



# Attendance Policy

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|------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Committee Responsible              | Full Governing Body |
| Member of School Staff Responsible | Charlotte Hartley   |
| Review Frequency                   | Annually            |
| This Version Dated                 | Jan 2022            |
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## **Section 1:**

### **Rationale / Statement of Intent:**

For a child to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance is essential.

We are committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all our pupils/ students and endeavour to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome. Parents and pupils play a part in making our school so successful. Every child has a right to access the education to which he/she is entitled. Parents and teachers share the responsibility for supporting and promoting excellent school attendance and punctuality for all.

It is our duty to consistently strive to achieve a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

For our children to take full advantage of the educational opportunities offered it is vital that your child is at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. The routines children develop around attendance and punctuality at school are the same as the expectations of any future employer in the world of work. High attainment, confidence with peers and staff and future aspirations depend on good attendance.

### **Good attendance is important because:**

- Statistics show a direct link between under-achievement and absence below 95%
- Regular attenders make better progress, both socially and academically
- Regular attenders find school routines, school work and friendships easier to cope with
- Regular attenders find learning more satisfying
- Regular attenders are more successful in transferring between primary school, secondary school, and higher education, employment or training

## **Section 2:**

### **2.1 Promoting Good Attendance & Punctuality**

The foundation for good attendance is a strong partnership between the school, parents and the child. The Home/School agreement will contain details of how we will work with parents and our expectations of what parents will need to do to ensure their child achieves good attendance.

To help us all to focus on this we will:

- Provide information on all matters related to attendance
- Report to you on how your child is performing in school, what their attendance and punctuality rate is and how this relates to their attainments;

### **2.2 Roles and Responsibilities:**

## **Responsibilities of Classroom Staff:**

- Ensure that all students are registered accurately.
- Promote good attendance at all appropriate opportunities.
- Liaise with the headteacher on matters of attendance and punctuality.

## **Responsibilities of Students:**

- Attend every day unless they are ill or have an authorised absence.
- Arrive in school on time.
- Go to all their registrations and lessons on time.
- Take responsibility for registering at Reception if they are late or are leaving the school site during school hours.

## **Responsibilities of Parents and Carers:**

Ensuring your child's regular attendance and punctuality at school is a parent/carer's legal responsibility (section of the 1996 Education Act) and permitting absence from school that is not authorised by the school creates an offence in law.

Parents will:

- Inform the school on the first day of absence, before 8.45am.
- Complete a request for leave of absence form for exceptional circumstances only.
- Support the school with their child in aiming for 100% attendance each year with no lateness.
- Make sure that any absence is clearly accounted for by phone or email on the first and subsequent days of absence, or by letter if an email/phone is unavailable.
- Avoid taking their child out of school for non-urgent medical or dental appointments.

## Section 3:

### 3.1. Recording Attendance:

Legally the register must be marked twice daily. This is once at the start of the school day by the latest 8.55am (albeit the school day starts at 8.45am. The gates open at 8.40am and children should go straight to their classroom for the start of the first lesson) and again for the afternoon session at 1.00pm.

## Section 3:

### 3.2. Lateness /Punctuality

For further advice and guidance refer to: Hampshire guidance 'Promoting Pupil Attendance Recording Absence' available at: <http://documents.hants.gov.uk/childrens-services/HIAS/Promotingpupilattendanceandrecordingabsence-maindocument.pdf>

It is important to be on time at the start of the morning and afternoon school sessions to ensure that children do not miss learning time.

- The school day begins at 8:45am and all **pupils are expected to be in school at this time**. Morning registration is at 8.45 am and it closes at 8.55am.
- All lateness is recorded daily. This information will be required by the courts, should a prosecution for non-attendance or lateness be necessary.
- Arrival after the close of registration will be marked as unauthorised absence code 'U' in line with county and Department for Education (DfE) guidance.
- If a pupil is late due to a medical appointment, they will receive an authorised absence coded 'M'. Please be advised that where possible doctors and dentist appointments are to be made outside of school hours or during school holidays.

