

Howard Primary School Attendance Policy

Attendance

Good attendance and being punctual are essential if pupils are to take full advantage of school and gain the appropriate skills, which will equip them for life. Excellent attendance is a key factor in high achievement and we believe that here, at Howard, parents, carers, teachers and our Governors have a duty to encourage maximum attendance at school.

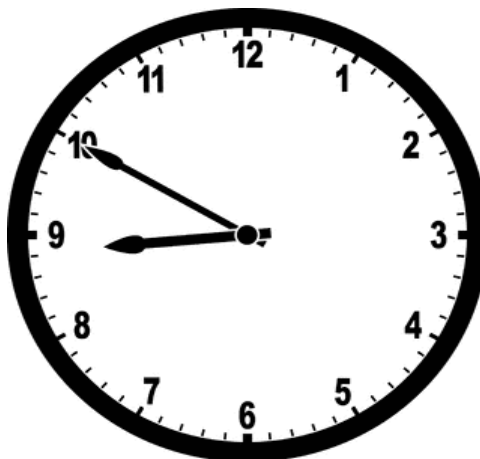
Parents and Carers of children at Howard are responsible for ensuring that their children come to school every day and arrive at school on time, therefore, we will be working in partnership with our parents and carers in order to achieve this.

Punctuality

Being on time is always important so when children arrive late for school, they have not only missed out on valuable learning time but may also disrupt their classmates who are already learning. For some children, who are persistently late, this can be an embarrassing experience that may lead to uncooperative and disruptive behaviour both at school and home.

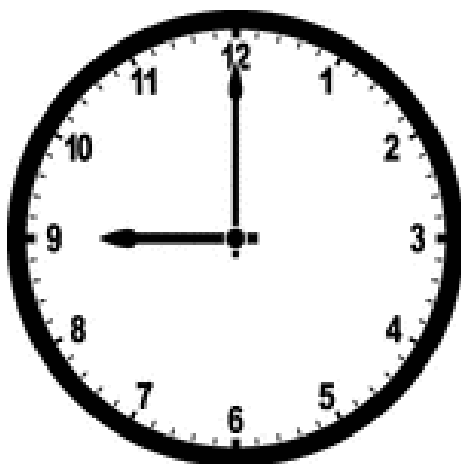
Important times of the School Day

The doors to school are opened at 8:50 a.m.



Children, with the exception of those pupils in Years 5 and 6, will be met by staff in the playground at 8:50 a.m. Year 5 and Year 6 pupils are expected to make their own way into class.

It is expected that all children will be in their classrooms by 9:00 a.m. ready to start learning.



Class attendance registers are taken promptly at **9.00 a.m.** If your child comes to school after this time they will need to report to the school office and will be marked 'late'. **After 9:15 a.m.** your child will receive a U code for Unauthorised absence, in line with the Department for Education guidance. The unauthorised marks shows the child is in school but is legally recorded as an absence.

All school gates are closed promptly at **9:10 a.m.** and the only entrance into school after this time is via the main entrance in **Dering Place**.

Lateness

- * If your child is late on a regular basis you will receive a text reminding you that school opens at 8:50 and your child should be in their classroom by 9:00 a.m.
- * If your child is late **five times** during half a term, you may receive a telephone call or be invited to attend a meeting with the School's Attendance Manager.
- * Should the lateness continue then the School's Education Welfare Consultant (EWC) will be informed and a more formal meeting will need to take place.

Absences

There are two types of absences. Authorised and Unauthorised.

What is an Authorised Absence?

Many absences are for justifiable reasons and will, therefore, be authorised by the school. These include absence for:

- Illness – although frequent absences due to illness will be monitored.
- Religious observance.
- Compassionate leave such as bereavement

- Parents' wedding or siblings
- Sudden loss of housing through eviction or domestic violence (up to a maximum of 3 days)
- Out of school programmes such as music, arts or sports operating at a high standard of achievement
- Time off relating to Child Entertainment Performances, subject to a license being issued by Education Social Work Service
- Pre-planned medical appointments. Parents/Carers should always try to make dentist's/doctor's appointments for after school hours or during the school holidays. If it is unavoidable during school hours we will require **proof of appointment**.

