

# Hunsley Primary

## Absence During Term Time in Exceptional Circumstances Policy

**This policy is applicable to** Hunsley Primary

<p><b>Important:</b> This document can only be considered valid when viewed on the school website. If this document has been printed or saved to another location, you must check that the version number on your copy matches that of the document online.</p>	
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<p><b>Name of Responsible Committee/Individual:</b></p>	Hunsley Primary Local Governing Body
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<p><b>Target Audience:</b></p>	All Staff, Parents, Pupils

# Absence During Term Time in Exceptional Circumstances Policy

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## **1. Purpose and Scope**

The **purpose** of this policy is to outline the expectations and guidance relating to requests for absence during term time in exceptional circumstances.

## **2. Roles and Responsibilities**

### **School Leaders:**

- Must ensure that staff are aware of and have read the policy and understand the expectations regarding term time absence in exceptional circumstances.

### **Local Governing Body:**

- Must ensure that the school has a Policy and that it is regularly reviewed every two years
- Must ensure that the effectiveness of the policy is regularly monitored

### **Parents:**

- Should adhere to the expectations set down in the Home-School Agreement, Attendance, and Absence in Exceptional Circumstances Policies to avoid taking their child out of school during term time unless in circumstances deemed to be 'exceptional'

## **3. Equality and Diversity**

Hunsley Primary is committed to:

- Eliminating discrimination and promoting equality and diversity in its policies, procedures and guidelines.
- Delivering high quality teaching and services that meet the diverse needs of its pupil population and its workforce, ensuring that no individual or group is disadvantaged.

## **4. Vision, Values and Ethos**

### **Vision: Our Commitment**

Hunsley Primary is committed to being an innovative, stimulating, forward-thinking free school that makes the most of its freedoms to impact positively on pupils' lives in the community and provide opportunities for all its children to make outstanding progress. Hunsley Primary children are capable, confident and creative thinkers and motivated, resilient, problem-solving learners. In particular, the school is committed to developing pupils as mathematicians and scientists.

### **Values: Our Children**

At Hunsley Primary, we believe that every child is an individual, ready, able and eager to learn, and as such a member of the team. We are a fully inclusive school and we view every child as unique; we believe that all learning activities should be personalised and challenging to meet all pupils' needs and that every child should receive the care, guidance, nurture and robust support they need to

overcome disadvantage or barriers to learning. It is our prime aim that all children make their best progress in an enabling learning environment, in the presence of their peers and the security of positive relationships with those around them. Our highly-trained expert classroom practitioners, from teachers, TAs, volunteers to associate Trust staff, ensure that all children have the chance to work, discuss and learn with professionals who are passionate about education.

By ensuring our children become responsible for directing, sustaining and reviewing their own learning, taking responsibility for critiquing their own and each other's work and for setting ambitious challenges, we aim to embed an understanding of the importance of refining work to its best point so that children feel a sense of high achievement as a result of the feedback they receive.

By maximising the benefits of our close relationship with South Hunsley School and Sixth Form College and its subject specialists, we aim to secure a continuum of learning and a depth of conceptual understanding necessary for excellent progress in all curriculum areas, leading to the highest achievement at Key Stage 2, GCSE and A Level and, in due course, access to the most aspirational HE institutions, courses and professions for all children.

### **Ethos: Our Teaching and Learning Rationale**

#### **Engagement, Enjoyment, Discovery, Reflection, Achievement**

Our aim is to deliver teaching and learning which meets the needs of every single pupil in school, basing our planning on rigorous assessment and observation, mapping out challenging, supportive next steps. We plan our curriculum activities and our personalised teaching and learning approach to match the following rationale:

- Flexible, personalised timeframes for learning, based on excellent pupil-centred teaching – teachers highly conversant in the complexities and specialisms of their practice
- Real learning themes and deep-thinking investigations, which prepare our pupils for 21<sup>st</sup> Century living and engage them in learning with enjoyment and passion
- Inspirational and challenging learning activities, which have the principles of scientific enquiry and investigation ('working scientifically') at their core, generating a lifelong love of learning, enquiry and discovery and a systematic means of approaching challenging and new tasks
- A union of partnerships with cross-phase, multi-agency and multi-disciplinary expertise for planning, delivery, monitoring and review, to ensure each child has every opportunity to build successfully on their learning from 4 to 19, removing barriers to engagement and development
- Pupil resilience, independence, confidence and readiness to meet the rigours of education, through to university and beyond, and the demands of living and working in a rapidly-changing technological world
- Innovative, immersive and inclusive learning resources, combining the best of expert input, outdoor, hands-on, experiential learning and digital interfaces, to give pupils every opportunity to aspire to their full potential.

