



**Heworth**  
Church of England Primary School

# Attendance Policy

## 2023/2024

*Person responsible for the strategic approach to attendance:*

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*01904 806330*

To report an absence, please speak to the school office by calling 01904 806330 and choose option 1.

Approval Date: To be approved at LGC December 2023

Next Review Date: September 2024

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## Rationale

Heworth Primary School is committed to providing a welcoming environment where every child is valued and given opportunities to flourish. Our Christian ethos and school values are important in making a difference to children's lives. Every child is a gift from God - we show compassion for difficulties they may face, while developing endurance for their lifelong journey. Trust between school and families is very important to us and we seek to work with and support you in creating good attendance and punctuality, in order for pupils to achieve their true potential. Heworth will do all that we can to ensure that all pupils attend school to their fullest and that any barriers to full attendance are identified and acted upon as soon as possible.

Providing safe and happy places to learn is essential to achieving school improvement, raising achievement and attendance, promoting equality and diversity and ensuring the safety and well-being of all members of the school community. Every member of the community has rights and responsibilities which enable us to work and learn in a school environment in which we feel safe and supported.

At Heworth CE Primary School, we recognise that improving attendance is everyone's responsibility and is essential to positive outcomes for all pupils. We know that, in order to secure good attendance, we must first provide a calm, orderly, safe and supportive environment where all pupils want to be and are keen and ready to learn. This is something we have at this school.

We do recognise that some pupils find it harder than others to attend school and therefore, at all stages of improving attendance, we consult with parents, the wider community, the MAT, the local authority and the pupils and staff remove any barriers to attendance by building strong and trusting relationships and working together to put the right support in place.

Securing good attendance at Heworth CE Primary School cannot therefore be seen in isolation. Effective practices for improvement will involve close interaction with our schools' efforts on curriculum, behaviour, bullying, special educational needs support, pastoral and mental health and wellbeing, and effective use of resources, (including pupil premium). We recognise that it cannot solely be the preserve of a single member of staff within our school, it must be a concerted effort across all teaching and nonteaching staff in school, the trust, governing body, the local authority, and other local partners.

## **Attendance Aims**

At Heworth Primary School, children should be in school from 8:40am, every day unless they are unwell and unable to attend.

We expect children to aim for 100% attendance at school. However, we also understand that there are times when a child will be ill and may be absent. The national average for expected attendance is 96%, the equivalent of missing around 8 days over a year, and all children should aim to have this as a minimum for attendance.

Any child whose absence falls below 90% (or around 19 days off over the year) is classified by the Government as a Persistent Absentee.

In order to improve the overall attendance of pupils in school we aim to:

- Develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance.
- Have a clear school attendance policy which all staff, pupils and parents understand.
- Take into account the specific needs of certain pupils and pupil cohorts.
- Always consider the individual needs of pupils and their families who have specific barriers to attendance.
- Accurately complete admission and attendance registers and have effective day to day processes in place to follow-up absence.
- Regularly monitor and analyse attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require support with their attendance and put effective strategies in place.
- Build strong relationships with families, listen to and understand barriers to attendance and work with families to remove them.
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities, and other partners when absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe.

## **Day to Day Monitoring of Attendance**

We need children to arrive at school punctually so that they can access all learning opportunities. If a child misses the start of the day they will miss time spent with their class teacher getting vital information and news for the day. Pupils who arrive late miss interventions and key learning opportunities. We therefore actively encourage all children to arrive at school on time.

- The gates to the school open at 8:30am and close at 8.50am. Any children entering the school after this time must do so via the main school office.

- Children who enter the classroom between 8.40am and 8.50am are marked as attending the session.
- Children arriving after 8.50am, must do so via the school office and will be recorded as late (before the register has closed).
- School registers close at 9:30am. Children arriving after the register closes will be recorded as late (after the register closes).
- Registers reopen at 12:35pm and close at 1:10pm.
- The end of the school day is 3:15pm for all pupils.

Attendance is monitored daily by our administration team.

### **Absence**

On the first day of absence, it is the expectation that parents/carers report their child's absence to the school office via the designated attendance phone line (01904 806330, Option 1). This should be done before the register closes at 9.00am.

If the school has not received a reason for a child being away from school, the Office team will make contact with the parents/carers. This is done by phone call. Where no contact can be made, the child's absence will be unauthorized until contact is made. If the school is unable to make contact, a senior member of staff may choose to visit the family home to check on the whereabouts of the child in question. If no contact is made after this, we would report this to the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) for further advice.

Following the first day of absence, any subsequent continued absence must be reported by a parent/carer on every day of their child's absence. This should be reported by 9:00am.

### **Illness**

If a child is ill, parents/carers must report this to the school office via the designated attendance phone line (01904 806330, Option 1). This should be done before the register closes at 9.00am.

### ***Requesting Leave of Absence (non medical)***

We do not authorise leave of absence (including family holidays) in term time unless for exceptional reasons. Such reasons may include:

- Immediate family events – relating to parents, grandparents and siblings.
- Service personnel and other employees who are prevented from taking holidays outside term time if the holiday will have minimal disruption to the pupil's education.
- When a family needs to spend time together to support each other during or after a crisis.

