

Yorke Mead Primary School

Attendance Policy

March 2020



Our School Vision Statement

BRINGING LEARNING to LIFE

We are a school dedicated to creating an environment where children are able to grow into happy, well-rounded individuals with a love of learning through which they can achieve to the best of their abilities.

We want our pupils to enter the wider world as

- o Happy, positive individuals*
- o Responsible citizens who make a positive contribution*
- o Confident, resilient, healthy & life-long learners.*

DARE TO...

D - Determination

A - Ambition

R - Resilience

E – Enjoyment

T - Trust

O - Openness

At Yorke Mead Primary School, we want the whole school community – governors, staff, parents and pupils to be committed to high standards of attendance and punctuality.

Good attendance helps the children in this school community to maximise their learning. This policy will support us all to achieve high levels of attendance and punctuality.

Yorke Mead School aims to encourage excellent levels of attendance and punctuality to enable all pupils to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them.

We believe that good school attendance assists children and young people to achieve the following 5 outcomes:

- To be healthy
- To stay safe
- To enjoy and achieve
- To make a positive contribution
- To achieve economic well-being

Parents are responsible for making sure that their child attends school regularly and punctually.

Section 7 of Education Act 1996 states:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable—

(a) to his age, ability and aptitude, and

(b) to any special educational needs he may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise

Expectations

Staff at Yorke Mead School will:

- ensure that records of attendance are maintained according to Government legislation and guidance on a daily basis
- encourage good attendance and will investigate all unexplained and unjustified absence
- set a good example in matters of attendance and punctuality
- follow up all instances of poor attendance and punctuality
- keep parents informed of their child's attendance/punctuality record
- work closely with parents should attendance or punctuality give cause for concern

Parents are:

- legally responsible for ensuring their child's regular and punctual attendance
- expected to ensure that their child attends school regularly, punctually, properly dressed and equipped and in a fit condition to learn
- required to inform school on the first day of absence, of the reason for their child's absence from school
- advised not to arrange family holidays during term time
- required to maintain regular communication with school staff where necessary
- required to inform the school of any changes of contact details

Pupils are expected to:

- attend school and all of their lessons regularly and punctually
- remember to hand any note giving reasons for absence to the relevant person
- be ready to learn and to allow other children to learn
- not leave the school without permission from a member of staff

At Yorke Mead School doors open at 8:45 am. School finishes at 3:15 pm.

Breakfast Club opens at 7:45 am.

School doors open at 8:45 am. Pupils may enter the building at that time. School officially begins at 8.50 am. Children not in class by 8:55 am are considered to be late and will be marked as late.

Pupils should not arrive at school before 8:30 am.

Nursery runs from 9:00 am until 3 pm. Children have flexible hours in Nursery.

Registration

Morning registers are called at 8:50 am and closes at 8:55 am. In KS1 the afternoon register is called at 1:00 pm and closes at 1:05 pm. In KS2 the afternoon register is called at 1:15 pm and closes at 1:20 pm. Registers are marked consistently by staff.

When registers are called pupils are welcomed with “Good Morning.....” and should respond in the agreed formal manner – “Good Morning.....” In the morning children will also add “home packed lunch please/ hot dinner please” etc. depending upon their lunch choice.

Staff may choose to call the register in another language at times.

Punctuality

Punctuality is an essential life skill for children to develop. Parents play a key role in establishing the importance of this in their children.

When pupils arrive late parents are asked to sign a late book or complete a form and to give a reason for their lateness. The time a child arrives in school is recorded in the school attendance system. Each half term the parents of children who regularly arrive late are informed of how many minutes of learning their child has missed due to poor punctuality.

Registers will be marked in accordance with DfE guidance. See Absence and Attendance Codes January 2009, **Appendix A**

The importance of punctuality should also be remembered at the end of the day so that children are collected promptly at 3.15 pm. We appreciate that there will always be incidents that cause lateness, however where parents are consistently late collecting children they will be contacted regarding this and records kept.

Absences

If your child is unable to attend school please:

- Phone or email the school before 9:30 a.m. to explain why your child is absent.
- If your child is absent for one day you do not need to send a letter to the school if you reported the absence by phone or email
- For absence of more than one day please send a letter or email to the school office explaining the absence.

