Halley Primary School

Including all learners, achieving their best

Attendance Policy

Approved by:	Shoshannah Thompson
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OUR INTENT

OUR VALUES



OUR VISION

Provide a safe, supportive, and stimulating environment that enables and encourages highest standards of achievement (**ambition**).

Broad, balanced and **creative** curriculum which makes the most of the learning opportunities offered by the richness and diversity of the **cultures** and environment on our doorstep.

Provide an **enriched practical** curriculum based on excellence and **enjoyment** which allows for **exploration**, **enquiry**, and opportunities to ask questions.

OUR AIMS

1. All of our children are to become **successful**, **independent** learners.
2. All of our children are to be equipped with skills and knowledge to meet their current and future needs and **creative** potential.
3. All of our children are to be **confident** individuals who can live safe and **healthy** lives.
4. All of our children are to **respect** and value each other's contributions irrespective of race, gender, religion or ability.
5. All of our children are to be **self-aware** and able to manage their own behaviour, understanding that it has an impact on others.
6. All of our children are to be active and motivated **citizens** within the wider school community.

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Attendance Policy

1. Aims

Halley Primary School is dedicated to supporting parents and pupils by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Safeguarding every pupil and protecting their right to education
- Acting early to address patterns of absence proactively with necessary support and challenge to bring forth improvements
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school
- Supporting parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly
- Promoting and supporting punctuality in attending lessons.
- Working with the Local Authority Education Welfare team as required
- Striving to exceed the Local Authority annual attendance figure aims

Central to raising standards in education and ensuring all pupils can fulfil their potential is an assumption so widely understood that it is insufficiently stated – pupils need to attend school regularly to benefit from their education. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind. Children with poor attendance tend to achieve less in both primary and secondary school.

School Attendance, DfE, July 2019

As a UNCRC Rights Respecting School, children's rights underpin our school ethos. Every child has the Right to an Education (Article 28, UN Convention on the Rights of the Child). Persistent absence or lateness can impact on children receiving the full education they are entitled to.



Any absence affects the pattern of child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil's absence or late arrival disrupts teaching routines and so may affect the learning of others in the same class. Ensuring a child's regular attendance as school is the parental responsibility and allow absence from school without good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

We aim for above **97%** attendance for every child. Alongside the academic benefits, attending school regularly is also about being and playing with friends and part of the school's community. The routine of school can be comforting and familiar for children, providing a consistent support network and a sense of security.

To contextualise this aim:

Missing 19 days in a school year means only being in school for 90% of the time. Being late 15 minutes, every day would mean missing two weeks of learning in a year.

95%	=	47 LESSONS MISSED EACH YEAR 8 days in total or 1 week and 3 days
90%	=	95 LESSONS MISSED EACH YEAR 16 days in total or 3 weeks and 1 day
85%	=	142 LESSONS MISSED EACH YEAR 24 days in total or 4 weeks and 4 days
80%	=	190 LESSONS MISSED EACH YEAR 32 days in total or 6 weeks and 2 days

2. Legislation and Guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the working together to improve school attendance from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures. These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of The Education Act 1996
- Part 3 of The Education Act 2002
- Part 7 of The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments)
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Tower Hamlets Protocol for issuing Fixed Penalties regarding School Attendance.

This policy should also be read in conjunction with our:

- Safeguarding & Child Protection,
- Medicines Policy,
- Behaviour for Learning Policy

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data

- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

The link governor for attendance and punctuality is XXXX responsible for monitoring attendance, school systems and procedures.

3.2 The Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Ensuring the policy is implemented consistently across the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors

The Headteacher also supports other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils and issues fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

3.3 The Inclusion and Welfare Officer

The School's Inclusion and Welfare Officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data at a school and individual pupil level
- Reporting concerns about attendance to the senior leadership team and Headteacher
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the Headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

3.4 Class Teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office. Registers must be completed by 9am each day. An afternoon register must also be completed at the start of each pm session,

3.5 School Admin Team

School's admin team will:

- Take calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents to the Inclusion and Welfare Officer in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

3.6 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every and on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before start of the school day, on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day

3.7 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every and be on time

4. School Procedures

4.1. Attendance Register

By law, all schools are required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on this register.

