

# Greenfields Federation

The Governing Body of

Littlehaven Infant School and Northolmes Junior School



## Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Review Date: July 2019

Date to be ratified by FGB: 4.7.19

Next Review: July 2020 or earlier depending on government policy

### The Government expects:

The government expects schools and local authorities to:

- Promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence;
- Ensure every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled; and,
- act early to address patterns of absence.
- Parents to perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age who are registered at school attend regularly.
- All pupils to be punctual to their lessons.

To enable pupils to achieve all they are capable of, it is essential that they attend regularly and punctually.

All schools are expected to achieve an overall rate of at least 95% attendance. It is the responsibility of all school staff to be welcoming to pupils and their parents, creating an atmosphere where they both feel able to raise concerns and share any information that could affect the pupil's attendance. Due regard will be given to the fact that a register is a legal document and, taking this into account, registers will be marked regularly and conscientiously at the beginning of both the morning and afternoon sessions.

### Official school hours at our schools:

Littlehaven Infant School 8.50am – 3.10pm

Northolmes Junior School 8.50am – 3.30pm

Pupils are recorded as late when they do not arrive at school on time and on the close of registration. See Appendix A The local authority recommends that, unless there is prior agreement or good reason, should a pupil arrive more than half an hour late after the registration closes, this should be an unauthorised absence (U). It is important that all pupils arrive at school punctually. If a pupil is late, s/he should report to the school office to be marked in and ensure that in case of emergency the school has an accurate head count. It is most important that parents discuss any

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problem with either the class teacher or the Headteacher so that appropriate help can be offered.

If a pupil needs to leave school for a medical appointment during school hours s/he must be signed out, and in again on return, at the office. Parent/s/carer/s are asked to make every possible effort to make appointments out of school hours.

If a pupil is absent for the day, the school expects parent/s/carer/s to make contact between 8.30am and 9.15am, giving the reason for the absence and the expected day of return. If no word is received from the parent/s/carer/s the school will contact the parent/s/carer/s on that day. The school follows up absences where no reasons are given. If the reasons for these absences remain unspecified they will be classed as unauthorised.

It is the parents' legal responsibility to ensure their child's good school attendance and punctuality. If attendance or punctuality is persistently unsatisfactory, or falls below 90%, initially the school will liaise with the parent verbally and/or by letter.

If the situation does not improve i.e. the child's unauthorised absences build up, the school will consider a referral to the Pupil Entitlement Team. Should a pupil's attendance/punctuality still not improve, the parent/s/carer/s could be prosecuted under the 1996 Education Act. Alternatively an Education Supervision Order could be sought in the family proceedings court under the 1989 Children Act.

**Amendments to the 2006 regulations remove references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. The amendments make it clear that headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.** If the leave is granted, headteachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school.

Examples of exceptional circumstances would be:

- Funeral of an immediate relative
- Religious observation on a date that cannot be moved
- Compassionate leave
- Close family wedding
- Medical appointments which cannot be arranged outside the school day
- Music/Ballet Exam
- Educational visit to another school

A leave of absence form obtained from the school office must be completed when withdrawal from learning is being requested. Appendix A is an example.

**There is now no legal entitlement to holidays during term time and this should be avoided. It will automatically be classed as unauthorised absence and when there have been at least 10 sessions (2 sessions in each day) within a recorded 10 school week period, the headteacher may request that a fixed penalty notice or fine be issued by West Sussex County Council.** A guidance leaflet is available on the school website.

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Regardless if the absence is authorised or unauthorised, after ten days in which no contact can be made with the parents/carers, the school will make a referral to the Pupil Entitlement Team. If the school can make contact with the parent/s /carer/s, it will warn them, if possible, in writing, that it may need to consider taking the pupil off roll.

If taken off roll, parent/s/carer/s would need to reapply for a place through West Sussex County Council Admissions on their return and a place cannot be guaranteed at their current school.

Genuine illness will be authorised, although the school reserves the right to ask for medical clarification if a pupil's medical absences are above the amount expected for a usually healthy child. If it has been necessary for a pupil to have extended absence due to illness, the school will work with the pupil, parent/s/carer/s and any other involved agencies to instigate a re-integration programme for that pupil.

Good school attendance will be recognised; our schools use reward systems e.g. children with 100% attendance at the end of each term are awarded a special certificate in assembly and there is a weekly attendance trophy.

Littlehaven Infant School and Northolmes Junior School provides a broad, balanced curriculum, but for children to access the many opportunities that are provided, it is necessary for them to attend school regularly and punctually.

#### Appendix A

8.50 – 9.00 Noted as late in late book

9.00 – 9.20 Recorded as 'L' - late in the register

>9.20 Recorded as 'U' - unauthorised in the register

Parents are informed of their child being late when their child is in any of the categories above.

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## Attendance and Punctuality policy

### Littlehaven Infant School

Littlehaven Infant School and Northolmes Junior School  
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#### Request for Leave of Absence in Exceptional Circumstances

To: Mrs S. Anderson, Headteacher

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Dates: From \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ (inclusive) No. of school days: \_\_\_\_\_

Reasons for seeking absence during school time:

- Medical/dental/hospital appointment
- Appointment to visit another school
- Specific religious festival/day of observance
- Family bereavement
- Exceptional family circumstance
- Music/Dance exams/workshops

**Please tick box for reason and provide  
as much detail as possible below**

Reason in detail: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I understand that unauthorised absences of 10 sessions or more (5 school days) may incur a fixed penalty notice and that I have received a copy of "A Brief Guide to Fixed Penalty Notices".

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ (Parent/Guardian) Name in capitals: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Note:

- Absence from school for exceptional circumstances can **only** be authorised by the headteacher (or in their absence the deputy headteacher) (the headteacher will determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if leave is granted.)
- Absence not approved by the headteacher in writing and in advance may be recorded as 'unauthorised'.
- Absence cannot normally be authorised for holidays, minding the house, looking after brothers or sisters, illness of parents, absence of parents from home, shopping trips or family days out.
- Confirmation of approval or non-approval will be sent home via your child (copy of this form completed below)

#### REPLY FROM HEADTEACHER

Dear Parent,

- Your request for leave of absence for the above dates is duly authorised.
- Your request is not approved; therefore, if the pupil is absent as proposed above, it will be recorded as unauthorised for the reason detailed below, and may be subject to a fixed penalty notice.
- This absence **will** be referred for a fixed penalty notice as it is for 10 or more sessions (5+ school days)

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

S. Anderson, Headteacher

#### For school use only

Number of school days authorised: \_\_\_\_\_ unauthorised: \_\_\_\_\_ code: \_\_\_\_\_

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### Northolmes Junior School

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#### Request for Leave of Absence in Exceptional Circumstances

To: Mrs S. Anderson, Headteacher

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Dates: From \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ (inclusive) No. of school days: \_\_\_\_\_

Reasons for seeking absence during school time:

- Medical/dental/hospital appointment
- Appointment to visit another school
- Specific religious festival/day of observance
- Family bereavement
- Exceptional family circumstance
- Music/Dance exams/workshops

**Please tick box for reason and provide  
as much detail as possible below**

Reason in detail: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ (Parent/Guardian) Name in capitals: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
S. Anderson, Headteacher

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

#### For school use only

Number of school days authorised: \_\_\_\_\_ unauthorised: \_\_\_\_\_ code: \_\_\_\_\_