WHOLE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY

Introduction
Panshanger Primary School is committed to providing a full and efficient education to all pupils and positively promotes the concept of equal opportunities for all.

A high level of school attendance is essential if a child is to gain maximum benefit from the learning opportunities offered and reach his or her full educational potential. The school will consistently work towards achieving the highest possible attendance for all children and every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

Statutory Framework
School attendance is subject to various Education laws and this school attendance policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by the Department for Children, Schools and Families.

Responsibilities
Regular and punctual attendance is the responsibility of the whole school community and everyone has a part to play in promoting the highest possible levels of attendance at Panshanger Primary School.

- **Pupils** are expected to arrive punctually and to attend school every day.

- **Parents** are responsible for ensuring that their child attends the school at which she / he is registered daily and on time (as set out in Section 199 of the 1993 Education Act), properly dressed and equipped and in a fit condition.

- **The school** is responsible for promoting and monitoring attendance. Each year the school will examine its attendance figures and set attendance/absence targets. These will reflect national and Hertfordshire attendance targets. (96.4% for 2010 – 2011)

Promoting Attendance
In order to promote the highest level of attendance, the school will:

- ✓ Provide a welcoming and stimulating environment where all pupils feel safe and valued;
- ✓ Plan a broad and balanced curriculum appropriate to children's differing needs;
- ✓ Provide a wide range of learning opportunities to promote each child's academic, social, emotional, moral, spiritual, cultural, and physical development;
- ✓ Help each child to gain a sense of achievement and to take a pride in that achievement by raising self-esteem and confidence;
- ✓ Encourage the development of self-discipline and mutual respect for all members of the school and the wider community and encourage a caring, thoughtful attitude towards others;
- ✓ Ensure that new parents and children are aware of the importance of regular and punctual attendance;
- ✓ Monitor attendance effectively and ensure that reasons for absences are recorded promptly and consistently.

Attendance will be celebrated at the end of each term with stickers and certificates for all children who achieve 100% attendance. Special certificates are awarded to those children who manage 100% for the whole year and this will be celebrated in reports and newsletters.

If all the children in a class achieve 100% attendance for a week, they will be rewarded with additional 'Golden Time'.

School Procedures
Any child who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity [attendance out of school]. A letter or telephone message from a parent does not, in itself, authorise an absence. Only the Headteacher or a member of staff acting on the Headteacher's behalf can authorise absence, having first determined if the explanation given is satisfactory. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence must be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised. The Local Authority will be notified of any pupil who is absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive days.

Lateness
Morning registration will take place at the start of school at 8.40 a.m. The registers will remain open for 30 minutes. Any pupil arriving after this time will be marked as having an unauthorised absence unless there is an acceptable explanation. In cases for example, where the absence at registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate authorised absence code will be entered.

Pupils arriving after the start of school but before the end of the registration period will be treated for statistical purposes, as present, but will be coded as late before registers close.

Absences
Parents are expected to contact the school office on the first day and every day of absence before 9.30 a.m. and to follow this up in writing on the child's return to school. Notes received from parents explaining absence should be kept for the remainder of the academic year. If there are attendance concerns about the pupil, that may require further investigation, then the notes may need to be retained for a longer period.

Frequent Absence
It is the responsibility of the class teacher to be aware of and bring attention to, any emerging attendance concerns. In cases where a pupil begins to develop a pattern of absences, the school will try to resolve the problem with the parent/s. If this is unsuccessful the school will refer to the School Nurse if the problem appears to be a medical one. In other cases the school will seek advice from the school's Attendance Improvement Officer.

Leave of Absence and Holidays in Term Time
Parents have a duty to ensure that children are in school every day, including the first and last weeks of every term, unless they are ill.   Holidays during term time are discouraged unless there are exceptional circumstances as absence can have a detrimental impact on a pupil's potential achievement. Requests for leave of absence without a clear explanation of the 'exceptional circumstances' will not be authorised. (Please note that because 'it's cheaper to go on holiday in term time' does not constitute an exceptional circumstance.) Where there are deemed to be 'exceptional circumstances' absence can only be authorised up to a maximum of 10 school days in any one academic year. However, no leave will be granted during April and May, when children are working towards SATs and other yearly assessments.