What is an Unauthorised Absence?

These are absences where the reasons are not considered acceptable by the school and officers working on behalf of the Local Authority. We ask that all Parents and Carers avoid any absences for the following reasons:

- It is your child's or a family member's birthday.
- You wake up late and, therefore, do not think you should send your child to school.
- Your child has a non-infectious condition.
- Unreasonable delay in returning your child to school following Doctor's or Dentist's appointments.
- Weddings.
- Unauthorised lateness (as this is counted as absence - see page 2).
- *Holidays during term time.

If any unauthorised absence builds up, you will be referred to the Education Welfare Consultant.

The school can, if needed, change an authorised absence to an unauthorised absence and vice versa if new information is presented. An example of this would be where a parent states a child is unwell but on return to school there is evidence they have been on holiday.

Communication

Parents and Carers are expected to notify the school immediately on the first day if their child is absent from school with the reason why. If we do not hear from you, the Office staff will contact you by text or telephone and will continue to phone or text until we hear from you. You are advised to respond immediately. If we haven't had contact with any of the named parents/carers after the third day of absence, the school will make all reasonable efforts to establish the whereabouts of your child, including making enquiries to known friends and the wider family. School staff or EWC may also visit your home. It may be necessary to start 'Children Missing in Education' procedures as set

out by the Local Authority. The emphasis on this cannot be stronger due to our legal requirements regarding Safeguarding.

***Holidays - Please note:** The Board of Governors of Howard have made the decision not to authorise families taking holidays during term time, other than in exceptional circumstances. If parents take their child out of school during term time for a holiday, the Manager will notify the EWC and you may be issued with a **fine (Fixed Penalty Notice)**. Please read the section concerning the Education Welfare Consultant to find out more about FPNs.

Reward

In an attempt to improve punctuality and attendance we reward individuals and whole classes by:

- Presenting each class that achieves 100% attendance for the week with a certificate in merit assembly and informing parents by text/emails which class received the highest attendance for the week.
- Rewarding children who achieve 100% attendance at the end of every term. The children are given a bronze medal for one term, silver for two terms and gold for three terms together with having their photos displayed in the school entrance.

We will also invite the EWC into assembly to talk to children about the importance of coming to school on time and about having excellent attendance. We usually find that the children understand why being at school every day is important, however, a small number of parents and carers still appear to condone absence. The school encourages all Parents/Carers to help ensure that their children take full advantage of their learning time at Howard by keeping to the principles of this Attendance Policy.

Education Welfare Consultant (EWC)

The school works very closely with the EWC. Referrals are made to her when the school is concerned about high levels of absence and persistent lateness. The Local Authority may in cases of unacceptable unauthorised absence, issue a **Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN)** or enforce attendance. Please be aware that legal measures may be taken against you.

An **FPN** is a fine. Parents who are issued an **FPN** will be expected to pay a fine of **£60** per parent, per child. If the fine is not paid within 14 days, it will increase to **£120** per parent, per child.

Every attempt will be made by the school to work in partnership with you to ensure that your child **attends school regularly and on time**. The Manager will arrange to meet with parents to discuss attendance issues in order to improve the child's/children's attendance.

However, if there is not an improvement in your child's attendance/time keeping then the school will refer the matter to the Education Welfare services. **This is**

a route we wish to avoid. Should you have any concerns and/or would like us to support you, please contact the school to arrange a meeting and we will be delighted to meet with you to help in any way we can.

Fair Processing Notes

At regular intervals throughout the year the school is required to pass information on to the Local Authorities, DfE and to agencies that are prescribed by law. The information includes contact details, national curriculum assessment results, attendance information, characteristics such as ethnic group, special needs and any relevant medical information.

Names:

School Office/Attendance Manager: Mrs Carter

Head Teacher: Miss De Saulles

Education Welfare Consultant: Mrs Horner-Knight

February 2018