

HURSTHEAD INFANT SCHOOL

**ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCE
OF LEAVE POLICY**

September 2016

Hursthead Infant School

Attendance and Absence of Leave Policy

This policy has been written in conjunction with Stockport MBC's guidance:

A Guide for Schools in Stockport (September 2016)

Removing Pupils from a School Roll: A Guide for Schools in Stockport (September 2016)

Children Missing Education Policy (December 2014)

These documents can be found within the Attendance and Leave of Absence file located in the School Office.

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1 Statement of Intent

If learners are to get the greatest benefit from their education in school it is vital that they have good attendance and arrive punctually. As learners grow and prepare for their next stages of education and employment they need to see good attendance as important qualities that are valued by others and employers. We will do all that we can to encourage good attendance. Where learners and their parents are not conforming to our high expectations for attendance we will put into place effective strategies to bring about improvement. We seek to promote good attendance by working in close liaison and co-operation with all our parents.

2 Objectives

- 1 To ensure that all learners enjoy school and therefore have good attendance.
- 2 To gain the support of parents in ensuring that their children have good attendance and that they arrive on time.
- 3 To ensure our records of attendance comply with legislation and to take prompt action where attendance is a concern.
- 4 To work effectively with the LA and other agencies to follow up attendance issues promptly and effectively.
- 5 To monitor closely all pupils' attendance and to liaise closely with parents to maintain the school's high level of attendance.

3 Reporting a Pupil Absent/Missing from School

- Electronic registers are taken at 9am. Any child not present when the register is taken is marked with an N (absent). If the child arrives before 9-30am a L for late is entered (authorised). If a child arrives after 9-30am the register is marked with a U (unauthorised).
- School is able to authorise absence for the following:
 - Illness or medical appointments
 - Education being received elsewhere
 - Approved sporting activity
 - Days of religious observance
 - Bereavement
 - Special circumstances

Note: Children must be entered into the attendance book in the school office when they go and return from their visit for safety reasons.

- Parents are asked to telephone on the day of absence, or write prior to the absence if known in advance, to inform the school of the reason for absence.
- Where an absence has not been reported by the parents school follows a "first day call" policy. Parents will be contacted by the Attendance Officer to establish the reason for absence.
- If the Attendance Officer is unable to contact parents she will continue to establish the reason for absence through the use of the emergency contact form. A home visit may be required if this results in a concern.

- When a pupil's absence is established but still a cause for concern safeguarding procedures will be followed.
- If a pupil has not returned to school after 10 days and school is not satisfied with any explanation of absence given, the school will follow Stockport MBC's 'Children Missing from Education Policy' and report the child missing to the LA Contact Centre.

Please note: School monitors pupil absence half-termly through an "Under 90s Process". Please refer to the Stockport Family Flowchart "Reporting Pupils Missing from School" - Appendix 1

4 Leave of Absence

School follows Stockport MBC's 'A Guide for Schools in Stockport: Leave of Absence'

- If a parent wants to request leave of absence for their child they are required to complete the School's Leave of Absence Request Form (Appendix 2).
- Parents are invited to telephone or make an appointment with the Headteacher to personally explain their request.
- The form should be completed and submitted to the Headteacher within 4 weeks of the start of the proposed leave of absence, if possible.
- The Headteacher will review each request on an individual basis following Stockport MBC's guidance – determining leave of absence (page 5 of document).
- In respect of requests which may constitute "exceptional circumstances" the Headteacher will follow the above stated guidance.
- The Headteacher will respond in writing to the request and either authorise the request or inform parents that the request is unauthorised.
- The Headteacher will issue an Education Penalty Notice, following the most recent Stockport guidance, if appropriate.
- Where it is suspected that a reason for absence is not legitimate the Headteacher may issue a "suspected holiday" letter. Contact with the Educational Legal Officer may be made to seek advice and in cases where there is no parental response an Educational Penalty Notice request by the Education Welfare team may be required.

Please refer to Education Penalty Notices for Unauthorised Holidays/Leave of Absence 2016-7 Flowchart – Appendix 3

5 Removing Pupils from the School Role

Removing children from school rolls is a necessary part of enabling children to move on to new schools and freeing up school places that are not needed. However, it is a complex area which is governed by legislation. The grounds on which children can be removed are limited to those allowed by the legislation, and in many cases children cannot be removed until both the school and the local authority have taken certain steps.

The aim of the legislation is to protect vulnerable children, young people and families from risks associated with leaving a school, including:

- Going missing
- Not accessing education
- Losing contact with services providing support
- Safeguarding/child protection concerns going undetected

The School follows Stockport MBC's guidance "Removing Pupils from a School Roll" if there is a necessity to do so, including "The Grounds for removal" as follows:

- Transfer to a new school
- Dual registered pupil where both schools consent
- Pupil to be educated otherwise than at school
- Family has moved away
- Failure to return from Leave of Absence
- Pupil is medically unfit and will remain so until after his/her official leaving date
- Pupil's whereabouts is unknown following 20 continuous school days of unauthorised absence

6 Register Codes

The School follows Stockport MBC'S guidance on register codes. Please find the document within the Attendance and Absence of Leave File.

7 Appendices

Appendix 1 – Reporting Pupils Missing from School Flowchart

Appendix 2 – Leave of Absence Request Form

Appendix 3 – Unauthorised Leave of Absence Flowchart