



# Attendance Policy

Fenstanton and Hilton Primary School

2014-2015

Fenstanton & Hilton Primary School  
**Attendance Policy**

**1. Statement of Intent**

- 1.1 The school aims to work together with parents and carers to ensure that all children registered at the school attend both regularly and punctually.

**2. Parents' Responsibilities**

- 2.1 Parents have a legal duty to ensure that children of compulsory school age attend on a regularly and full-time basis.
- 2.2 Parents/carers should ensure that if their child is to be absent from school for any unavoidable reason such as sickness they should contact the school as soon as possible, on the first morning of absence. This should be done by phone or in person. A letter or email confirming the reasons for absence should be given on the child's return to school.
- 2.3 Parents/carers may not authorise their child's absence – only the school can do this on the basis of the explanation provided by the parents. (Should parents/carers fail to provide a satisfactory reason for their child's absence the school will record such absence as unauthorised.)
- 2.4 Parents/carers should ensure their child arrives at school in time for the start of registration (9.00am). If a child is late his/her parent should report directly to the school office where a 'late book' is kept to record lateness.

Parents should not book family holidays during term-time. Absences will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the Headteacher. Following DfE guidelines – see note below – holiday absence booked during term times will be unauthorised. If absence is unavoidable they should apply in writing to the Headteacher. Please see appendix 1 for a list of agreed exceptional absences.

***The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006***

*Amendments have been made to the 2006 regulations in the **Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013**. These amendments, as described below, will come into force on 1 September 2013.*

***Term-time holiday***

*The **Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006** currently allow headteachers to grant leave of absence for the purpose of a family holiday during term time in “special circumstances” of up to ten school days leave per year. Headteachers can also grant extended leave for more than ten school days in exceptional circumstances.*

***Amendments to the 2006 regulations remove references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. The amendments make clear that headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are***

***exceptional circumstances. Headteachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.***

### **3. School Responsibilities**

- 3.1 The school will record and monitor attendance in accordance both with the statutory requirements and with the principle that regular, uninterrupted attendance is vital to a child's educational progress.
- 3.2 Registers will be entered into SIMs twice daily (at 9.00 and at 1.15). Registers will close at 9.15 and at 1.25. Any child arriving after the closing of the register will be recorded as 'late' for that session.
- 3.3 Teachers will complete registers in accordance with the guidance contained in the staff handbook. The Headteacher will monitor registers regularly in order to ensure that these are being satisfactorily maintained and to ensure that any potential attendance difficulties are identified at an early stage.
- 3.4 Should a class teacher have particular concerns about an individual child's attendance or punctuality, they should contact the Headteacher.
- 3.5 Attendance is monitored by the Office half termly and a report prepared for the Head teacher. The Head will then use the Three Letter System advised by the Education Welfare Officer to improve attendance. Letter One will be sent out if attendance falls below 90%. In addition concerns can be raised by class teachers. Children whose attendance is below 90% will be subject to first day absence calling. A member of the Learning Zone where the child attends will call home as soon as the child is absent to enquire after their welfare.
- 3.6 If a child is absent the class teacher will enter the appropriate code in the register. If no explanation has been received from the child's parent the administration staff will endeavour to make contact with the parent. If this proves impossible the class teacher should refer the matter to the Headteacher.
- 3.7 All absence notes from parents should be dated and initialled by the class teacher and sent to the office on the day of receipt. Only notes concerning absences about which there are concerns/queries should be brought to the attention of the Headteacher (who may then choose to speak to the parents concerned himself/herself.)
- 3.8 The Headteacher will regularly collect attendance data and will use this data during meetings with the school's Education Welfare Officer. These meetings will agree on attendance thresholds and targets and will identify respective tasks and follow-up actions for both the school and the EWO.
- 3.9 The school will employ a number of strategies to promote regular, punctual attendance:
  - The Headteacher and class teachers will communicate regularly with parents on attendance matters.
  - Attendance monitored half termly and reported to Head
  - Appropriate personal encouragement or congratulation will be offered to individual children.
  - First day of absence calling- for all pupils whose parents/carers have not made contact with the school. This is to be completed by 10am.
  - Clear attendance information will be entered on the school website.
  - LA parent leaflets will be sent to all new parents.

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- Termly meetings with Education Welfare Officer (EWO) – Use of 3 letter system.
- 4. This attendance policy will be reviewed on a three yearly basis.

