



Hartford Primary School

Attendance Policy

Updated: 5th December 2023
To be reviewed: 4th December 2024

Author: Headteacher

Signature of Headteacher:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L. G. ...', is written over a faint horizontal line.

HARTFORD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Attendance Policy

Rationale

Regular attendance at school is essential in order for children to receive their educational entitlement and to make the most of education. Children regularly arriving late have their education, and that of their peers, interrupted. We expect and encourage all our pupils to attend every day, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. Children with regular absence miss continuity of teaching and their progress can be significantly impaired.

Good attendance is important because:

- There is a direct link between under-achievement and poor attendance.

Regular attenders:

- Make better progress, both socially and academically
- Find learning more satisfying
- Find school routines and school work easier to cope with
- Have an easier transition to secondary school.

Rightly, parents hold the school to account for the quality of education provided. Likewise, the school will hold parents to account for supporting their child's learning by ensuring they come to school promptly each day and do not take time off unless there are legitimate reasons.

Under the *Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995* the governing body is responsible for making sure the school keeps an attendance register that records which pupils are present at the start of both the morning and the afternoon sessions of the school day. This register will also indicate whether an absence was authorised or unauthorised.

Aims

Through this policy we seek to:

- Maintain a whole school attendance rate of at least 95%. At Hartford Primary School will give ourselves a stretched target of 97%.
- Raise parents' and pupils' awareness of the importance of regular attendance
- Have procedures in place to address poor attendance.

Definitions

Authorised absence

An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or guardian

Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents do not have this authority.

Unauthorised absence

An absence is classified as unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent.

Punctuality / Lateness

- Children are expected to arrive in school punctually every day between 8.45 a.m. when both gates are opened and staffed and 9.00am. Once both gates have been locked at 9.00 am registers are taken
- Pupils will enter the school immediately and make their way to their classroom. Any children arriving after 9.00 a.m. after the gates have closed will be brought in to school through the main entrance and their parents / carers must sign their children in via the computerised signing in system
- The register will be taken by 9.10am. Children arriving after 9.00 a.m. but before 9.30 a.m. will be marked in as late with 'L' by the class teacher or the office staff. Children arriving after registers are closed at 9.30 a.m. will receive an unauthorised absence mark (U).

General Guidelines

Procedures for unplanned absence

- Parents should notify the school office on the first day of absence, in person or by phone
- As part of our safeguarding policy, when a child is absent unexpectedly at the start of the school day, the school office will endeavour to contact a parent or guardian before 10.00 am to discover the reason for the absence in order to check on the safety of the child. As soon as we realise a child's absence hasn't been reported by a parent/carer, we will endeavour to make contact as soon as possible after the start of the school day.
- Failure of staff to be able to contact a family may result in the school contacting colleagues working in Education Welfare or Social Care
- It is parents and carers responsibility to ensure that our records of current telephone numbers, addresses and email are up to date. An opportunity to do this is included in the Headteacher's weekly newsletter.

Requests for leave of absence

Parents and carers will complete a leave of absence form which is then handed to the Headteacher for processing and is dealt with in accordance with up to date statutory legislation and guidance.

Long-term absence

When children have an illness that means they will be away from school owing to serious medical conditions, the school will do all it can to send material home, providing the child is well enough, so that they can keep up with their school work. If the absence is likely to continue for an extended period, or be a repetitive absence, the school will contact the support services, so that arrangements can be made for the child to be given some tuition outside school. For example, if a child is being treated via a hospital environment.

Repeated absences

- The school will contact the parent or guardian of any child who has an unauthorised absence or repeated absences.

- Whole school and individual attendance will be reviewed at least at the end of every half term.
- If a child has 3 late marks in a half term a letter will be forwarded to the parents/carers with the expectation that an improvement is seen immediately.

If a child's attendance falls between 85% and 90% a letter will be issued advising the parents/carers of their child's attendance and explaining that school need to see an immediate improvement. The parents or guardians may be asked to visit the school and discuss the problem. If the situation does not improve, the school will then contact the EWO, who will contact the parents and visit the home and seek to ensure that the parents or guardians understand the seriousness of the situation. If the situation does not improve, the Educational Welfare Officer will be informed and a TAF (Team Around the Family) may be put in place.

If the attendance of any pupil falls below 85% this will result in an automatic referral to the Education Welfare Team. (This may not apply if school are aware of a serious medical condition.)

The Governors, supported by the LA, reserve the right to consider taking legal action against any parents or guardians who repeatedly fail to accept their responsibility for sending their children to school on a regular basis.

Attendance targets

We seek to maintain our attendance figures in line or above 95% at all times.

Registers

The completion of the register at the start of morning and afternoon school is the responsibility of the class teachers. The registers are opened in Arbor and must be completed between 9.00am and 9.10am in the morning and by 12.35pm for KS1 and 1.35pm for KS2 in an afternoon. They must be completed clearly and accurately. All absences must be accounted for, by word of mouth or letter, and the reason recorded with the appropriate code entered into the register. If there is no reason for an absence and the child is not sat in front of the class teacher at the time the register is taken, the space will be coded with an N. The codes can be found on the register screen. Any letters detailing absence should be retained in the class file.

By approximately 9.30am every day the office staff will check the Arbor database and look into all absences. Any absence codes that they are aware of will be inserted.