The attendance register is taken at the start of the first session of each school day (by 9am) and once during the second session (by 1.30pm). It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Pupils must arrive in class by 8.50am on each school day. School Gates open at 8.40am and bell rings for start of school day at 8.45am

See Appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

4.2 Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parent), as either **authorised** or **unauthorised**. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required. Each half-day is known as a 'session'.

Authorised absences are morning or afternoon sessions away from school for a genuine reason such as illness (although you may be asked to provide medical evidence for your child before this can be authorised), medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been granted. This type of absence can lead to the school referring to the Local Authority for penalty notices and/or legal proceedings.

4.3 Unplanned absence

Parents must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence – for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health – by 10.00am or as soon as practically possible.
We ask that parents call the School Office on 020 72658061 to and report a pupil absence by pressing option 1.

Absence due to illness will be authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask parents to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.
If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised, and parents will be notified of this in advance.

4.4 Planned Absences: Medical or Dental Appointments

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; advance notice is required for authorising these absences. Please call or visit the School Office to inform us of an appointment and provide evidence, such as a letter, text or email, of confirmation of appointment.

However, we encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

Applications for other types of absence in term time must also be made in advance. Information relating to whether the school can authorise such absences can be found in section 4.

4.5 Lateness and Punctuality

A pupil who arrives late but before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.

A pupil who arrives after the register has closed will also be marked late, using the appropriate code. Registers close at 9am. In line with our attendance procedure, the office staff will ask the reason your child is late. If this is something personal or an ongoing factor which you would like the school to be aware of, please request to speak to Assistant Head for Inclusion or Deputy Headteacher.

4.6 Following up Absence

The school will follow up any absences to ascertain the reason, ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary, identify whether the absence is approved or not and identify the correct attendance code to use.

If the school has not been informed about an absence, either in advance or via phone, a member of the Office staff will call parents or carers. This will take place from 10.15am. This is for safeguarding reasons and in order to log reasons for absence.

4.7 Reporting to Parents

You will receive your child's absence record termly. This will show whether they have attended each session and the codes applied to any sessions which they were absent for. Their overall attendance percentage will also be included.

4.8 Granting Approval for Term-time Absence

Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence to pupils during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'.

We define exceptional circumstances as:

- Visits to seriously ill relatives
- Bereavement of a close family member (usually for funeral only but each situation is considered individually)
- Religious observances
- An unexpected and traumatic event which may require time off

Exceptional circumstances do not include:

- Birthdays
- Day trips or holidays
- Siblings who are mildly unwell and home from school

Valid reasons for authorised absence include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments – as explained in sections 4.2
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a Traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision

All children can feel unwell or show mild illness sometimes; it shouldn't normally be a reason to keep them off school.

We will always contact you if your child becomes increasingly unwell or we don't feel they are well enough to be at school. Please refer to our Medicines Policy if your child requires prescribed medication for any illness.

Vomiting and diarrhoea are good reasons for staying off school and the school enforces a 48-hour rule before returning to school.

Sometimes children complain of illness as a way of communicating that they are worried about something. This can be indicative of a wider problem or concern. It's always good to make time to talk to your child, listen to them and find out what the real problem is. If you find it difficult to talk to your child about things, speak to either your child's class teacher or member of the senior leadership team (Deputy Headteacher, AHTs or Headteacher). If you are aware of a reason your child's attendance may be affected, such as being a Young Carer, please speak to **Shan Hardy**, AHT for Inclusion and SEND or attendance assistant.

4.9 Legal Sanctions

Schools can request that the Local Authority fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age (the first term after their 5th birthday).

Penalty Notices will still be issued to each parent for each absent child. For example – 2 siblings absent for unauthorised leave in term time will result in each parent receiving two separate fines. If issued with a penalty notice the payment must be made directly to the local authority.

A parent may receive more than one separate penalty notice resulting from the unauthorised absence, but not in excess of 3 penalty notices for an individual child in any twelve-month period. A penalty notice will be issued to each parent of each child.

First Offence

The first time a penalty notice is issued, the amount will be £160 per parent, per child, if paid within 28 days. (Reduced to £80 per parent, per child, if paid within 21 days.)