- Religious Observance

Should a parent wish to request leave of absence for such a reason, they must fill in the 'Application for Absence of a Pupil during Term Time' form (Appendix 1) available from the school office. This must be then handed to the school office upon completion for approval by the Headteacher. The Headteacher will respond to your request within 2 working days.

### Medical Appointments

We encourage families to book medical appointments outside of the school day. Where this is unavoidable, parents/carers must fill out a medical appointment request form (Appendix 2) which can be obtained from the school office. This must be then handed to the school office upon completion for approval by the Headteacher. This must be accompanied by proof of this appointment. You may censor a medical appointment letter as we only need the name, date and time. You may also collect retrospective evidence in the form of a GP slip if you have made an appointment over the telephone but this must be provided after the appointment.

### Serious Medical Illness

The school and the attendance team will do all they can to support families with serious medical illness. Please contact the Headteacher to discuss any circumstances that may require routine or extended absence.

### Monitoring Whole School Attendance and Persistent Absence

The monitoring of attendance will take place on a daily, weekly and half termly basis by the head teacher and the administration staff in the office.

Where absence escalates and pupils miss 10% or more of school (equivalent to 1 day or more a fortnight across a full school year), we will work with the MAT and local authority to put additional targeted support in place to remove any barriers to attendance and reengage these pupils. In doing so, schools should sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence and understand the importance of school as a place of safety and support for children who might be facing difficulties, rather than reaching immediately for punitive approaches

The School will follow the LA model of the 'Fast Track' cycle (Appendix 3) to quickly rectify persistent absence.

The governing body also monitors the rate of attendance and ensures the policy is adhered to fairly and consistently through attendance reports at all LGC meetings.



**Appendix 2: Application for unavoidable medical appointments**



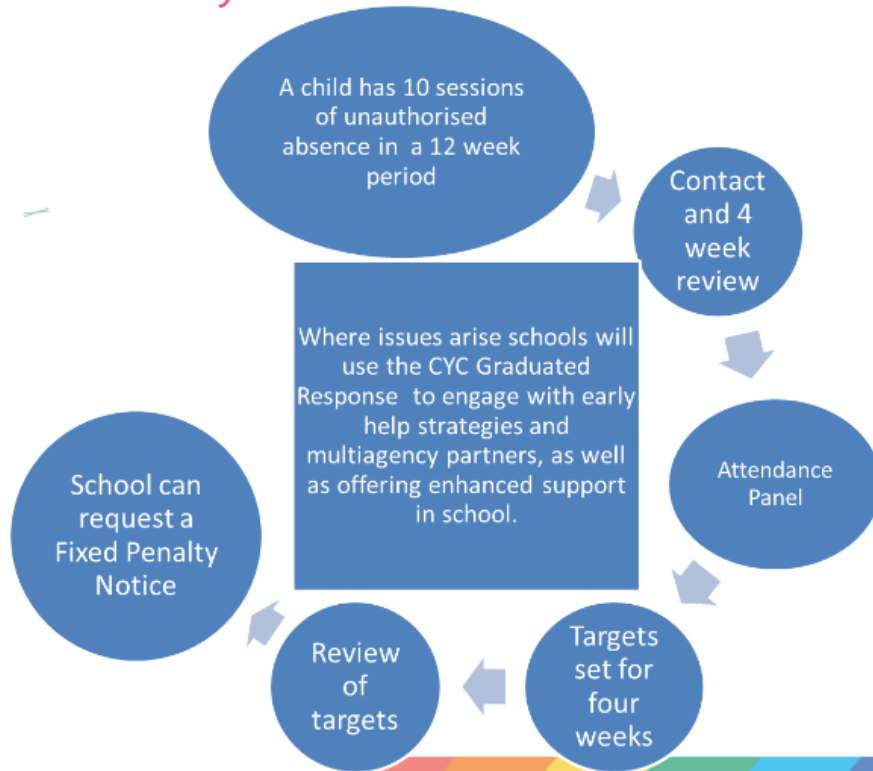
<b>Application for Absence of a Pupil during Term Time:</b> <b>THIS FORM IS NOT FOR MEDICAL / DENTAL APPOINTMENTS</b>	
<b>Applications for leave during term time will not be authorised unless there are EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES.</b>	
Name of child:	Class:
First day of requested period of absence:	
Last day of requested period of absence:	
Total number of days requested:	
<i>If the request is for family holiday then this must be <b>EXCEPTIONAL</b> and the circumstances explained below.</i>	
(This section <b>must</b> be completed, or the request will be <b>automatically rejected</b> )	
I understand and accept that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This absence may affect <b>my child's</b> learning</li> <li>• I <b>may be fined</b> if I take this absence as unauthorised</li> </ul>	
Signature of parent/carer ..... Date .....	
<b>Please hand in this form at least two weeks before the start date of the request.</b>	
<b><i>This section is for school use only</i></b> <i>I authorise / do not authorise the above leave of absence application.</i>	
Signature of Head Teacher _____ Date _____	





**Appendix 3: LA model 'Fast Track' Cycle**

## Fast Track Systems



**York Education**

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