Unresolved absences

- Any unresolved absences will be noted in the absence log
- Firstly, the classroom and entry signing in system will be checked as well as the answerphone and admin emails
- Phone calls and texts will then be made to parents to ascertain why a child is not in school- the time of the call will be noted in the absence log book
- After 1 hour if the absence still exists the office staff will make contact with other relatives noted on the child's contact list and the time noted again in the absence log book
- If by midday there has been no explanation for an absence the office staff will refer the matter immediately to the headteacher, who, through knowledge of the family will decide if the absence can remain recorded as an N until the next morning where it will be chased again. School will take all appropriate measures to contact any child and their family prior to escalating the situation as a missing child to the EWO.

The office staff will run off weekly hard copies of attendance of each class, every Friday afternoon and file accordingly.

Leaving during the school day

All children leaving school during school hours must be signed out at the office by the adult responsible for them.

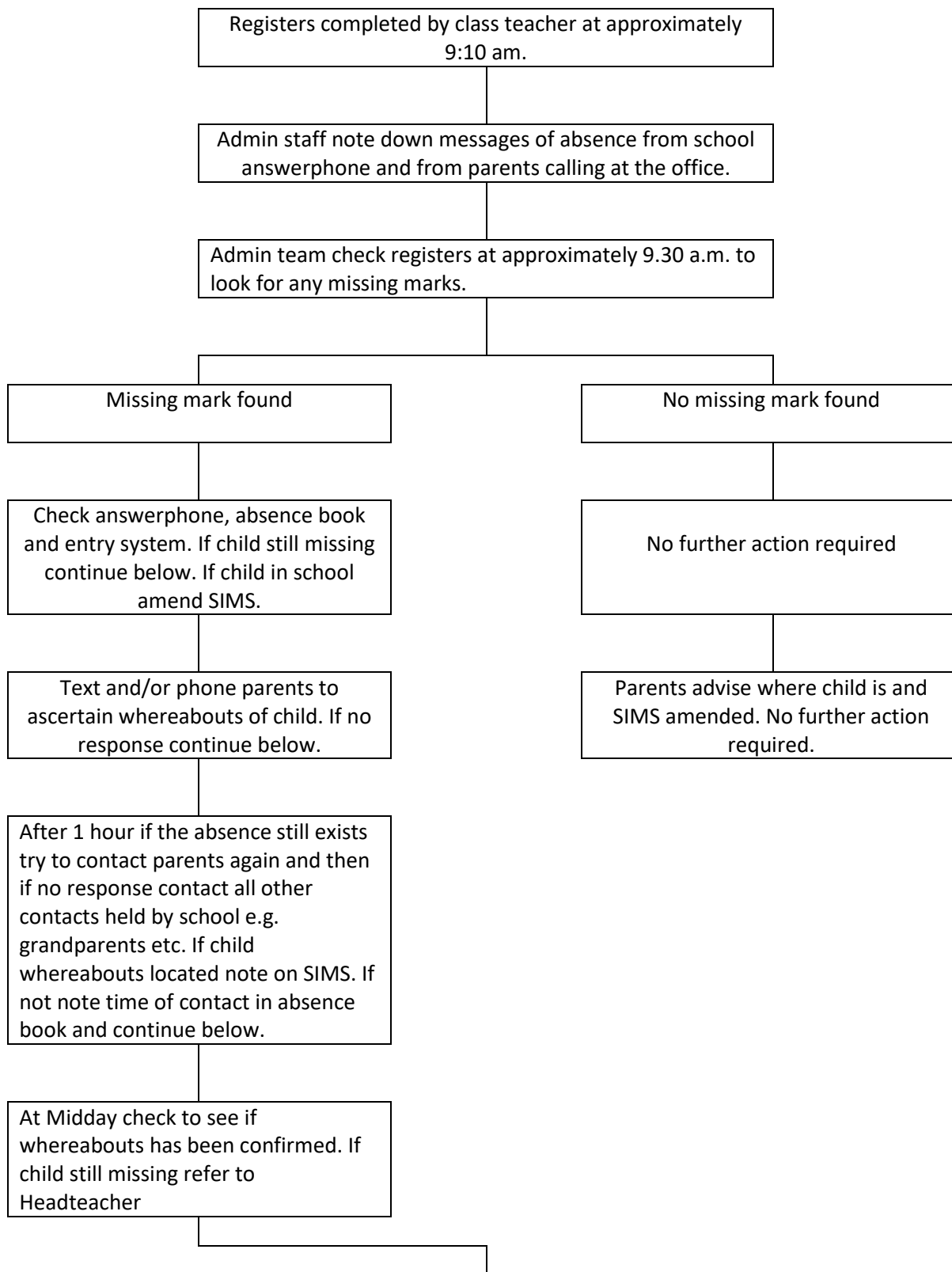
Equal Opportunities

- Children with specific medical needs, preventing good attendance at school, will have this taken into account if a request for exceptional additional leave is requested.
- Where children have exceptional additional needs they may need to arrive late regularly. The registration time may be adjusted at the discretion of the headteacher.

Monitoring and review

- It is the responsibility of the governors to review this policy and monitor absence procedures and overall attendance
- The Headteacher must report attendance and punctuality annually to Governors and also reports an update at each Full Governors Meeting in the Headteacher report, 6 times a year.
- The Governors must examine the information provided to them, and seek to ensure that the school's attendance figures are as high as they should be
- The school will keep accurate attendance records on file for a minimum period of three years
- The Educational Welfare Officer will review the attendance figures termly and provide a written report that will be shared with the Governors
- This policy will be reviewed by the governing body every three years, or earlier if considered necessary.

ATTENDANCE FLOW CHART



Headteacher to decide on next course of action - every effort made to contact family, to find whereabouts of child.
If Headteacher remains concerned EWO to be contacted