Holymead Primary School
Attendance and Absence Policy

Rationale

Holymead Primary School is committed to providing its pupils with a full-time education which maximises opportunities for each pupil to realise his/her full potential. We will work with pupils and their families to ensure each pupil attends school regularly and punctually. This policy has been written in conjunction with other primary schools within the Bristol South locality in order to ensure consistency between schools.

Aims - To

- Improve the overall percentage of attendance of pupils at the school
- Make attendance and punctuality a priority for all those involved in the school community
- Provide consistency of practice across the schools in the area
- Develop a framework, which defines agreed roles and responsibilities and promotes consistency in carrying out designated tasks
- Provide support, advice and guidance to parents and pupils
- Develop a systematic approach to gathering and analysing attendance related data
- Further develop positive and consistent communication between home and school
- Ensure clarity of when absences will be recorded as authorised or not
- Provide clear guidelines on penalty notices.

Guidelines

Attendance

Parents/ carers must inform the office whenever a child is absent from school, providing a reason. This will be recorded and added to the register and the teacher informed. Any notes written directly to teachers will be sent to the office in order they are processed appropriately and the correct codes entered into the register.

Attendance will be entered on to the SIMS database. Daily attendance statistics will then be available to attendance staff and the Educational Welfare Officer (EWO).

The school will send letters to any family whose child persistently arrives late for school, who has periods of unexplained absence or who has a regular pattern of non-attendance. The Education Welfare Officer will liaise with the school on a termly basis, and priority cases will be alerted with notes for action.

At the Full Governing Body on March 20th 2019 the school governors voted to change the time the register closes and the new times become operational from September 2019.

<u>New times from September 2019</u>

The register will be taken at 9am.

Any pupils arriving after 9am but before 9.15am will be registered as ‘L’ for late.

Pupils arriving after 9.15am will be marked ‘U’ for unauthorised.

Where the school doesn’t receive a message for an absence then pupils will be marked ‘O’. This is also an unauthorised absence mark.

Persistent unauthorised absences (‘U’ or ‘O’) can lead to a penalty notice (fine) being issued.

Leave of Absence
'Holidays in term time are not normally authorised.' Education Welfare Service leaflet

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

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 allowed head teachers 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. Head teachers could also grant extended leave for more than ten school days in exceptional circumstances.

The amendments to the 2006 regulations (made in 2013) remove references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. The amendments make clear that head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are EXCEPTIONAL circumstances. Head teachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

Appointments to meet with the Head teacher to discuss extenuating reasons must be made before any time off school is booked in advance. Taking a holiday because it is more affordable during term time is NOT considered by the Educational Welfare Officer to be an extenuating reason.

Leave of absence forms, giving the extenuating reasons, must be completed for any family wishing to take their child out of school for an exceptional reason (this also applies to individual days for weddings, funerals etc and does not necessarily only apply to prolonged periods of time). This may be used as evidence should the Local Authority decide to take action on attendance issues.
There should be no assumption that leave will be automatically agreed at any time of the year.

Fixed Penalty Notices and Fines
In accordance with advice from the Local Authority, a fixed penalty notice may be issued where a child has been absent for between 8 or more sessions (a whole day counts as two sessions) within a ten week period. A penalty notice (fine of £60 per child, per parent, where both parents have responsibility for their children) will then be issued to the family from the Local Authority. A leaflet explaining penalty notices and fines is available from the reception area. Fixed penalty notices may be issued where holidays are taken but not authorised by the Head teacher.
Education Welfare will be notified of all cases where absence falls below 90% attendance.

The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007

Amendments have been made to the 2007 Regulations in the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013. These amendments, as described below, came into force on 1 September 2013.

The 2007 regulations set out the procedures for issuing penalty notices (fines) to each parent who fails to ensure their children's regular attendance at school or fails to ensure that their excluded child is not in a public place during the first five days of exclusion.

Amendments to 2007 regulations reduced the timescales for paying a penalty notice. Parents must, from 1 September 2013, pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. This brings attendance penalty notices into line with other types of penalty notices and allows local authorities to act faster on prosecutions.

Conclusion

Our school has a good attendance record, and our children are highly motivated to learn. Where families do not support their child by sending them to school, we will work with them and other agencies to improve the situation and ensure children receive the education to which they are entitled.

Monitoring, evaluation and review

This policy will be monitored by the Head teacher and governors.

March 2019 Review: March 2020

RIGHTS RESPECTING SCHOOLS
unicef
UNITED KINGDOM

Rights Respecting Schools Article 28:

All children and young people have a right to a primary education, which should be free. Wealthy countries should help poorer countries achieve this. Discipline in schools should respect children's human dignity. Young people should be encouraged to reach the highest level of education they are capable of.