

Attendance and Punctuality Policy



Providing the roots to grow & the wings to fly.

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1. Aims

Our school aims to meet its obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence

We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly, and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

Henhurst Ridge Primary Academy recognises that regular attendance and punctuality is not just a legal requirement but a contributory factor in raising educational standards. Where the words regular and regularly are used in this policy, it refers to a minimum attendance of 96% or better.

Attendance	Description	Approx. days lost per year	Approx. weeks lost per year
98-100%	Excellent	0-4	Less than 1
96-98%	Good	5-9	1-2
95-96%	Satisfactory	10-13	2-3
90-95%	Unsatisfactory	14-18	3-4
Below 90%	Persistent Absence	More than 19 Equivalent to 38 sessions	More than 4

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [school attendance guidance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- [The Education Act 1996](#)
- [The Education Act 2002](#)
- [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2010](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2011](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2016](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the [school census](#), which explains the persistent absence threshold.

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

3. School procedures

3.1 Attendance register

By law, all schools (except those where all pupils are boarders) are required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on this register.

The attendance register will be taken at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

Every entry in the attendance register will be preserved for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Registration takes place at **8:50am promptly**. The register closes at 9am. Any pupil arriving after 9:00am will be classed as an unauthorised absence if a suitable explanation is not given as to why they were late. See Section 3.4 for more information on lateness and punctuality.

3.2 Unplanned absence

Parents must notify the school by phone call on the first day of an unplanned absence - for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health - by **8:30am** or as soon as practically possible (see also section 6). Parents can leave a message on the answer machine if the phone is unanswered. A reason must be given.

Absence due to illness will be authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask parents to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified of this in advance.

3.3 Medical or dental appointments

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; advance notice is required for authorising these absences.

Parents should provide a copy of the appointment letter to the school office prior to the absence so this can be attached to the pupil's records.

However, we encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

Applications for other types of absence in term time must also be made in advance. Information relating to whether the school can authorise such absences can be found in section 4.

3.4 Lateness and punctuality

Children who are in class by 8:50am will receive a present mark (/). Any child arriving in class between 8:50am and 9:00am will receive a late mark (L). All registers close at 9:00am as teaching and learning begins. Any child arriving after this time must have a valid reason and will be marked as (U). If parents fail to provide a valid

reason for absence, the arrival will be treated as an unauthorised absence (O). Children who are late disrupt their own education and that of others. Recurrent patterns of lateness or persistent lateness can be construed as non-attendance and may warrant the intervention by the Attendance and Welfare Team. Parents/cares have a legal responsibility to ensure that their child arrives on time for school and have a responsibility to their children to ensure they get the best start to a school day by at least being on time.

Being frequently late for school adds up to lost learning:

- Arriving 5 minutes late every day adds up to over 3 days lost learning each year
- Arriving 15 minutes late every day is the same as being absent for 2 weeks a year
- Arriving 30 minutes late every day is the same as being absent for 19 days a year.

19 days lost a year through being late = 90% attendance = Persistent Absence.

Some strategies to support improving punctuality:

Night time routines:



- *Encourage your child to pack their bag before going to bed
- *Getting to bed earlier
- *Setting a time for all devices and TV to be turned off to assist better sleep.

Morning routines:



- *Set the alarm to give plenty of time to get all morning routines completed without making them late for school
- *Having breakfast before leaving home so need to call into the shop on the way to school
- *Leave home 5 minutes before you need to
- *Meeting a friend to walk to school with
- *Coming to Breakfast Club.

3.5 Following up absence

The school will follow up any absences to ascertain the reason, ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary, identify whether the absence is approved or not and identify the correct attendance code to use.

First Day Contact: If a child is absent with no explanation from the parent/carer, the Attendance Officer (Mrs Dennis) will contact the parent by telephone/text message.

If parents/carers do not respond, other emergency contact will be contacted. If no contact can be made, a safe and well check may be considered via either two staff

members from school or the police. If children are known to be vulnerable,

other agencies working with the family will be contacted to alert them to the unreported absence.

3.6 Reporting to parents

Attendance will be reported to parents annually in the end of year written report.

4. Authorised and unauthorised absence

4.1 Granting approval for term-time absence

Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence to pupils during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the headteacher's discretion.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments - as explained in sections 3.2 and 3.3
- Religious observance - where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes - this covers Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a Traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision
- 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.
- 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.
- The death or terminal illness of a person close to the family.
- To attend a wedding or funeral of a person close to the family.
- Where there are exceptional and unforeseen circumstances that fall outside of the above, the Headteacher agrees to consult with the Local Governing Body.

