Jubilee School

inspiring imaginations

ATTENDANCE POLICY

November 2020

Attendance Policy

Jubilee Primary School aims to create an environment which enables and encourages all members of the community to achieve their best.

For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly. Your child should be at school, on time, every day that the school is open, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

It is very important therefore that you make sure that your child attends regularly and on time and this policy sets out how together we will achieve this.

Why Regular Attendance is so Important

Learning
Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil's absence disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning of others in the same class.

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

Safeguarding
Your child may be at risk of harm if they do not attend school regularly. Safeguarding of our children is everyone's responsibility and within the context of this school, promoting the welfare and life opportunities for your child encompasses:

- Attendance
- Behaviour Management
- Health and Safety
- Access to the Curriculum
- Anti- bullying

As a school, we work in line with the government's Prevent agenda as well as their advice around preventing FGM. We monitor attendance closely with these issues in mind. Failing to attend this school on a regular basis will be considered as a safeguarding matter.

Promoting Regular Attendance
Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility - parents, pupils and all members of school staff.

To help us all to focus on this we will:

- Call all parents when children are absent to ensure we record reasons for absence Offer in school rewards such as Attendance Class of the Week and certificates for individual pupils with 100% attendance at the end of the year.
- Work alongside School Attendance Officers in an attempt to minimise absences
- Call Social Services if a child is absent and we cannot contact the family or emergency contact after repeated attempts

The Law Relating to attendance
Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that 'the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient full time education suitable to age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs/he/she may have either by regular attendance at school or otherwise'.

The Law relating to Safeguarding
Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 places a duty on local authorities and governing bodies to have regard to guidance issued by the secretary of state with regard to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and students under 18.

Understanding Types of Absence
Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parents), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required, preferably in writing.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This type of absence can lead to Hackney Education using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. This includes:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- truancy before or during the school day
- absences which have never been properly explained
- children who arrive at school too late to get a mark
- shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed.

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If your child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and usually make things worse.

Persistent Absenteeism (PA):

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 20% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parents' fullest support and co-operation to tackle this. We monitor all absence thoroughly. All PA cases are made known to the Hackney Education School Attendance Officer.

Absence Procedures:

If your child is absent because they are ill you must:

- Contact us as soon as possible on the first day of absence

If you child is absent because they have a medical appointment, you must:

- Inform the reception staff in advance so that it can be noted in the register

If your child is absent and we have not heard from you, we will:

- Telephone or text you on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you;
- Due to safeguarding protocol, we may choose to come to the child's home.

Telephone Numbers:

There are times when we need to contact parents about lots of things, including absence, so we need to have your contact numbers at all times. So help us to help you and your child by making sure we always have an up to date number – if we don't then something important may be missed. It is the parent's responsibility to ensure the school always hold 3 contact numbers.

The School Attendance Officer:

Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school may refer the child to the School Attendance Officer (SAO) from Hackney Education. He/she will also try to resolve the situation by agreement but, if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed and unauthorised absences persist, these Officers can use sanctions such as Penalty Notices or prosecutions in the Magistrates Court. Full details of the options open to enforce attendance at school are available from the school or Hackney Education.

Alternatively, parents or children may wish to contact the SAO themselves to ask for help or information. They are independent of the school and will give impartial advice. Their telephone number is available from the school office or by contacting Hackney Education.

Arrival at the school

(NB: Some of arrangements described below may be different in the time of COVID-19).
Children can arrive at school from 8:50am, from which time there is a school adult in the KS2 playground. However, only children in Years 5 and 6 can be left unattended after 8:50am. If they are, it is under the expectation that their parents have made it clear to them how to behave whilst waiting at school. We reserve the right to insist particular pupils are supervised by an adult from home until 9:00 if they are not responsibly behaved between 8:50 and 9:00. Children in Nursery, Reception, Year 1, Year 2, Year 3 and Year 4 must be attended by their parent/carer until they go into their classrooms at 9:00am.

Lateness

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If your child misses the start of the day they can miss work and do not spend time with their class teacher receiving vital information and news for the day. Late arriving pupils also disrupt lessons which can be embarrassing for the child and can also encourage absence.

How we manage lateness

(NB: Some of arrangements described below may be different in the time of COVID-19).
We ring a bell at 8:55 am to signal to children that they need to start lining up outside their classrooms.
At 9:00am class teachers open the doors to their classrooms so that children can come in.
A second bell is rung at 9:05 am and your child will receive a late mark if they are not in by that time.
At 9.30 am the registers will be closed. In accordance with the regulations, if your child arrives after that time they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site, but this will not count as a present mark and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence. We record the number of minutes absent on a regular basis and when the total of minutes late reaches a certain point then further action is taken. This may mean that you face the possibility of a Penalty Notice if the problem persists. If your child has a persistent late record you

may be asked to meet with the School Attendance Officer to resolve the problem, but you can approach us at any time if you are having problems getting your child to school on time.

Collecting children from school

(NB: Some of arrangements described below may be different in the time of COVID-19).
On most occasions, children will be collected by their parent or another known adult such as a childminder or close relative. Children should be collected punctually by this responsible adult. We strongly discourage pupils being collected by an older sibling from the school but travelling to and from school is ultimately the responsibility of the parents. A relative or older sibling of secondary school age may collect a child on a regular basis if the parent has given written permission to the school. We recognise that the parent or other known adult cannot always collect the child from school. In such instances, permission must be given by the parent first, if not in writing then through introduction to the class teacher and other responsible adults. We will not allow children to be collected by an adult when such permission has not been given.

Children at our school are collected at different times depending on whether or not they attend clubs. The details are given below.

1) If the child is not in a club then they should be collected at 3:30pm promptly. Children who have not been collected promptly will be taken to the reception area and their late collection will be kept on record. When children are persistently collected late, we may contact social care.
2) If the child is in a club that ends before 6pm, they should be collected at the specified time. If the child is not collected at that time then they will wait in the reception area and their late collection will be kept on record. When children are persistently collected late, we may contact social care.
3) If a child attends after school club, they should be collected by 5:45pm. Again, when a child is collected late then they wait in the reception area. In this case a charging policy applies. When children are persistently collected late, we will contact social care.

Holidays in Term Time

Taking holidays in term time will affect your child's schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents to help us by not taking children away in school time. Remember that any savings you think you may make by taking a holiday in school time are offset by the cost to your child's education. There is no automatic entitlement in law to time off in school time to go on holiday. We follow the guidance from the Department for Education and we do not grant permission for holidays during term time. Any holidays taken during term time will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and may attract sanctions such as a Penalty Notice.
The school pastoral team sets targets to improve attendance and your child has an important part to play in meeting these targets. We know that good attendance is the key to successful schooling and we believe our pupils can be amongst the best.
The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend.
We encourage parents to check the school's website to see details of the school term dates so they can organise their holidays around these.

Special Leave

In exceptional circumstances, children can be granted permission to take special leave from school. Permission is given at the discretion of the Head Teacher. Leave for bereavement of a close family member will always be considered. A request for special leave must be made in writing. You can collect a form from reception to make your request.