

Harestock Primary School

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Dear Parents

September 2017

Welcome to the start of a new school year, and for all our new parents, welcome to Harestock. We would like to take this opportunity to remind you about our expectations relating to attendance and punctuality at Harestock Primary school. We are also sending you a copy of the Hampshire County Council Code of Conduct document with which we comply.

We monitor our children's attendance and punctuality very closely at Harestock to ensure that all children receive the best start to their journey in education. Regular and punctual attendance has a huge benefit to the children and their learning.

Our Attendance Policy states:

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is a parent/carer's legal responsibility (Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act) and permitting absence from school that is not authorised by the school creates an offence in law.

Understanding types of absence – authorised and unauthorised

Pupils are expected to attend school every day for the entire duration of the academic year, unless there is an exceptional reason for the absence. There are two main categories of absences:

Authorised absence: is when the school has accepted the explanation offered as satisfactory justification for the absence, or given approval in advance for such an absence. If no explanation is received, absences cannot be authorised. The most common use of authorised absence is when a child is poorly and cannot come into school.

Unauthorised absence: is when the school has not received a reason for absence or has not approved a child's leave of absence from school after a parent's request.

Her Majesty's Inspectors define unauthorised absence as:

"Absence from school for any period as a result of a premeditated or spontaneous act by the pupil or parent or both. This includes parentally condoned absence." (Education Observed, No 13)
Parentally condoned absences include absences when:

- a parent gives in to a pupil who wants to stay at home
- a parent is ill
- a parent is using the pupil as a childminder
- a pupil is supporting other members of the family
- work patterns, for example shift work, make it difficult for the family to ensure the child attends school
- a parent wants company
- it is the pupil's birthday
- a parent does not care whether the pupil attends school



- a parent has taken the pupil shopping
- a parent cannot control the pupil
- a parent has taken the pupil to the hairdresser
- a pupil is in paid work
- a parent is using the pupil as an interpreter

As soon as the children arrive in school at 8.45am the days learning begins. Being even 5 minutes late can be unsettling for the child and disruptive for the rest of the class. It is vitally important that if you arrive after 8.50am you **DO NOT** take your child to the classroom. You will need to go to the office with your child, where they will be signed in to school. Please do not send your child to class, after 8.50am without first speaking to a member of staff at the office, as this could lead to the register being incorrectly marked.

Our Attendance Policy states:

The school day begins at 8.45am and all pupils are expected to be in school no later than 8.50am when the class registers will close. Any child arriving after 8.50am will be recorded as late and given the code L. Arrival after the close of school registration at 9.15am will be marked as unauthorised absence and coded U in line with Hampshire County Council and Department of Education guidance. This mark shows them to be on site, but is legally recorded as an absence.

Pupils who are consistently late are disrupting not only their own education but also that of the other pupils. Ongoing and repeated lateness after 9.15am is considered as unauthorised absence and may be subject to legal action.

Should your child's attendance fall below 95% in any month and we do not have adequate reasoning as to why, we will contact you offering a chance to meet us and for us to help with any issues that could be causing the absence. Similarly if your child is late twice or more in a month, we will contact you to ensure that there is anything school can be doing to help with punctuality for your child.

We like to celebrate our children's successes at Harestock and this includes attendance. Every month children who have 100% attendance are given an award sticker in the Golden Book assembly. At the end of each half term children who have achieved 100% attendance are entered into a draw to win a WHSmiths voucher and 100% certificates are sent home. At the end of the academic year, we enter all the children who have achieved 100% attendance for the whole year into another draw for a larger value WHSmiths voucher. Certificates are sent home at this time for Gold, Silver and Bronze attendance for the whole year.

We look forward to working with you all to ensure that your child has great attendance at Harestock and a successful learning journey.

Kind Regards

Mrs J Sankey
Head Teacher

Mrs J Clements
SENCo/Inclusion Team

Mrs C Bailey
Family Support/Inclusion Team

