be contacted on:

T: 0116 277 6721

E: paula@childrensattendance.co.uk

I look forward to working with your child in school next term.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher

* Several different groups are covered by the generic term “Traveller Families” however many prefer to be known by their ethnic group - Roma, English or Welsh Gypsies, Irish or Scottish Travellers, Showmen (Fairground or Circus), Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers.

Appendix B

Showman or Traveller Home/School Pack Check						
Name:		Year Group:		Year: 2018-2019		Attendance in another school
Date	Time out of school confirmed	Pack signed out	Parent Signature & Date	Pack signed back	Parent Signature & Date	Name of school, phone number/email and time there
<i>20th September</i>	<i>20th September-29th September 2017</i>	<i>✓</i>	<i>JL Siddons 20/9/17</i>	<i>✓</i>	<i>JL Siddons 29/9/17</i>	<i>East Cardigan School 06413 227881 22nd Sept -24th September</i>

Appendix D

GOOD PRACTICE FOR TRAVELLING FAMILIES

Several different groups are covered by the generic term “Traveller Families” however many prefer to be known by their ethnic group - Roma, English or Welsh Gypsies, Irish or Scottish Travellers, Showmen (Fairground or Circus), Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers.

The “T” code should be used when Traveller Families are travelling for occupational purposes and have agreed this with the school.

Children who attend another school whilst travelling should be coded as “D”.

The “T” code should not be used for any other types of absence by these groups.

In order for the school to code absences for children from the traveller community as “Travelling” (T), the follow criteria should be met:

- ✓ A child should have 100 days attendance (200 sessions) in an academic year.
- ✓ Parents should provide the school with notification of travel, (dates, destination, length of time and evidence of parents work commitment).
- ✓ School should provide parents with schoolwork packs with parents collecting and returning the completed packs to school when child returns from travelling.

CODE OF GOOD PRACTICE

1. School should arrange an initial meeting with parents before children start school.
2. Parents should ascribe, to being either Traveller, Gypsy, or Other on the school’s data sheet (parents **must** put something in this box). In the case of showmen, I suggest ascribing to “other” and writing showman in the space provided.
3. Parents **must** update the school of any changes to contact details such as phone numbers and addresses.
4. Parents are encouraged to show the school their children’s birth certificates before their children start school.
5. Where possible school should nominate a dedicated member of staff to provide support and address concerns parents may have.
6. School may provide parents with a sticker with the contact number and name of the dedicated staff member.
7. School may provide parents with a printed month of the calendar for them to log periods of travel.
8. Parents **must** give the school notice of travel for the absence to be coded with a “T” Notice **must** include dates for departure, destination and return dates.
9. Parents **must** where possible provide school with evidence (work/employment/rent papers) with regards to travel for the absence to be coded as “T”
10. School to provide work packs for children to complete when travelling, (schoolwork packs may sometimes contain work children have already done as well as a diary). Parents **must** collect and return completed packs to the class teacher. Packs **must** be signed for on collection and return.
11. Parents **must** inform the school if their children are unable to attend school because of illness or appointments, (doctors, hospital, dentist, opticians).
12. Parents **must** inform the school if their children will be late to school or if they have any concerns regarding their children when at school.

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