



### **Attendance**

Parents have a responsibility to ensure that their children receive full time education. Regular attendance is essential if children are to progress with their learning. The school day is divided into two registration sessions so, for example, one day of absence will be recorded as two sessions. Please click [HERE](#) for the Cambridgeshire County Council's information on school attendance.

The school day at Houghton Primary School is 8.50am – 3.15pm. Registration takes place twice a day, at 8.50am and 1.45pm. The register closes in the morning at 9am and in the afternoon at 1.50pm. Our registers and attendance records are checked termly by the Local Authority Educational Welfare Officer (EWO). The EWO monitors children and families whose attendance raises questions.

Regular attendance is vital to every child's education as well as their social and emotional wellbeing. Frequent absences can be upsetting for children who may find it difficult to catch up with school work and friendships. As a school we are proactive and follow up all absences. We also contact and work with families if attendance is a concern.

### **Notification of Absence**

We would expect parents/carers to inform the school by 8.50am by phone, email, or in person, if their child is unwell and unable to attend school. If we have no reason for the absence by 9.15am the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. We would also expect to be notified if your child has a medical appointment by 8.50am. Other planned absences should be notified to the school in advance via an [Application for Leave of Absence Form](#) (see below).

### **Punctuality**

Our school day is 8.50am – 3.15pm each day. The school gates open at 8.40am each morning and the children come in straight away to engage in learning activities. We call the register at 8.50am (closing it at 9.00am) each morning. For security, the playground gates are locked at 9.00am.

We believe that punctuality is an important social courtesy and regularly arriving late to school not only disrupts children's opportunities for learning but those of the children in their class. Children arriving after the register has closed will need to be registered at the school office using the code 'absence after the register has closed' which is classed as an unauthorised absence unless there is an authorised circumstance for late arrival.

Late arrivals are monitored by the school and Local Authority Education Welfare Officer. We will write to and meet with parents if there is concern.

### **Illness**

We ask parents/carers to contact the school office by 8.50am on the first day of absence and to keep in regular contact with us if their child's absence is more than one day. We will ask parents to confirm their child's absence in writing (either by email or letter).

We follow NHS guidance and request that children who have been sick or have had a tummy upset do not come to school for 48 hours after their symptoms have disappeared in order to reduce the risk of passing the illness to others. <http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/Yourchildatschool/Pages/Illness.aspx>

We administer medicines in school for children who have an agreed health plan (for example, a child who has severe allergic reactions, children who are on long term medication, etc). For all other medication, including over-counter medicines such as Calpol, parents must seek the permission of the Headteacher (forms available from the school office).

### **Dental/Medical Appointments**

All dental and medical appointments should be booked outside of school hours unless emergency treatment is required or if the appointment is with a clinic or hospital. We request proof of appointments during school hours.

## Leave of Absence

The school implements Cambridgeshire County Council's policy on Leave of Absence. The 2013 School Attendance Penalty Notice amendment means that Head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. This is to improve levels of school attendance across the County. Authorised absences include sickness, medical appointments and other approved activities. At Houghton Primary School we fully adhere to County Policy, which means that requests for leave of absence will only be approved in very exceptional circumstances. **We expect attendance to be 100%, unless there are exceptional or unavoidable reasons for absence, which would then be authorised.**

There are 190 statutory school days in one year and 175 days (weekends and school holidays) available to use for holiday. The fact that a holiday is cheaper in term time will not be considered to be an 'exceptional circumstance', nor will parents' working circumstances. No absences will be granted or authorised during SATs or other statutory assessment periods.

All requests should be made in writing to the headteacher using a [Request for Leave form](#) and will be considered on an individual basis but the most important factor is the effect an absence would have on a child's education. If leave is granted, the headteacher will specify how many days leave is being authorised.

If the headteacher does not agree to an absence in term time any absence during the period requested will be recorded as unauthorised and the family will be at risk of a Penalty Notice being issued. The Local Authority will issue requests for penalty notices for single event absences which have not been authorised if they are not considered exceptional or unavoidable. This means that absence due to holiday taken during term time will be subject to penalty notices even if it is the first time that a holiday has been taken.

If the headteacher believes that a leave has been taken without any formal request to school they reserve the right to challenge this by writing to parents and allowing 7 days for them to prove otherwise. Should parents not respond this will be recorded as unauthorised leave of absence.

If absence is unauthorised, a referral may be made to the Local Authority Education Welfare Officer (EWO) who may issue each parent with a Penalty Notice (fine) ranging from £60 to £120 for each parent for each child and could ultimately lead to prosecution resulting in a fine of £2,500 and a 3 month custodial sentence. For more information on Penalty Notices please see [Cambridgeshire County Council's website](#)

## Monitoring Attendance

The school monitors the attendance of all pupils. Monitoring includes lateness, absences on the same days of the week (e.g. Mondays, Fridays), the attendance of siblings and the number of sessions being missed.

With every lesson counting towards children's learning and progress, absence can soon build up:

Attendance during one school year	Number of sessions (half days)	Number of days absent	Weeks absent	Number of lessons missed (equivalent of 5 per day)
95%	18	9	2	45
90%	38	19	4	95
85%	58	29	6	145
80%	76	38	8	190
75%	96	48	10	240
70%	114	57	11.5	285
60%	134	67	13.5	335

We are proactive and contact parents where there is any concern relating to attendance. We will formally write to parents when attendance is dipping below 96% and there is concern. This includes concerns relating to the health of the child.

If a child's attendance overall is 90% or less they are deemed to have 'Persistent Absence' and a referral will be made to the Local Authority EWO who may issue a Penalty Notice or consider legal action.

The school requires your child to attend regularly and we aim to support you to achieve this. If you have any issues with your child's school attendance we would encourage you to discuss this with your child's teacher, school support member of staff or the Head Teacher who can offer support to ensure good school attendance preventing the need for any Local Authority intervention as outlined above.

### **Further Information**

Please click the links below for Cambridgeshire County Council's information on:

- [School Attendance](#)
- [Consequences of Non-Attendance](#)
- [Term Time Holidays](#)