Pupils who are consistently late are disrupting not only their own education but also that of the other pupils. On-going and repeated lateness is considered as **unauthorised absence and will be subject to legal action** (see section 6 for further detail).

Parents, guardians or carers of pupils who have patterns of lateness will be contacted to discuss the importance of good time keeping and how this might be achieved. If lateness persists, parents, guardians or carers will be invited to attend the school and discuss the problem and support offered. If support is not appropriate or is declined and a child has 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence due to lateness recorded in any 10 week period the school or the Hampshire County Council will be required to issue parents with a penalty notice in accordance with Hampshire's Code of Conduct for issuing penalty notices for non-attendance (See section 6 of this policy for further detail).

### 3.3 What to do if my child is absent?

#### First Day Absence

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/educationandlearning/behaviour-attendance-parents>

A child not attending school is considered a **safeguarding** matter. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required.

If your child is absent you must:

- Contact us by completing the following form;  
[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfmCZaheurzv24zlt8GbyWzf\\_0EdGqmrq7GYVZ7akoBZcFAQ/viewform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfmCZaheurzv24zlt8GbyWzf_0EdGqmrq7GYVZ7akoBZcFAQ/viewform)  
as soon as possible on the first day of absence, ideally before 8.45 am explaining the reason for absence.

If your child is absent we will:

- Telephone, text or visit you on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you as we have a legal requirement to register children daily; *we have a duty to ensure your child's safety as well as their regular school attendance.*
- Invite you in to discuss the situation with the Headteacher if absences persist;
- As set down by the Department for Education, Penalty Notices can be issued for unauthorised absence. In Hampshire, Penalty Notices are issued when a pupil has had 10 or more half-day sessions (equivalent to five school days) of unauthorised absence, in the last 10 school week period.

#### Third Day Absence

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/550416/Children\\_Missing\\_Education\\_-\\_statutory\\_guidance.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/550416/Children_Missing_Education_-_statutory_guidance.pdf)

Please Note: If your child is not seen and contact has not been established with you or any of the named parent/carers after three days of absence the school is required to start a child missing in education procedures as set down by Hampshire County Council Guidance. We will make all reasonable enquiries to establish contact with parents and the child including making enquiries to known friends, wider family.

#### Continued or Ongoing Absence

If your child misses 10% (3 weeks/15 sessions ) or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason they are defined as **persistent absentees**. Where this absence is authorised the school will work with families to support them in how this can be improved.

Absence for whatever reason disadvantages a child by creating gaps in his or her learning. Research shows these gaps affect attainment when attendance falls below 95%. As such we monitor all absence thoroughly and all attendance data is shared with the Local Authority and the Department for Education. If your child has had absence and their attendance level is falling towards 90% we will contact you to see how we can work with you to so this can be improved.

Children at this school are dependent on their parents/carers, who are responsible for their level of attendance and punctuality. It is vital that children enjoy coming to school, and whilst being encouraged to attend well and on time, will not carry blame and be made to feel unhappy if their parents are not supportive or effective in these areas.

For national and local guidance refer to:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-attendance>

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/educationandlearning/behaviour-attendance-parents>

#### **Section 4:**

#### **Request for Leave of Absence:**

Amendments to school attendance regulations were updated and enforced from September 2013: **(Pupil registration) (England) regulations state that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.** It is important to note that Headteachers can determine the length of the authorised absence as well as whether absence is authorised at all. The fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional' are rare, significant, or unavoidable which means the event could not reasonably be scheduled at another time. **There are no rules on this** as circumstances vary from school to school and family to family. There is, however, no legal entitlement for time off in school time to go on holiday **and in the majority of cases holiday will not be authorised.** Parents/Carers wishing to apply for leave of absence need to fill in an application form (available from the reception or the school website) in advance and **before** making any travel arrangements. Term time leave is taken without prior permission from the school, the absence will **be unauthorised** and if the number of sessions absent hits the thresholds set down in Hampshire's Code of Conduct parent/carers will be issued with a fixed-penalty fine, or other legal action in accordance the code (see section 6 for detail).

