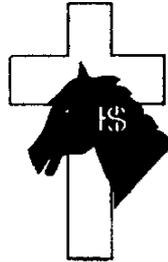


# HORSINGTON CHURCH SCHOOL



## ATTENDANCE A POLICY STATEMENT

### RATIONALE

Regular school attendance has always been important. Without it the efforts of the best teachers and the best schools will come to nothing. Education provides a means of advancement for all young people. Pupils need to attend regularly if they are to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them in law. Irregular attendance undermines the educational process and leads to educational disadvantage. It places pupils at risk and in some cases they can be drawn into patterns of anti-social and criminal behaviour. (Extract from Dept. for Education Booklet 'School Attendance')

### HOME/SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP

Parents are responsible for ensuring that children of compulsory school age receive efficient full-time education (Section 36, 1944 Education Act). In most cases children attend, and stay at school.

At Horsington Church School the staff and governors endeavour to support parents in this responsibility by:

- Providing a comprehensive induction programme for all new entrants and parents to help children come to school willingly with a positive attitude
- Encouraging parents to discuss any attendance related problems with the classteacher/headteacher
- Aim to ensure that the school is bright, clean, warm and welcoming
- Teachers/classroom assistants being available from 8.50am on the playground to greet children
- Informing parents of changes in the school routine by newsletter e.g. school trips, visits to church, etc.
- Setting out in the school prospectus clear statements about absence and punctuality
- Instigating a Headteacher's Certificate for 100% attendance on a termly basis
- Through an annual Attendance Certificate for 98%+ attendance over a year

### REGISTRATION

Registers must be completed at the beginning of every school session in accordance with Regulation 3 of the Pupils' Registration Regulations 1956. Children not in school by this

time should be marked absent. The 1991 Regulations state that registers must state whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised.

Morning Session	9.00am – 12.25pm
Afternoon Session	1.25pm – 3.30pm

## **REPORTING ABSENCES**

It is the parents' responsibility to inform schools of the reason for a child's absence as soon as possible.

Parents are expected to contact the school office or class teacher in person or by telephone on the first day of absence giving as much information as is available at that time. A record of all telephone calls made to report absence will be kept by the school office. Teachers will record in the record sheet in their register reasons given for absence. If the absence is prolonged, interim information would be appreciated, so that the school can help with homework, if appropriate, or other necessary arrangements.

In the event of no contact having been made regarding a child's absence by the end of the school day, parents will be contacted the following day by the school office. If a child has a poor record of attendance then parents will be contacted after 9.30am on the first morning of absence. If unexplained absence continues, or the school is concerned regarding irregular attendance the assistance of the Education Social Worker will be enlisted. Standard letters are used to request reasons for absence when the school has not been informed by parents.

## **AUTHORISED/UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE**

Only the school, within the context of the law, can approve absence, not parents (Section 199, Education Act 1993):

### **ILLNESS, MEDICAL AND DENTAL APPOINTMENTS**

If the school is satisfied that a child of compulsory school age is prevented from attending school by reason of illness then the absence will be treated as authorised. Leave for medical or dental appointments may be given where confirmation has been received from the parents or on production of an appointments card.

#### **a. LATENESS**

The school policy is to encourage punctuality and proactively discourage lateness as it can seriously disrupt lessons. If a child is late and misses registration a late mark will be recorded. Once the school gate is locked children will need to enter school via the school office and a record will be kept of the arrival time of late pupils. Obviously if there is a good reason the school will be sympathetic. If however a pattern of lateness starts to emerge, parents will be invited to discuss the matter in order to reach a satisfactory conclusion. Late is after 9.10am.

#### **b. SPECIAL OCCASIONS**

It is for schools to determine whether in this category an absence should be authorised or not; much will depend on the circumstances of the particular case. Generally the rule should be on truly exceptional circumstances and should be sanctioned through authorised absence after discussion with the Headteacher.

**c. FAMILY BEREAVEMENTS**

The death of a family member can be a particularly traumatic event in any young person's life. Schools have discretion to authorise absence to attend funerals or associated events and any request will be dealt with sympathetically.

**d. FAMILY HOLIDAYS**

Under Regulation 12 of the Education (Schools and Further Education) Regulations 1981, there is a discretionary power for leave to be granted for the purpose of an annual family holiday during term time. Only in exceptional circumstances may the leave granted exceed 10 school days. Request for leave for up to 10 school days should be made on a Holiday Form, which can be obtained from the school office. On this form parents are asked to state the exceptional circumstances for this leave. The school will be very reluctant to authorise absence close to Standard Attainment Tests, during the first year of a new school or at the beginning of a school term.

**e. DAYS OF RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE**

Absence of a pupil for participation in a day set aside exclusively for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong is classified as authorised absence.

**TRUANCY**

If truancy is suspected at any time the Headteacher should be informed immediately to enable action to be taken. If truancy is in progress, parents will be informed and action taken to return the child to school. If necessary the police will be informed.

**CONCLUSION**

This policy is written in accordance with the Aims of the School and had been agreed by the Governing Body. It will be reviewed at regular intervals.

Adopted: July 2005  
Reviewed: April 2008  
Reviewed: March 2010  
Reviewed: June 2014