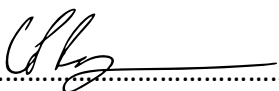


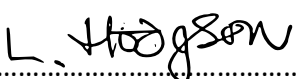


We aim to create an exceptional school that harbours confidence, respect and a love of learning and prepares children for the challenges and adventures of life.

Mousehole School Pupil Attendance Policy

Approved.....October 2019.....

Signed..........Head Teacher

Signed..........Chair of Governors

1. Principles

The school aims to promote, among parents and children, a high level of awareness of the need for regular and prompt attendance. Regular and punctual attendance is of paramount importance in ensuring that all children have full access to the curriculum. Valuable learning time is lost when children are absent or late. Regular attendance is defined as 95% or above.

These principles are expressed in the following ways;

- A statement defining the school's expectations relating to attendance appears on the school website
- Parents are advised of the school's expectations during the induction meetings for new children
- Parents are reminded regularly via Seesaw of the importance of good attendance and timekeeping
- We celebrate good attendance patterns in our school assemblies

2. Absence procedures

Parents are requested to ring school by 9.10am to notify us that their child will be absent. The school will then authorise absences that are due to sickness. The school registers are closed at 9.30am each morning. Children who have not arrived by the end of registration are marked absent. Latecomers should report to the school office on arrival. The child will be given a 'late after register closed' mark.

If the school has been informed that the child will arrive late due to a medical/dental appointment then an attendance mark will be given on arrival. A child's absence will be recorded as unauthorised if no satisfactory explanation is given for absence or if the school considers the information received from a parent is not an acceptable reason for absence.

Attendance will be monitored termly. Parents will be informed of their child's low attendance level and invited to discuss their child's attendance when:

- A child continues to be absent for more than 7 consecutive days without explanation
- A child is absent for 7 school days or more with an unsatisfactory explanation.
- A child's attendance drops below 90%.

Where a pattern of unauthorised absence persists or attendance does not improve, despite the school's involvement, the Educational Welfare Officer will be contacted and asked to visit the home.

Staff are asked to inform the school office of any unexplained absences and the school will then telephone home to get an explanation of the reason for absence. If members of staff are concerned about the level of attendance or punctuality of any of the children in their class, they should inform the head teacher.

We as a school have a duty to inform parents of their child's attendance and how this can impact upon their performance. We do this annually via school reports where we also share information about average school attendance figures so that parents can make comparisons and understand the context of their own child's attendance rates. We also inform parents more regularly if we are concerned about attendance patterns.

Long term standing medical conditions need to be reviewed and monitored with evidence (either a letter from a consultant doctor or photocopy of medical prescriptions) where appropriate.

3. Attendance Pattern Concerns

Concerns about attendance can involve more than low attendance rates indeed low attendance rates may be due to unavoidable circumstances like illness. We use our information management systems SIMS to look for concerning patterns in attendance. This is reviewed termly or more regularly if concerns are raised by staff members or parents.

Other patterns that may cause concern and would therefore be challenged may include:

- Regular lateness
- Repeatedly missing specific days of the week
- A large number of broken weeks - where a child regularly misses one or more days in a week (not necessarily the same day)

4. Planned absence and term time holidays

It is a legal requirement for children to attend school. The school places great importance on attendance. High attendance leads to high achievement. From 1 September 2013 legislation prohibits any school from authorising leave of absence for holidays except in exceptional circumstances. Amendments have been made to the 2006 regulations in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013. These amendments, as described below, came into force on 1 September 2013.

It is therefore illegal to take children out of school for holidays during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. There is no entitlement to any leave of absence for a holiday during term time. Schools are in session for 190 days per year, so there are opportunities to take children on holiday during the remaining 175 days.

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance on:

- a. what might be defined as exceptional circumstances;
- b. procedures for applying for leave of absence for holiday;
- c. the criteria the school will use in deciding whether to refer any unauthorised absence due to holidays in term time to the Local Authority to issue a Fixed Penalty Fine.