## 5. Policy Statement

This policy outlines the principles and values underpinning the expectations of Hunsley Primary for pupil attendance of school during term time and the process for responding to term-time absence requests at Hunsley Primary. The policy is a school policy derived from the East Riding of Yorkshire Local Authority Policy.

Schools are required to provide education for 190 days a year and it is expected that children who are registered at a school will attend for this time. Parents do not have an automatic right for their children to have time off school and any requests for absence are entirely at the Headteacher's discretion with regard to the policy.

Research shows that children do not achieve as well in their education and in public examinations the more school absence they have. A child absent from school for a period of two weeks each year, for exceptional circumstances and with the average absence for illness, will have missed the equivalent of one whole year's education over their school life.

### General Principles

The following general principles underpin this policy:

- (i) The principles of honesty, openness, transparency and the spirit of co-operation
- (ii) All schools within the East Riding who have adopted this policy agree to follow it through to penalty notice if appropriate. This will ensure that the policy is applied in a consistent manner and provides equity for all parents and schools.
- (iii) Support of this policy from the local authority will be as a partner in both the primary and secondary behaviour and attendance partnerships. The achievement and inclusion services of the Council will ensure other local authority departments are aware of and include the philosophy of this policy in their practice.
- (iv) Where a request for absence form is not submitted, absences cannot be authorised retrospectively; this is prescribed in law. In these circumstances the penalty notice code of conduct must be followed.
- (v) Data from each individual school in relation to requests for absence will be monitored by the local authority and shared with schools and the partnerships. This will allow the partnerships to assess the impact of this policy.
- (vi) The behaviour and attendance partnerships will review this policy annually or in line with any legislative changes.

In order for consideration to be given, requests for absence must be for exceptional circumstances only. The primary and secondary behaviour and attendance partnerships and the East Riding of Yorkshire Council agree to follow the law, in such that the provision for Headteachers to authorise absence for the purpose of a family holiday is no longer available. Exceptional circumstances could include:

1. Service personnel returning from a tour of duty abroad where it is evidenced the individual will not be in receipt of any leave in the near future that coincides with school holidays.
2. Where an absence from school is recommended by a health professional as part of a parent or child's rehabilitation from a medical or emotional issue.
3. The death or terminal illness of a person close to the family.
4. To attend a wedding or funeral of a person close to the family.

5. Where there are exceptional and unforeseen circumstances that fall outside of 1 to 4 above, the Headteacher agrees to consult with the principal education welfare officer prior to any authorisation being given to the parent.

Evidence would be required in each case.

**If a request meets the above exceptional circumstances but falls within the following times, the Headteacher must be convinced that absence from school is the only option:**

- 1) The first half term of any academic year (applies to all pupils).
- 2) Year six transition day (for pupils in year six).
- 3) Year six SATs week (for pupils in year six).
- 4) Year nine options time (for pupils in year nine).
- 5) At any time during years 10 & 11 (for all pupils in these year groups).
- 6) At any time specified by the school (this will be communicated to parents by each school).

Consistency across our large geographical area is vital for parental confidence. If a Headteacher has any doubts their thoughts can be discussed with the principal education welfare officer for advice and guidance prior to informing parents of their final decision. Headteachers would be well advised to keep a log of their decision making rationale. This will be useful should a parental or legal challenge arise.

### **Looked After Children**

This policy applies to all children, including those who are Looked After Children. The Headteacher will only approve an absence for a Looked After Child in accordance with Children, Family & Adult Services guidance. The only person who can request an absence for an East Riding Looked After Child is the area manager. Requests from foster carers and social workers should not be considered.