In all cases, evidence will be requested.

A request for term time leave should be made using the request form to the Head teacher 14 days prior to the intended absence, if this is possible, and a decision will be made on individual circumstances. (The request form can be collected from the school office).

Failure to notify the Academy of a reason will result in the matter being passed on to the Education Welfare Team which may lead to a request for a Fixed Term Penalty Fine of £60.00 per parent/carer per child.

A child who is absent for more than 20 days consecutively without authorization can be removed from the school's roll.

REQUESTS FOR HOLIDAYS WITHIN TERM TIME WILL NOT BE AUTHORISED.

4.2 Legal sanctions

Schools can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a penalty notice, parents must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice ultimately rests with the headteacher, following the local authority's code of conduct for issuing penalty notices.

This may take into account:

- A number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year. Persistent means at least 20 sessions of unauthorised absence over a period of 12 school weeks, excluding holidays.
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason
- Persistent late arrival at school, i.e. after the register has closed. Persistent means at least 10 sessions of unauthorised late arrival over a period of 12 school weeks, excluding holidays. These late episodes do not need to be consecutive.

Other conditions:

There will be no limit on the times a Penalty Notice for unauthorised leave of absence can be used in an academic year.

In cases where there is more than one pupil in a family with unauthorised absences, Penalty Notices may be issued for more than one child.

Use of a Penalty Notice or formal warning of a Penalty Notice for unauthorised persistent absence/lateness will be restricted to one notice/warning per parent of a pupil per academic year.

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute the parent or withdraw the notice.

5. Strategies for promoting attendance

Children are reminded by their class teachers and the Senior Leadership Team, the importance of being at school everyday on time.

Class attendance is monitored and celebrated each week and term.

Any families struggling with attendance will be supported by the school to help them overcome this, through meetings with practical strategies and school rewards to encourage attendance and punctuality. Breakfast Club will be offered.

6. Attendance monitoring

The attendance officer monitors pupil absence on a weekly basis.

Parents are expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health (see section 3.2). Parents should call every day the child is ill.

If a pupil's absence goes above 5 days we will contact the parents to discuss the reasons for this.

If after contacting parents a pupil's absence continue to rise, we will consider involving an education welfare officer.

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee.

Pupil-level absence data is collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. We compare our attendance data to the national average, and share this with governors.

The school uses its MIS system, Arbor, to collect and track attendance data. It is used to track the attendance of individual pupils, identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern, and monitor and evaluate those children identified as being in need of intervention and support.

7. Roles and responsibilities

7.1 The Local Governing Body

The Local Governing Body is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

7.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the school, and for monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.

The headteacher also supports other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils and issues fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

7.3 The attendance officer

The attendance officer:

- Monitors attendance data at the school and individual pupil level
- Reports concerns about attendance to the headteacher
- Works with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Advises the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

7.4 Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office.

7.5 Office staff

Office staff are expected to take calls from parents about absence and record it on the school system.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years by the Attendance Officer. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

9. Links with other policies

This policy is linked to our Child Protection and Safeguarding policy and Missing Pupil policy.

Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made

H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend

y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

Appendix 2: How absence affects children.

Did you know..?

Children spend only 190 days out of 365 days in school.

Children who lose time from school do not do as well as they could.

There is never a good time to take children away from their lessons especially:

- When children have important tests to complete
- When they move from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2
- When they move from Primary to Secondary School

It is not true ...

- That they catch up. Research show that by missing lessons, pupil soon fall behind. Lessons they miss are not repeated at a later date.
- That you automatically have 5 days extra school holiday each year. Schools are quite within their rights to refuse to authorise applications
- That for younger children, lost schooling does not matter. It is just the opposite!

Every School Day Counts - Always

Check Academy holiday dates and discuss with your child's Class Teacher any holiday plans or visits which do not coincide with these dates.

Please, please, please put your child's education first

Parents/carers who take their children out of school during term time without the Headteacher's authorisation beyond an agreed date:

- Risk losing their child's place at the school
- Risk being taken to court or being given a Fixed Penalty Fine if their child's attendance is generally poor
- Risk their child's future
- Risk their child feeling left behind or left out

Stop and think what it will cost your child...