Second Offence

The second time a penalty notice is issued, the amount will be £160 per parent, per child, if paid within 28 days. (There is no reduction for any early payment.)

Third Offence

The third time a penalty notice is issued, the case will be presented straight to the Magistrates Court. Fines of up to £2500 per parent, per child, can be issued by the courts.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice ultimately rests with the headteacher, following the local authority's protocols for issuing penalty notices. The Tower Hamlets Protocols for issuing Fixed Penalties regarding School Attendance states that penalty notices can be issued for:

- Persistent late arrival at school (after the register has closed)
- Pupils whose attendance has not reached a satisfactory level during a 6-week period following intensive support.
- Where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification in a fixed term or permanent exclusion.
- 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence within a 10-week period.
- All unauthorised holidays taken during term time (The Local Authority recommendation is that this is for any unauthorised leave of ten sessions (5 days) or more)

The Access to Education team will issue penalty notices on behalf of schools and will always serve them by first class post. The team will also ensure that the issuing of penalty notices is closely monitored with the relevant financial penalty being imposed.

If an initial Fixed Penalty Notice has failed to secure an improvement in attendance, the Access to Education team reserves the right to proceed with prosecution, providing the necessary casework has been completed by the school. Each case will be considered on its own merit.

5. Strategies for Promoting Attendance

At Halley Primary School, we believe in developing good patterns of attendance and set high expectations for the attendance and punctuality for all our pupils from the outset. It is a central part of our school's vision, values, ethos, and day to day life. We recognise the connections between attendance, achievement, safeguarding and wellbeing.

Helping to create a good habits and pattern of regular attendance is the responsibility of parents, pupils and all members of school staff.

To help us all to focus on this we will:

- Give pupils/parents/carers details on attendance on our website and school newsletter
- Celebrate excellent attendance each week for classes and school during our weekly attendance assemblies
- Celebrate individual attendance achievements termly
- Reward good or improving attendance and punctuality
- Report to parents/carers regularly on their child's attendance
- Contact parents/carers should their child's attendance fall below the school's target for attendance.

6. Attendance Monitoring

The Inclusion and Welfare Officer acts as attendance Officer liaising with the Headteacher and AHT for Inclusion as necessary to monitor and track attendance and any penalty notices. The Attendance Officers monitor pupil absence on a fortnightly basis.

Parents are expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health (see section 4.3). If a child has been had vomiting or diahorrea, they are not permitted back into school for 48-hours, in line with healthcare recommendations. In this instance, a follow up phone call the next day is not required. If a child has been hospitalised

or a doctor has signed them off from school for a set period of time, daily call ins are not required. In all other circumstances of illness, daily calls are required.

If a pupil's attendance dips under 95% or persistent lateness is recorded, the attendance officers will look further into the reasons around this through analysis of the pupil attendance record. They will take into account authorised and unauthorised absences, lateness or any illness or other reasons for absence.

If a pupil's attendance is 90% or below, the attendance officers will make contact with the pupil's parents and carers to discuss the reasons behind persistent absence and any support required. The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee.

If after contacting parents a pupil's absence continues to rise, a more formal Attendance Support Meeting will be held. This may include a parent / school attendance plan which both parties will be expected to sign and agree to.

If following an Attendance Support Meeting the pupil's attendance does not improve, we will consider involving an Education Welfare Officer from the Local Authority Access to Education team.

Pupil-level absence data is collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. We compare our attendance data to the national average and share this with governors.

Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

CODE	DEFINITION	SCENARIO
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

CODE	DEFINITION	SCENARIO
AUTHORISED ABSENCE		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
C1	Authorised Regulated Performance	Pupil has been granted leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad

C2	Temporary Reduced Timetable	Pupil has been granted leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
K	Alternative provision (LA arranged)	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and traveller absence	Pupil from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
Q	Unable to attend	Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

CODE	DEFINITION	SCENARIO
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y1	Unable to attend	Tansport normally provided not available
Y2	Unable to attend	Widespread disruption to travel
Y3	Unable to attend	Part of the school closed
Y4	Unable to attend	Whole school closed
Y5	Unable to attend	Sentence of detention
Y6	Unable to attend	Absent in accordance with public health guidance or law
Y7	Unable to attend	Any other unavoidable cause
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day