

Attendance Policy: The Whole School Policy including EYFS

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Missing Child policy.

For the good of all members of the school community it is essential that attendance is treated as a matter of fundamental importance. All staff and parents have their part to play, whether by proper compliance with our procedures or by administering them conscientiously. Attendance is an area of our school life which, in the interests of pupils, is clearly regulated by law. All parents and teachers need to be aware of the following key points to which we are obliged to adhere:

- registered pupils of compulsory school age are required by law to be in school;
- whilst it is right that the school should recognise that individual pupils and families have problems, the aim should always be to expect regular attendance;
- lateness should be actively discouraged;
- where a pupil is absent without prior authorisation, an explanation is required. If one is not forthcoming (for whatever reason), the absence must be treated as unauthorised and the register annotated accordingly;
- school is not obliged to accept parental notes where there is reason to doubt the validity of the explanation offered;
- parents should not expect, or be led to expect, that the school will agree to family holidays during term time (see below)
- even where absence is authorised, the school should be alert to changing patterns of absence which may seriously disrupt continuity of learning;
- the school is always asked for attendance records by prospective future schools and is required to release this information by law.

Absence

It is important that parents notify the School Office or your child's form teacher if your child is absent from school. This is a legal requirement. In the event of illness, parents should notify the School Office by telephone on 01276 473059 or by email to office@hallgrove.co.uk or medical@hallgrove.co.uk by 0830 on the morning of the absence.

Prior written notice of absence due to medical appointments, senior school visits, music exams etc., should be sent to the School Office in addition to any notes written in diaries, emailed to or verbally communicated to form teachers.

School absence for family events and holidays in term time must be authorised in advance by the Headmaster and will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances. Parents should complete the authorised absence form on the school website and return it to the school office.

Absence information is logged directly on iSAMS by the School Office.

Attendance

The school is obliged to adopt the following approach:

- in recognition of local circumstances (such as bad weather...), the school may keep the registers open for a reasonable period. Keeping registers open all morning or afternoon is not acceptable;
- where pupils miss registration altogether and fail to provide an adequate explanation, they should be marked as unauthorised absent for that session, even though they may arrive later;
- the school will, of course, need to take account of the individual circumstances of each case.

Our practice for registration at Hall Grove conforms to the law, with proper public registration in form rooms or activities before 0840 (Years 3 – 8) or 0900 (Pre-School – Year 2), and at the end of lunch or in classrooms after lunch. The registers are checked by the School Office. The registers are considered ‘closed’ at 0930 and at 1430. Unexplained absences are followed up.

Pupils who arrive too late for registration must not simply go straight to their form/class: they must report immediately to the School Office to sign in.

Parents of any children not in school will be contacted on the morning of their absence by the School Office or School Nurse if permission has not been sought. Their absence will be marked as ‘unauthorised’ if a valid explanation is not offered.

A record of attendance is maintained for each pupil. The school expects good attendance from its pupils, which should normally be 95% or better to enable pupils to receive a full-time education. This is monitored by the School Nurse, Section Leaders, Safeguarding Team and Head of Pastoral Care, who will follow safeguarding procedures if there are concerns about a pupil’s attendance. The school has a duty to inform Surrey Education Services of any children with ten days or more of continuous unauthorised absence.

Key publications referred to:

Children missing education (Dfe 2016)

School Attendance: Guidance for Schools (DFe July 2021)

Updated September 2023 (LR/SB)