



Hollymount Primary School

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY 2014-2015

Hollymount Primary School is committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all its pupils and recognises this can only be achieved by supporting and promoting excellent school attendance for all. This is based on the belief that only by attending school regularly and punctually will children and young people be able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them.

For a child to reach their full educational achievement, Hollymount believes a high level of school attendance is essential. We will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance, and the link this has to achievement and attainment.

Hollymount Primary School promotes early intervention and prevention of poor attendance. School attendance is subject to various Education laws and this school attendance policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by the Department for Education and Skills.

Each year the school will examine its attendance figures and set attendance/absence targets. The school will review its systems for improving attendance at regular intervals to ensure that it is achieving its set goals.

This policy will contain within it the procedures that the school will use to meet its attendance targets.

School Procedures

Absence

Any child who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity. Only the headteacher or a member of staff acting on their behalf can authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence will be recorded as 'no reason given' and a phone call made to the parents, followed by a letter if a reason is still not obtained. On the first day of absence parents should telephone the school office or use the e-mail box: pupilabsences@hollymount.merton.sch.uk to inform them why their child is unable to attend and how long they are expected to be absent. The school is then able to mark the register appropriately as either an authorised or unauthorised absence. The decision to authorise or unauthorise absence rests with the school.

Lateness

Morning registration will take place at the start of school at 9.00am. Any pupil arriving after this time will be marked as late. If they arrive after 9.30, without an acceptable reason they will be marked as having an unauthorised absence. Pupils who arrive late following an early morning appointment should bring evidence of this, e.g. an appointment card.

The afternoon registration will be at 1.15pm for Reception and KS1; 1.30pm for KS2

Ten Day's Absence

Any pupil who is absent without an explanation for 10 days in a term will be notified to the Local Authority, by submitting a referral to the Education Welfare Officer. The school will include details of the action that they have taken.

Frequent Absence

Registers are monitored regularly by the head, admin officer and Education Welfare Officer to identify any emerging attendance concerns. In cases where a pupil begins to develop a pattern of absences, the school will try to resolve the problem, depending on severity, using strategies such as:

- Headteacher talking to parent/child
- A letter from the Headteacher
- A meeting with the Headteacher
- A referral to the Education Welfare Officer

Where attendance falls below 90%, the school may request medical evidence (and provide parents with guidance on acceptable examples of medical evidence) for all future illness absences. The school will also refer the child to the School Nurse or the Specialist nurse in the Education Welfare Service if there is a high level of absence for medical reasons. If medical evidence as requested is not provided, the absence will be marked as unauthorised. A high level of unauthorised absence will result in a referral to the Education Welfare Officer who will issue a Penalty Notice warning. A monitoring period will then follow, and if attendance does not improve within the monitoring period, a Penalty Notice will be issued which carries a fine of £120, reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days.

For pupils with appropriately evidenced illness, the school will follow appropriate protocols to offer support.

A Welcome Back

It is important that, where appropriate, on return from an absence all pupils are made to feel welcome. This should include a discussion about the best way for the child to catch up on missed work where appropriate and be brought up to date on any information that has been passed to the other pupils.

Absence notes

The school will retain notes from parents explaining absence as per current protocol/legislation.

Promoting/improving attendance

The school will use opportunities as they arise to remind parents/carers that it is their responsibility to ensure that their children receive their education. The weekly newsletter will be used to promote attendance, including information about weekly class attendance figures, which are also announced in assembly and displayed outside the school office.

Leave of absence

The Governors of Hollymount Primary School believe that leave of absence should be avoided if at all possible as it can have a damaging effect on a pupils education and overall achievement. Only in exceptional circumstances, where sufficient evidence is provided to substantiate the circumstances will any absence from school be authorised.

The school policy is as follows:

- 1) Parents must request leave of absence in writing to the school office as far in advance as possible.
- 2) The request must include the reason why it is necessary to take such absence during term time, including exceptional circumstances and relevant evidence such as a medical certificate. For an emergency trip, evidence of last minute booking of flights must be provided.

On receipt of an application for leave in writing together with any supporting documentation, consideration will be given to the circumstance. Without the appropriate evidence, all leave of absence will be unauthorised. A letter outlining the decision of the school (whether absence is authorised or unauthorised) will be sent within 7 days.

A decision on whether or not to authorise absence will take into consideration:

1. Child's current attendance level;
2. Child's current academic achievement and attainment;

Any leave of absence that is not authorised is very likely to result in a Penalty Notice being issued by the London Borough of Merton. The Penalty Charge Notice currently carries a fine of £120.

Attendance Awards

The school will use the following system to reward pupils who have good or improving attendance.

- Weekly attendance and punctuality chart
- Weekly celebration assembly for children to celebrate class with the highest attendance
- Termly attendance award for the class with highest attendance
- Annual attendance award for the class with highest attendance
- Annual attendance award for pupils with 100% attendance

Attendance Targets

The school will set attendance targets each year. Progress towards these targets will be analysed regularly by a member of the Senior Leadership Team and strategies adopted in line with this policy will be implemented to achieve or exceed the target. It is the responsibility of the parents, staff and pupils at Hollymount Primary School to ensure good attendance and achievement of targets.

Our school attendance target for 2014-15 is 96%

Register Security

Registers by law must be kept for at least 3 years.

Registration is carried out electronically using SIMS (School Information Management System) and backed-up daily.

Approved by:	<i>Pupils, Personnel & Community Committee</i>
Date:	3 October 2014
<u>Review Date:</u>	June 2015