

Attendance Policy: The Whole School Policy including EYFS

Absence

It is important to notify the School Office or your child's form teacher if your child is absent from school. 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 schoolnurses@hallgrove.co.uk on the morning of the absence. This is a legal requirement. Prior written notice of absence due to medical appointments, music exams etc., should be sent to the School Office in addition to any notes written in diaries or verbally communicated to form teachers. School absence for family events and holidays will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances and must be requested using the authorised absence form on our website.

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:

- *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. Each application will need to be in writing to the Headmaster and considered on its merits;*
- *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.*

On 'Lateness':

- *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.*

Practice at Hall Grove

- Current practice 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 regularly by the School Nurses and an official return is taken each month. The registers are considered 'closed' at 0930.
- Communication concerning attendance related to medical appointments, senior school visits, music exams etc. should come either in person to the school office or to form tutors, by letter, by telephone, be written in pupils' diaries or be sent by email. Messages should be given by 0830 on the day of absence at the latest. The information is either logged directly on Hall Grove Manager by form tutors, or passed immediately to the school office.
- Those who arrive too late for registration must not simply go straight to their form/class: they must report immediately to the school office so that their entry can be amended appropriately.

- Permission for extended planned absence may be granted by the Headmaster to parents who apply directly to him, if he considers that their application falls within the spirit and the custom of the school. This is monitored by School Nurses, Section Leaders and Head of Pastoral Care.
- Parents of any children not in school will be contacted on the morning of their absence by the school office or School Nurses 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. Safeguarding procedures are followed if there are concerns over their non- attendance. This is monitored by School Nurses, Section Leaders and Head of Pastoral Care. The school has a duty to inform Surrey Education services for any children with ten days or more of unauthorised absence.

Conclusion

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.

Updated September 2018 (TJGL)

Key publications referred to:

Children missing education (DfE 2016)

Advice on School Attendance (DfE 2016)