Highfield Hall Primary School



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# HIGHFIELD HALL PRIMARY SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY ATTENDANCE STATEMENT 2023

The governors wish to thank the vast majority of parents who bring their children to school on time - and never forget to notify school of the reasons for an absence. Levels of absence are around the national average and have been for the last three years.

However, we still have a number of children whose attendance is below 90% and are considered to be persistent absentees. The governors have a duty to use all the powers open to them to deal with these families so that more children attend more of the time next year.

**Why regular attendance is so important:**

Regular absence or lateness will seriously affect a child's learning, may disrupt teaching routines, and may affect the learning of others in the class. Ensuring a child’s regular attendance at school is a parent's legal responsibility; an absence from school without a good reason is an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

### Persistent absenteeism:

A pupil becomes a ‘persistent absentee’ when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason.

The Governing Body has instructed the Head Teacher to do everything in his power to reduce the number of persistent absentees across the school and report them, as appropriate, to the appropriate authorities who will then take steps that can lead to a fine, and in some cases a court appearance and a conviction.

**Holidays in term time:**

There is **no** automatic entitlement in law to holidays in school time.

Since 1st September 2013 the law says that all applications for leave must be made at least two weeks in advance. At the discretion of the school a maximum of 10 days in any academic year may be authorised under certain exceptional circumstances. When deciding about whether to grant leave for exceptional circumstances, the school will consider each application individually, including any previous pattern of absence.

It is important that parents understand that leave in term time ***cannot*** be agreed by the school simply because holidays and travel are cheaper or because the holiday overlaps with the beginning or end of a term.

The Governing Body has instructed the Head Teacher to ensure that any request for a holiday or leave of absence where there is a record of unacceptable levels of absence and/or lateness is **not** to be authorised for **any** reason.

The current position is that when a holiday is **not** granted for exceptional circumstances it will be deemed unauthorised and a penalty notice will be issued. It can no longer be the case that a child’s good attendance over the preceding 12 months can be taken into account.

Where a parent can prove that their holidays are determined by their employer it will be deemed an exceptional circumstance. The nature of other ‘exceptional circumstances’ are at the discretion of the Head Teacher.

The Governing Body Highfield Hall Primary School September 2023