

# Healey Primary School



## Attendance Policy

## Values

'Central to raising standards in education and ensuring all pupils can fulfil their potential is an assumption so widely understood that it is insufficiently stated – pupils need to attend school regularly to benefit from their education. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind. Children with poor attendance tend to achieve less in both primary and secondary school.'

**School Attendance: Statutory guidance and departmental advice, DFE Aug 2013**

## Aims

- To maintain an attendance rate of at least a minimum of 97%
- To identify patterns of low attendance with individuals and address them
- To work with external agencies, in order to address barriers to attendance and overcome them.

## Good attendance is important because:

- Statistics show a direct link between under achievement and poor attendance
- Regular attenders make better progress, both socially and academically
- Regular attenders find school routines and school work easier to cope with
- Regular attenders find learning more satisfying
- Regular attenders have an easier transfer to secondary school

## Parent can help by:

- Ringing or notifying school on the first morning of all absences (by 10.00am) with the reason and saying when the child will return to school
- Arranging dental and doctor's appointments out of school hours or during school breaks
- Keeping us updated by telephone or letter if your child has an extended period of absence due to illness

## We shall:

- Follow up unexplained absences by a phone call or home visit on the first day of unexplained absence
- Remind parents of the importance of regular attendance and punctuality in newsletters
- Acknowledge and reward good attendance
- Inform parents of their child's attendance termly
- Discuss any concerns with parents

## Authorised Absence

Some absences are allowed by law and are known as "authorised absences". For example if a child is ill, family bereavement, religious observation.

We realise that there are **rare** occasions when there might be a particular problem that causes your child to be absent. Please let us know and we will try to deal with it sympathetically.

## Unauthorised Absence

There are times when children are absent for reasons, which are not permitted by law. These are known as "unauthorised absences". Examples of unauthorised absence are:-

- Attending someone else's medical appointment
- Illness of a sibling or parent
- Going for a family day out
- Sleeping in after a late night
- Treating headlice

- Going shopping or for a hair cut
- Because it is your child's birthday
- Unapproved holidays
- Taking the whole day for a local medical appointment
- Where there is no explanation for the absence
- When siblings are consistently absent at exactly the same times

Unauthorised absences are tracked by the Local Authority and school will refer to the Educational Welfare Service where attendance is not improving and there are unusual patterns. Penalty notices will be issued where appropriate.

### **Punctuality**

- School doors opens at 8.55am
- Morning registration is at 9.00am, children are marked late if they arrive after 9.00am.
- Morning registration closes at 9.10am.
- It is important to be on time as the first few minutes of the school day are often used to give out instructions or organise school work for the rest of the day.
- If your child misses this short but vital session, their work for the whole day may be affected. Late arrivals are disruptive to the whole class and often embarrassing for your child.
- We will let you know if we have any concerns about your child's punctuality.

### **Term Time Leave of Absence**

We are not able to authorise holidays in term time, leave of absence for special events can only be given under exceptional circumstances with the Headteacher's discretion. Exceptional circumstances are seen as 'short, rare, significant and unavoidable'. So a day to attend a close family member's wedding would be authorised (this is short, rare, significant and unavoidable) but a week to attend a wedding abroad would not (this may be rare, significant and unavoidable but it is not short).

**Where holidays totalling two weeks are taken in one academic year a penalty notice will be issued. Penalty notices may also be issued after one week's holiday when attendance is also poor.**