**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 out during school time.**

## Section 5:

### Understanding types of absence – Authorised & Unauthorised:

Pupils are expected to attend school every day for the entire duration of the academic year, unless there is an **exceptional reason** for the absence. There are two main categories of absences:

- **Authorised Absence:** is when the school has accepted the explanation offered as satisfactory justification for the absence, or given approval in advance for such an absence. If no explanation is received, absences cannot be authorised.
- **Unauthorised Absence:** is when the school has not received a reason for absence or has not approved a child's leave absence from school after a parent's request. This includes:
  - parents giving their children permission to be off school unnecessarily such as for shopping, birthdays, to look after siblings
  - truancy before or during the school day
  - absences which have not been explained

A school can, if needed, change an authorised absence to an unauthorised absence and vice versa if new information is presented. Any changes will be communicated to parents/carers. An example of this would be where a parent states a child is unwell but on return to school there is evidence they have been on holiday.

## Section 6:

For national guidance refer to: '**Parental responsibility measures for behaviour and attendance**' which covers legal measures for non-attendance

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/parental-responsibility-measures-for-behaviour-and-attendance>

### **Penalty Notices for Non Attendance and other Legal Measures:**

In Education law, parents/carers are committing an offence if they fail to ensure the regular attendance of their child of compulsory school age at the school at which the child is registered, unless the absence has been authorised by the school.

### **Legal Measures for tackling persistent absence or lateness**

Hampshire Schools and Hampshire County Council will use the full range of legal measures to secure good attendance. Legal measures will only be considered through a referral to Hampshire's Attendance Legal Panels where:

- 1. The child or family do not require the support from any agency to improve the attendance**
- 2. The child has 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence and parents are complicit in the child's absence.**

The following legal measures are for pupils of compulsory school age who are registered at a school:

- Parenting contracts set at Education Planning Meetings
- Parenting orders
- Penalty notices
- Education Supervision Orders
- Prosecution

### **Legal Measures for absence taken when the headteacher has declined parent/carers request for leave of absence**

Where a pupil has unauthorised absence due to either:

1. non approval of a parent/carer's request for leave of absence or
2. a holiday that has been taken without permission and the unauthorised absence is for 10 or more sessions (5 days) in any 100 possible school sessions then a penalty notice for non-attendance will be issued

Where a child has **unauthorised absence** the school must enforce Hampshire's Code of Conduct for issuing Penalty Notices or follow its guidance on other Legal Measures for Non-Attendance. The Code of Conduct is a statutory document that ensures that powers for legal sanctions are applied consistently and fairly across all schools and their families within the authority. A copy is available from:

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/educationandlearning/behaviour-attendance-parents>

The code of conduct states that:

Schools or Hampshire Local Authority will issue a Penalty Notice for any unauthorised absence where the pupil has been:

- absent for 10 or more half-day sessions (five school days) of unauthorised absence during any 100 possible school sessions – these do not need to be consecutive
- persistently late (coded *U*) for up to 10 sessions (five days) after the register has closed
- persistently late before the close of the register (coded *L*), but the school has met with parents and has clearly communicated that they will categorise as unauthorised any further lateness (code *O*), and where the threshold of 10 sessions (five days) has been met unless the issuing of a Penalty Notice would conflict with other intervention strategies in place or other sanctions already being processed.

