

# **WEST HESLERTON C.E. PRIMARY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY**



West Heselton School reflects Christian attitudes and values ensuring that all pupils become co-operative and responsible members of a moral and spiritual society.

We encourage everyone to become self-motivated, independent people with the confidence to achieve their full social and academic potential.

As part of a wider, caring community, working in partnership with families, the church, its parish and diocese, we provide opportunity and encouragement in a positive but disciplined way.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Good attendance and punctuality at school is important and ensures continuous learning. We encourage good attendance and celebrate this at the end of each school year. School encourages good attendance through making the school day and pupils' learning enjoyable. We aim to encourage a positive attitude to school to nurture learning in all pupils. Children need to feel that their contribution in school is valued and all staff care about them as individuals.

### **Attendance at School**

Parents are legally obliged that unless there is illness or some other acceptable reason for absence, children, from the start of the term after their fifth birthday, should attend school for each session during the prescribed school days of the academic year. Children are welcome to arrive between 8.30 and 8.45 each morning. Children arriving and leaving at any other time should be signed in by their parent or carer in the school office.

### **Reporting of Absences**

Parents are responsible for contacting the school as soon as possible and definitely before 10am every day of the child's absence. This is usually by phone, sometimes in person. If an absence is known of in advance, eg. a medical appointment, a letter to the school prior to the absence is helpful. Please inform school of the reason for this absence so that it may be categorised using NYCC absence codes.

It is crucial that parents adhere to this procedure to ensure that all pupils are safe and their whereabouts accounted for.

### **Long term Absences**

Occasionally, some pupils experience health or other difficulties that prevent them from attending school for some time. School deals with each case individually, agreeing procedures for re-integrating these pupils with each family as the need arises. Please contact the Headteacher if your child would benefit from such an arrangement.

### **Recording and use of Absence Data**

A registration system is in place to record, in an accurate manner, attendance, lateness and absences. This complies with Government and L.A. guidelines.

Staff will aim to unlock the gate and be on duty from 8.30 when pupils may arrive at school. Until this time, they should be supervised by a responsible adult. School's official starting time is 8.45 am when staff and parents will close all gates. Pupils arriving after this time should report to the school office.

Any child arriving between the start of school and 8.55am, when registration closes, will be registered with a late mark. Those arriving after this time will be marked absent for the session unless a reason is given. School may then, following NYCC guidance, authorise this lateness. It is important that pupils are punctual and arrive prepared for the day's learning. It is important that pupils arriving after 8.45 are escorted to the school office to ensure they arrive safely into our care and have dinners ordered etc.

When a child fails to attend school for one or more sessions this will be recorded as an absence. Absences will be shown as authorised or unauthorised, following authority guidelines. The school determines whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised using these guidelines.

When absences are unaccounted for, school will telephone and/or send a letter home to try to ensure all absences are explained.

Data is collected and collated. Attendance figures for individual pupils are shared with their parents on a termly basis and included in their school report. Pupils' attendance and punctuality data is closely monitored and where this data causes concern, a referral to the Educational Welfare Service and other appropriate agencies is made. Attendance information is passed on when pupils transfer to other schools.

### **Holidays/Leave of Absence**

We aim to publish and circulate, as soon as possible, term dates, including school holidays and non-contact days, so that parents have this information for forward planning and booking holidays.

Periods of exceptional absence for special events, including religious holidays, should be applied for in advance. Leave of absence forms are available in school and online on the school website. Absence may be authorised by the Headteacher, provided NYCC criteria are met and leave of absence forms have been completed in advance. Please see NYCC school leave forms for current criteria and timescales. However, it must be emphasised that leave taken in term time is disruptive to a child's education. Leave from school taken at the time of national tests will be unauthorised.

### **Illness during the school day**

From time to time, pupils show symptoms of illness at school. School will contact parents and other family members if a child needs to go home. School asks parents to ensure we have up to date contact names and telephone numbers for this purpose.

Parents are informed that they should not send children to school who seem unwell. Pupils who are ill are often very distressed and illnesses are quickly spread. Guidelines for the return of recovering pupils are detailed in the school medical policy.

### **In the event of School Closure**

During winter months it occasionally becomes necessary to close the school due to adverse weather conditions. If this closure takes place at the start of the day we will try to state this on our school website and contact BBC Radio York, Minster FM and Yorkshire Coast Radio to advertise the closure. If the weather or other conditions mean that a decision is taken to close school during the school day parents and guardians will be telephoned and asked to collect their children as soon as possible. The school staff will remain on the premises until all children have been collected.

Reviewed: December 2016

Date of next planned review: Autumn 2019 or sooner if required