HILL VIEW PRIMARY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY

Principles

- Regular and full time attendance is essential if children and young people are to benefit fully from their school life
- We actively encourage and promote 100% attendance
- It is important that children learn the importance of being punctual as part of their preparation for adult life
- We will work in partnership with pupils and parents/carers in order to achieve high standards of attendance and punctuality

Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to
- identify the ways by which attendance and punctuality are managed by the school
- clarify the role of the parents/carer

The School will:

- Give attendance and punctuality a high priority
- Provide and promote a welcoming and positive atmosphere so that children feel safe and know that their presence is valued
- Raise awareness of the importance of full attendance and punctuality using newsletters and other communications to parents
- Encourage the children to have a positive attitude towards attendance and punctuality so that they can retain this into adult life
- Ensure that attendance is effectively monitored and absences are followed up promptly
- Enquire about an absence if the parent has not contacted the school on the first day of absence.
- Communicate effectively with other agencies (Education Welfare Service, Health, Social Services etc)
- Meet the legal requirements with particular reference to authorised and unauthorised absence
- Ensure that all staff comply with the school policy and deal consistently with absence and punctuality
- Ensure information is available for Governors and parents
- Develop incentives for good attendance and punctuality
- Have procedures in place to help children settle in after a long absence
Strategies to Promote and Maintain High Standards of Attendance and Punctuality

- Information on attendance is available in the School Prospectus
- Individual parents are approached where there is concern about their child’s attendance or punctuality
- Attendance certificates, prizes etc. reward children for good attendance

We expect the parent to:

- Provide up to date contact numbers and changes of address
- Notify the school, in person or by telephone, when their child is unable to attend, with a reason, on the first day of the absence
- Provide a note indicating attendance at the dentist, doctor or optician before the arranged appointment unless an emergency situation has arisen
- Ensure that their child arrives at school on time each day
- Let the school know if their child is going to be late
- Understand the importance of good attendance and punctuality and promote this with their child

Registers

Registers close at 9.15 a.m.

Authorised and unauthorised absence

The ultimate responsibility to authorise absence rests with the Headteacher. If the Headteacher is not satisfied with the reasons provided, the absence may be categorised as unauthorised.

An absence may be classified as unauthorised when:

- A child is kept off school because a parent is ill
- A child is absent because a sibling is ill
- The parent cannot get the child to school
- The child is taken on a shopping trip
- The child is absent due to a birthday treat/family treat
- A child is absent due to family work patterns
- The child refuses to come to school or wants to stay at home
- A child is more than half an hour late without a satisfactory explanation

Each child’s unauthorised absences (including unauthorised holiday absences) will be noted and recorded on an annual report to parents.

Where there is cause for concern, i.e. when attendance is below 88% in any term, the reasons for this will be investigated and in all cases discussed with the Education Welfare Officer.
It is a legal requirement for a school to report percentages of authorised and unauthorised absences to the DCSF.

Holidays

Parents are asked to avoid taking their children away on holiday during term time if at all possible. If this cannot be avoided, the appropriate form may be obtained from the school office. We ask for this to be completed well before the holiday commences. Up to ten days may be authorised for an annual family holiday, but this will only be in special circumstances. This is at the discretion of the Headteacher and may not always be granted. The availability of cheaper holidays or desired accommodation will not be considered “special.” Parents are asked to reflect on the affect that this time out of school will have on their child’s learning when requesting such authorisation.

Permission will not be granted for term time holidays:
- During transition periods when a child is settling into school
- During preparation for tests
- During test periods
- If attendance is already below 95%
- If the pupil already has unauthorised attendance

Parents have no right to demand that absences are authorised. (Regulation 8 of the Education Regulations 1995 applies).

Authorisation may be sought only for the annual family holiday and not a second or subsequent holiday. More than ten days may only be permitted, in exceptional circumstances, at the Headteacher’s discretion.

If a pupil goes on holiday without permission, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and the Education Welfare Service will be informed.

Requests for absences due to other circumstances must be made in writing to the Headteacher in advance.

Punctuality

The school day begins at 8.55 a.m. Children arriving after 9.10 a.m. should report to the school office.

If a regular pattern of lateness is observed, a note will be sent home asking the parent to explain the lateness or to ensure that punctuality is maintained. Repeated, unexplained lateness or persistent lateness without an acceptable reason will be referred to the Education Welfare Officer.
Medical Appointments

Parents must pick up their child(ren) at the office when attending appointments during the school day. If a child has to attend regular medical appointments, the school may ask to keep a copy of appointment cards.

Monitoring

The Headteacher will keep Governors and the Education Welfare Service informed about attendance matters.

Signed (Headteacher)

Date:.........................