**If a child's unauthorised absence meets any of the above criteria and the family or child do not require any agency support to improve the attendance then a single Penalty Notice is issued for either:**

### **1. 10 sessions of unauthorised absence or lateness in any 10 week school period**

Parents and Carers will be warned of the likelihood of a penalty notice being issued for unauthorised absence either via a letter, through the leave of absence request form, or through the school's attendance policy and website. The penalty notice is a fine that is issued to each parent/carer who condoned (or was responsible for the child) during the period of unauthorised absence for which the fine has been issued. For each case of unauthorised absence the school or Hampshire County Council will decide whether a Penalty Notice is issued **to one or more parent/carers** for each child. **N.B** This could mean four penalty notices for a family with two siblings both with unauthorised absence for holiday i.e. one PN for each child to each parent.

Each penalty notice carries a fine of £60 if paid within 21 days of the penalty notice being posted. If the fine is not paid within 21 days the Penalty is automatically increased to £120 if paid within 28 days. If the fine remains unpaid the Hampshire County Council will consider prosecution for the non-attendance. Payment methods are detailed on the Penalty Notices themselves. Penalties are to be paid to Hampshire County Council and revenue resulting from payment of Penalties is used by the County Council to help cover the costs of issuing Penalty Notices and/or the cost of prosecuting recipients who do not pay.

For further information parents/carers can request a leaflet from their school and should visit Hampshire County Councils website at:

<http://www3.hants.gov.uk/education/hias/learning-behaviour-attendance/attendance-guidance-for-parents/possible-penalties.htm>

## **Section 7:**

Children are sometimes reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If a 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 may make things worse.

Contact your child's class teacher immediately and openly discuss your worries. Your child could

be avoiding school for a number of reasons – difficulties with school work, bullying, friendship problems or family difficulties. It is important that we identify the reason for your child's reluctance to attend school and work together to tackle the problem. In some cases you may find it helpful to discuss the circumstances of your child's difficulties with another professional.

### **What can I do to encourage my child to attend School?**

Make sure your child gets enough sleep and gets up in plenty of time each morning. Ensure that he/she leaves home in the correct clothes and properly equipped. Show your child, by your interest, that you value his / her education.

Your child will bring home a homework diary. Please ensure you look at it each day with your child and sign it ready for the next day.

Be interested in what your child is doing in school, chat to them about the things they have learnt, what friends they have made and even what they had for lunch!

For many parents, your child attending school may be your first experience of being separated from them. This can seem daunting at first for both of you but consistency and a caring supportive home and school life will make the transition a quick and easy experience for you both.

### **Leavers**

If your child is leaving our school (other than when transferring to the secondary school parents are asked to:

Give the Business Manager comprehensive information about their plans including any date of a move and your new address and telephone numbers, your child's new school and the start date when known. This should be submitted to our school in writing

If pupils leave and we do not have the above information, then your child is considered to be a 'Child Missing in Education'. This requires schools and Local Authorities to then carry out investigations to try and locate your child, which includes liaising with Children's Services, the Police and other agencies. By giving us the above information, these investigations can be avoided.

## **Absence through child participation in Public Performances, including theatre, film or TV work & Modelling.**

*The regulations related to children participating in public performances are separate to those around authorising leave of absence. Headteachers can authorise this absence.*

*For further advice and guidance on child employment and performance licenses visit Hantsweb at*

<http://www3.hants.gov.uk/childrens-services/childrenandyoungpeople/child-employment.htm>

National Advice - <https://www.gov.uk/child-performance-licence-england-scotland-wales>

Parents of a child performer can seek leave of absence from school for their child to take part in a performance. They must contact the Headteacher to discuss the nature and frequency of the work, whether the child has a valid performance licence and whether education will be provided by the employer during any future leave of absence. Any absence recorded as part of a child's participation in a public performance is recorded as C an authorised absence.

### **7.4. Absence through competing at regional, county or national level for Sport.**

Parents of able sportsmen and women can seek leave of absence from school for their child to take part in a regional, county, national and international events and competitions. It is however, down to the headteachers discretion whether to authorise this and they will wish to discuss with you the nature and frequency of the absence and how learning will continue if absence occurs. Permission for your child to leave early or arrive late to attend coaching and training sessions are also at the discretion of the Headteacher and are not likely to be approved if it is a regular event, unless the sports club or association are providing an education tutor as part of their coaching.