4.1 Criteria for exceptional Absence

It is not possible to precisely define exceptional circumstances, but examples of what might be considered as such are:

- Where employment restrictions made it impossible to take a family holiday during the school holidays. This must be supported by evidence from the company or organisation.
- Service personnel returning from or scheduled to embark upon a tour of duty abroad.
- Where a holiday is recommended as part of a parent or child's rehabilitation from a medical or emotional issue. Evidence must be provided, from qualified professionals, such as a doctor.
- Where a holiday would be of unique and significant emotional, medical, educational or spiritual value to the child outweighing the loss of teaching time.
- Any child with attendance below 90% falls into the "Persistent Absence" category. We are not able to authorise any absence for a child with "persistent absence" unless it is for illness or for medical reasons.

Where there are other factors which the headteacher may consider to be exceptional circumstances, this may be referred to the Local Authority for advice.

4.2 Procedures for application

Applications for planned absence should always be made in advance on the correct form (Appended below). Forms can be obtained from the school reception. They should be returned to reception.

- The exceptional circumstances to explain why the holiday must be taken during term time should be clearly stated with exact dates.
- The Head teacher will decide whether the leave of absence can be authorised and will indicate the outcome on the completed form.
- Even where there are exceptional circumstances, no holidays requests will be granted during any period of external assessments, (usually the 2nd or 3rd week of May for Year 6 pupils, the 2nd or 3rd week of June for Year 1 pupils).

4.3 Consequences of taking an unauthorised holiday

Taking a holiday without authorisation will have an impact on a child's learning. Parents who choose to take an unauthorised holiday must accept that this will have an adverse effect on their child's educational achievement. The school may therefore ask the Local Authority to issue a fixed penalty fine where an unauthorised holiday has been taken.

Appendix 1. Planned Absence Request



MOUSEHOLE COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Request for Exceptional Leave of Absence from School

Please complete the following form and return to the Headteacher at least two weeks before the commencement of the proposed absence from school.

Pupil Name(s): Class:

I would like the Headteacher to consider authorising an absence from school from:

(start date).....To (finish date).....

Please give the exceptional reasons why you are applying for an absence for your child within term time (for guidance please see school attendance policy):

.....

.....

.....

Signed..... Date



Return Slip:

Dear Pupils Name

Requested dates ofto

Your application on this occasion has been Authorised / Unauthorised.

If unauthorised, my decision was reached having considered your noted exceptional reasons, together with your child's attainment levels and attendance at school. Please note that there has been a statutory change in the law regarding term time absences coming into effect in Sept 2013.

Yours child/children's attendance rate for this year (last year) figures at%

Signed: Headteacher..... Date.....

Notes on family holidays

Planning your holiday

We publish the dates of school terms well ahead. This is to help you plan your holidays. When you book your holiday, please check that it does not clash with the school term.

Applying for absence because of a family holiday

The Government recommends that family holidays are taken outside school terms. If you have to take your family holiday during school term, please fill in the form over the page. Please do not assume that you will automatically get permission for the absence because you have filled in the form.

Headteachers have the discretion to grant leave in term time, but they should only do so in exceptional circumstances. The Headteacher will consider the reasons for the holiday, the pupil's past attendance and the effects the absence will have on the pupil's learning. The Headteacher is unlikely to give permission simply because holidays cost less during term time.

Please wait to hear if the Headteacher agrees to your request. Parents can be fined for taking their child on holiday during term time without consent from the school.

The value of regular attendance

Your child must attend school regularly, especially to gain qualifications for their future employment. Research shows that pupils perform better if their parents or carers emphasise the importance of attending school.

Your legal responsibilities

You have a legal duty to make sure your child attends school regularly and punctually. The school and the Local Authority monitor your child's attendance and will take action if it is poor.

Warning

If you take your child out of school without permission you will be committing an offence under the Education Act 1996. We may refer the matter to the Education Welfare Service who may decide to prosecute. A conviction may result in a fine of up to £2,500, a prison sentence of up to three months or both. Alternatively, a penalty notice may be issued under Section 444A and 444B of the Education Act 1996. This carries a fine of £60 if paid within 21 days or £120 if paid after this but within 28 days. Failure to pay the penalty notice will result in Court action.