Designated school staff will decide whether to accept the reason given and to authorise the absence. It is the school and not the parent who authorise absence. An absence is authorised if the school is satisfied by the explanation offered. If a pupils' attendance has become a concern school may request parents offer any evidence they can offer to support the reason for the absence e.g. sight of a letter, text etc to confirm an appointment etc. This is intended to support the head teacher in deciding whether to authorise an attendance or not. Parents do not have to provide this if they do not wish to.

The school secretary will contact parents if we have received no explanation regarding the absence. A child who has been sick or had a bout of diarrhoea should be kept off school for a full 48 hours following the final episode.

Authorised Absence from school may include:

- *Illness*
- *Unavoidable medical/ dental appointments (these should be made, whenever possible, outside school hours)*
- *Days of religious observance*
- *Exceptional family circumstances such as bereavement, exceptional celebrations*
- *An approved public performance*
- *An approved activity e.g. a music exam*

Unauthorised Absence from school would include:

- *No explanation of an absence*
- *The school is not satisfied with the explanation*
- *An unexceptional special occasion e.g. a birthday*
- *Shopping*
- *Illness that could be managed in school such as minor cold etc*
- *Minor parent/ sibling illness*

Leaving and returning to School during School Day

If it is necessary for pupils to attend an appointment in the school day, parents should notify the school office at the start of the school day. Pupils should be collected and returned to the school office and parents must sign their children out of school and back in on their return.

Term Time Holidays

Recent changes to legislation make clear that head teachers may not grant any leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances. Head teachers no longer have the discretion to allow up to 10 days in a school year simply for a family holiday or to agree extended leave for parents to visit their country of origin.

If there are exceptional circumstances behind your request to take holiday in the term time parents should either write a letter explaining the reasons or make an appointment to discuss these with the Head teacher. Exceptional circumstances do not automatically mean this will be an authorised absence.

If your child is absent from school because of a holiday that has not been agreed this will be classified as an unauthorised absence.

Rewards

Yorke Mead School rewards good attendance in the following ways:

- Each week the class with the best collective attendance is awarded the attendance cup.
- Each term children who achieve 100% attendance are awarded a badge and certificate
- Children who achieve 100% attendance for the year are awarded a certificate and a special Yorke Mead attendance badge

A child may also receive a certificate if there has been a marked improvement in attendance.

What happens when Attendance at school become a cause for concern?

Attendance at Yorke Mead School is monitored on a weekly basis. Attendance is raised as a concern if it falls below 94% and is monitored closely.

Information regarding your child's attendance is given to all parents yearly along with the school reports. If a child has low attendance or poor punctuality this may be discussed with you at parent consultations.

The Head teacher may decide that some children should be identified for a first day phone call should they fail to turn up for school.

Parents of children who have attendance levels below 92% may receive a letter from the head teacher informing them of their child's low attendance. Parents may also be invited to a meeting with the head teacher to discuss their child's attendance. Attendance may also be closely monitored if there is a history of low school attendance over a period of time.

The Hertfordshire County Council Attendance Improvement Officer (AIO) visits the school. Any child who has attendance levels below 92% or persistent concerns around attendance may be discussed with the AIO who may decide to take further action to support some parents.

In the first instance the school works with individual parents to improve poor attendance. When attendance does not improve sufficiently, and after discussion with the AIO the school may make a referral to Children, Schools and Families for the AIO to work with the family on a formal basis.

Working with the Attendance Improvement Officer (AIO)

Yorke Mead School works in partnership with the allocated AIO to improve attendance for individual pupils and the whole school

Information to enable the AIO to carry out an effective consultation visit and/or home visit will be provided by the school secretary and the school will endeavour to ensure that any information which could assist the AIO to keep safe is given to them

Integrated Working

Yorke Mead Primary School works with other agencies and professionals to ensure that our pupils receive all the support available to achieve good attendance.

The school will demonstrate full commitment to integrated working by:

- using the Families First Assessment Framework
- sharing information
- encouraging staff to take on the role of Lead Professional
- working with other agencies and being part of 'teams around the family'.

APPENDIX A**NEW ATTENDANCE CODES, DESCRIPTIONS AND MEANINGS****January 2009**

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
D	Dual registration (i.e. present at another school or PRU)	Approved Education Activity
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Other unauthorised absence (not covered by other codes or descriptions)	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Day set aside exclusively for religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late and arrived after the registers closed	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience (not work based training)	Approved Education Activity
X	Untimetabled sessions for non-compulsory school age pupils	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Partial and forced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to all pupils	Not counted in possible attendances