



Hipsburn Primary School, Lesbury, ALNWICK, Northumberland. NE66 3PX

Tel: 01665 830210

Email: admin@hipsburn.northumberland.sch.uk

Web: www.hipsburn.northumberland.sch.uk

Headteacher Mr Kevin Moloney

September 2018

School Attendance

Dear Parents/Carers,

As a school, our attendance target is 96% and for the last academic year 2017-2018, we achieved 96.02%, so well done to everyone in helping us achieve our goal.

As we start a new academic year, we thought it timely to remind you of our attendance policy, so apologies for this lengthy letter! The policy can be viewed in full on the school website at <http://www.hipsburn.northumberland.sch.uk/website/policies/103165>.

As part of our commitment to improving the achievements of our pupils, we monitor pupil attendance on a regular basis and send a letter home towards the end of every half term giving you details of your child's attendance. In addition to this monitoring, this year we will be enlisting the help of our designated Education Welfare Officer who will look at how we can support those families where attendance is an issue and, where necessary, will attend meetings with parents to put support in place to improve attendance.

Ongoing low attendance is a factor often linked to low levels of attainment. Our aim is to try and prevent pupils developing poor habits of attendance and to this end, it is important that any issues are dealt with as soon as possible. The table below shows our red, amber, green approach to attendance.

Attendance	Description	Approx. days lost per year	Approx. weeks lost per year.
98% - 100%	Excellent	0 - 4	Less than 1
96% - 98%	Good	5 - 9	1 to 2
90% - 95%	Unsatisfactory	10 - 20	2 to 4
Below 90%	Persistent Absentee	More than 20	More than 4

We aim to celebrate excellent attendance with class rewards and school rewards for children who really make the effort, for example, a treat for those who reach 96% and above.

Authorised Absences

We do understand there are times when children will need to be absent from school for a number of reasons. As a result, we will only consider authorising absences in the following instances:

- For sickness or ill health
- For medical or dental appointments which fall during school hours (we would however encourage you to make appointments outside of school hours wherever possible)
- For religious or cultural observations
- For a family emergency





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We ask all parents and carers to follow our absence procedure in order to grant authorised absence in the above cases. You are required to contact the school as soon as possible on the first day of absence and certainly by 9.30am. **This procedure is to ensure that we know where your child is and that you are all safe.** Any parent or carer who has not reported their child as absent will be contacted by the school by phone call or email. Failure to follow this procedure may result in the child receiving an unauthorised absence and could lead to Education Welfare Officer intervention should their attendance fall below 92%.

Unauthorised Absences

The DfE has made it clear that headteachers are not to authorise absence for any holidays during term time, except under exceptional circumstances.

We will not, therefore, grant authorisation for absence in the following instances:

- Day trips and holidays in term time
- Leaving school unnecessarily during the school day
- Not attending school for an unnecessary reason such as shopping or birthdays
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences which have not been properly explained or have failed to follow the absence procedure

We must also state the importance of punctuality with regards to the beginning of the school day. The school day starts at 8.55am. Should your child arrive after the register closes, they will receive a mark to show they are on-site, though this will still be recorded as an absence. Continuous lateness will, therefore, result in several unauthorised absences, despite your child being on-site for the rest of the school day.

Research suggests that children who are absent from school may never catch up on the learning they have missed, which may ultimately affect progress and exam/test results. As a parent or carer, you have a legal requirement to ensure your child attends school on a regular basis. Therefore, you hold the responsibility to promote good attendance and punctuality.

Thank you for your co-operation in this matter.

Yours sincerely,

Kevin Moloney
Headteacher