Next review: 2017-2018

#### Appendices

#### **Are parents responsible for their child's attendance at school?**

Yes, by law, parents whose children are of compulsory school age and registered at school are responsible for ensuring that their children attend school regularly. If they fail to do this they are guilty of an offence and may be given a penalty notice or prosecuted under section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

#### **Revised regulations on education-related penalty notices from September 2012**

**Updated:** 22 August 2012

The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 increased the current amounts of penalty notices payable by parents from 1 September 2012.

These will apply to any parent who fails to ensure the regular attendance of their child of compulsory school age (5-16) who is registered at a state school or fails to ensure that their excluded child is not found in a public place during schools hours without a justifiable reason.

The amounts stated on the penalty notices will increase from £50 to £60 for those who pay within 28 days; and from £100 to £120 for those who pay within 42 days.

**Appendix 1 - Agreed ‘exceptional absences’.**

Cluster agreement of what can be deemed as ‘exceptional circumstances’ when a leave of absence is requested as at Oct 2014.

**An exceptional absence can be granted for:**

- ✓ Leave which cannot be taken during a statutory holiday period. A letter from the employers stating that holiday cannot be taken during the school holidays must be given, every time a request for absence is made.
- ✓ ‘Gifted and Talented agenda’ to compete or perform.
- ✓ Weddings – authorise the wedding day but the rest of the absence is unauthorised. Ask to see the invitation. If a wedding is overseas or a long distance away, there is some flexibility to extend the authorised absence.
- ✓ Restricted leave, for example the rest of the family living overseas. Suggestion to authorise 10 days absence every other year.
- ✓ Travellers, as per guidance.
- ✓ Medical needs / respite.
- ✓ Compassionate leave
  
- ❖ When a child is absent for 5 days, request a Doctor’s note.

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## Appendix 2

FENSTANTON &amp; HILTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

## REQUEST FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Research shows that even low-levels of term time absence have an impact on children's social and academic welfare. For this reason new regulations were introduced in September 2013 regarding parental applications for leave of absence. New legislation states that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Headteachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted. If leave of absence for exceptional circumstances has been denied and you take the child out of school, you may be subject to a Penalty Notice or face prosecution in court.

If leave is taken after permission has been withheld then this will be recorded as ‘unauthorised absence’. This will appear both in the school register and in your child’s report. A Penalty Notice involves a fine of £60 **per parent, per child** if paid within 21 days. This rises to £120 **per parent, per child** if paid within 28 days. Should a parent/carers, on whom a Penalty Notice is served, fail to pay the full amount of the fine within the specified time, he/she will be liable to prosecution in a Magistrates’ Court where, on conviction, a fine of up to £2,500 and/or a sentence of up to three months in prison may be imposed.

**Should you wish to apply for leave of absence please complete the following in full:**

<b>LEAVE OF ABSENCE REQUEST - to be completed by the Parent/Carer</b>					
<b>CHILD'S NAME</b>				<b>CHILD'S CLASS</b>	
<b>DATE FROM</b>		<b>DATE TO</b>		<b>No of school days requested</b>	
<p align="center"><b>REASON FOR APPLICATION</b></p> <p>Please give details below of why you need to apply for leave of absence for your child (please use separate forms for each child)</p>        					
<p>I understand that leave of absence will only be granted in <b>exceptional</b> circumstances. Should this not be authorised and if I take my child/children out of school without authorisation, I am aware that I may be liable to a Penalty Notice, as stated above. <b>Absence will not be authorised without your signature.</b></p> <p>Signature of parent/carer_____ Relationship to child_____</p> <p>Date_____</p>					
<b>HEADTEACHER'S RESPONSE to be completed by the Headteacher</b>					
<b>AUTHORISED</b>		<b>UNAUTHORISED</b>		<b>CODE</b>	
<p align="center"><b>TO BE COMPLETED BY THE HEADTEACHER</b></p> <p>I have authorised this as an ‘exceptional circumstance absence’ because –</p>        <p>Signature of Headteacher_____ Date_____</p>					

**B - Educated off site**

### C - Other Authorised Absence

**G - Family Holiday Not Authorised**

**M - Medical**

**O - Unauthorised Absence**

**P - Approved Sporting Activity**

## R - Religious Observance

### V - Educational Visit or Trip

**THIS FORM WILL BE RETURNED TO YOU WHEN THE HEADTEACHER'S RESPONSE HAS BEEN MADE.**

## Attendance Policy

Approved by Governors Jan 2015

To be reviewed in 2017/2018 Academic Year