### **7.5 Gypsy Roma Traveller Showman and Showman families:**

Code T: Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence

A number of different groups are covered by the generic term Traveller – Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers.

This code should be used when Traveller families are known to be travelling for occupational purposes and have agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision. It should not be used for any other types of absence by these groups.

To help ensure continuity of education for Traveller children it is expected that the child should attend school elsewhere when their family is travelling and be dual registered at that school and the main school. Children from these groups whose families do not travel are expected to register at a school and attend as normal. They are subject to the same rules as other children in terms of the requirement to attend school regularly once registered at a school.

For more details see:

<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attach>

hment\_data/file/1039223/School\_attendance\_guidance\_for\_2021\_to\_2022\_academic\_year.pdf

<https://www.gov.uk/government/case-studies/gypsy-roma-and-traveller-pupils-supporting-access-to-education>

## **Coronavirus**

For laws and recording of attendance and absence in relation to coronavirus during the 2021/22 academic year, please see: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-attendance/addendum-recording-attendance-in-relation-to-coronavirus-covid-19-during-the-2021-to-2022-academic-year>

## **Record preservation**

School registers are legal documents. We will ensure compliance with attendance regulations by keeping attendance records for at least 3 years. Computer registers will be preserved as electronic back-ups or microfiche copies

## **Appendices**

### **The Law**

The Education Act 1996 Part 1, Section 7 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 needs he may have.

either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

For educational purposes the term parent is used to include those that have parental responsibility and/or those that have the day to day care of the child.

The legislation that appertains to children who are of compulsory school age and are registered at school is contained within this Act.

Part V1 Section 444 contains the details of when an offence is committed if a child fails to attend school.

## Guidance documents on attendance.

School attendance main guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-attendance>

Addendum recording attendance in relation to coronavirus during the 2021/ 22 academic year: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-attendance/addendum-recording-attendance-in-relation-to-coronavirus-covid-19-during-the-2021-to-2022-academic-year>

Improving school attendance: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-attendance/framework-for-securing-full-attendance-actions-for-schools-and-local-authorities>

Hampshire County Council Guidance is available on Hantsweb at <http://www3.hants.gov.uk/education/hias/learning-behaviour-attendance/attendance-guidance/attendance-guidance-for-schools.htm>

## Relevant legislation

45. The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
46. The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010
47. The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2011
48. The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
49. The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016 50.The Education Act 2002
51. The Education (School Day and School Year) (England) Regulations 1999
52. The Changing of School Session Times (England) (Revocation) Regulations 2011 53.The Education and Inspections Act 2006

## Other DfE guidance

54. Parental responsibility measures for school attendance and behaviour 55.Children missing education
- 56.Keeping children safe in education

| Codes | Description                       |
|-------|-----------------------------------|
| /     | Present AM                        |
| \     | Present PM                        |
| B     | Educated off site (not Dual reg.) |
| C     | Other authorised circumstances    |

|   |                                    |
|---|------------------------------------|
| D | Dual registration                  |
| E | Excluded                           |
| G | Family holiday (not agreed)        |
| H | Family holiday (agreed)            |
| I | Illness                            |
| J | Interview                          |
| L | Late (before registers closed)     |
| M | Medical/Dental appointments        |
| N | No reason yet provided for absence |
| O | Unauthorised absence               |
| P | Approved sporting activity         |
| R | Religious observance               |
| S | Study Leave                        |
| T | Traveller absence                  |
| U | Late (after registers closed)      |
| V | Educational visit or trip          |
| W | Work Experience                    |
| X | Non-compulsory school age absence  |
| - | All should attend/no mark recorded |