



White Hall
Academy

Attendance Policy

At White Hall Academy we believe that children can only learn effectively if they attend school regularly. It is important too, that children arrive and leave school on time. It is equally important that children should not be at school if they are unwell.

White Hall Academy is a happy school. Children learn best when they are happy and relaxed. All staff show concern and care about each child's welfare.

As attendance is crucial to effective learning and the continuity of learning experiences, we place great emphasis on this in our communication with parents.

Communication

Information on lateness, illness and absence is given to parents through letters, newsletters and the school website. This highlights the importance of being at school on time and notifying school if their child is absent for any reason.

At the pre-school induction meetings held each year for children about to enter the Foundation Stage the importance of regular attendance is discussed and explained. This talk also includes parents/carers and children arriving at school on time so that each child can be given the best possible start to each school day. Being collected on time at the end of the school day is also stressed, especially for young children who can be very upset if they are the only ones left.

Parents are asked to share any worries their child might have in school. Sometimes little things upset children, which mean they become unhappy and may not want to come to school. Parents need to be aware of this.

Again, at this initial, meeting parents are asked to try to arrange their family holidays within the school holidays, rather than in term time so that their child's education is not disrupted. Holiday requests will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances.

Authorised and unauthorised absences are explained to parents. All parents are asked to contact school if their child is absent. This can be done by way of a telephone call. A book is kept by the telephone to record any messages. This information is recorded under the headings: date, child, class, and reason for absence. Parents should subsequently send a letter to school when their child returns explaining the absence. Parents can also call into school to see the class teacher to explain an absence (these records are kept by the class teacher). All information is used to inform teachers when filling in their registers. If no notification is received about a child's absence, the parent/guardian is contacted by telephone.

Concerns

We have a "First Day of Absence" call system where unless parents/carers have contacted us, we will contact them on the first day of absence to ascertain why their child is not at school.

If a child is regularly late for school or is often absent, then the parent is sent a letter informing them of the schools concerns, and asking for the situation to improve. If this persists, the Heads of School will arrange a meeting with the parents to discuss their concerns.

The attendance registers are looked at regularly, patterns of absence worked out and the Educational Welfare Officer and Aquinas, the School Attendance Provision Agency, are informed of any concerns.

The Educational Welfare Officer meets with the Attendance Officer each week to discuss attendance issues and offers advice and support.

Truancy

All the staff at White Hall Academy are concerned about children's regular attendance, and the importance of continuity in each child's learning. They are also concerned about each child's safety, welfare and happiness. Although it is a very rare occurrence for a child to truant, if there is a concern that a child might be truanting, then action is taken straight away.

If truancy is suspected, the Headteacher is notified. Contact is made with the parent by phone and the Educational Welfare Officer is informed. Parents are encouraged to bring their child to school so that reasons for the child not wanting to attend can be discussed and hopefully resolved. In the event of not being able to talk to the parent then the Headteacher talks to the child concerned to find out if there are any worries or problems in school that might make that child not want to attend. If there are, then these are discussed with the class teacher and appropriate action is taken.

The staff at White Hall Academy are aware that there may be times where the parent offers a reason for absence which is not legitimate and should not be authorised. This parent assisted truancy will be challenged. In repeated cases the Educational Welfare Officer will be informed.

Holidays during term time

Taking a child out of school during term time could be detrimental to the child's educational progress. There is no entitlement to parents to take their child out of school during term time. However an application may be made to the school for leave of absence if a parent believes there are exceptional circumstances.

If the absence is not authorised and the holiday is taken, the case will be referred to the Educational Welfare Service who may issue a Penalty Notice, currently £120 (or £60 if paid within 21 days) to each parent for each child taken out of school.

Children Missing From School Roll

If a child is absent from school without any explanation for their absence for longer than five days the school will complete the Missing Pupil Checklist and notify the Education Welfare Service.

Review Cycle

This Policy is reviewed and, if necessary, updated in line with the schools Review Cycle.

Policy Draft Date:

September 2016

Policy Ratified by Governors Date:

Policy to be updated:

September 2018

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V.C. of gov
23/3/17