Attendance Policy

Statutory / Non Statutory

HOCKLIFFE LOWER SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE POLICY

ADOPTION AND AMENDMENTS TO ATTENDANCE POLICY

Section	**Governors' Meeting or Committee**
Whole Document	LGB July 2024
Whole Document	LGB June 2025 – no material changes noted.
Whole Document	LGB June 2026
	Next Review 2026 / 2027

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1. Aims

At Hockliffe Lower School, we know that good attendance is a precursor to good attainment and progress. Good attendance also positively impacts on social and play skills, it also enables us to monitor and support the emotional and mental wellbeing of our pupils and staff. We are committed to working alongside our community to:

- Promoting good attendance and punctuality
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school

2. Legal Framework

Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act states that parents/carers must ensure that children of compulsory school age receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude to any special educational needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. A child is of Compulsory School Age at the beginning of the term following their 5th birthday. A child ceases to be of compulsory school age on the last Friday in June of the school year, in which they reach the age of 16. Parents have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends school regularly. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a smaller number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence I advance from the school.

Since September 2013 there is no entitlement to parents/carers to take their child on a family holiday during term time, and to do so could result in the Local Authority issuing a fixed penalty notice. Schools are open 190 days per year, plus 5 for training days, the remaining days are weekends and school holidays.

3. Roles and responsibilities

The Local Governing Body

The Local Governing Body is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

The headteacher (Designated Senior Leader responsible for attendance – Attendance Champion)

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary
- Leading attendance across the school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement

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- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Aoife Greaves and can be contacted via 01525 210330.

The attendance officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Take calls and review emails from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated Attendance Champion
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The attendance officer is Mrs M Sharpe and can be contacted via 01525 210330.

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, this is completed online. Attendance is taken each morning by 9.05am and each afternoon by 1.05pm. Class teachers will work with the Attendance Champion to support pupils who have difficulties with attendance.

Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Call or email the school to report their child's absence before 8.45am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
- Book holidays and events outside of term time

Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day on time

4. Recording attendance

Attendance register

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, require schools to take an attendance register twice a day, once at the start of the morning session and then again during the afternoon session.

We will keep an attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register by 9.05am and 1.05pm each day. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity

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- 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

We will also record:

- For pupils of compulsory school age whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8.45 on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken 9.05am and will be kept open until 9.20am. Between 9.05am and 9.20am pupils will be marked late before the register closes. The register for the second session will be taken at 1.05pm and will be kept open until 1.15pm.

Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8.45am or as soon as practically possible by calling or emailing the school office (see also section 7).

Phone 01525 210330

Email office@hockliffelowerschool.co.uk

Leave a message on the system stating why the child is absent and the likely date of return

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt or there are concerns regarding persistent absence, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer 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/carers will be notified of this in advance.

Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

Complete the online form

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSffxI7W_tUgA24SMM_2T72RdCA_sn_ogJoTlNwSNyGJg3CADw/viewform

However, we encourage parents/carers 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.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

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- Before the register has closed (9.20am) will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed (9.20am onwards) will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

Following up unexplained absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call / text / email the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may make a home visit, call the police or inform social care (if involved with the family). School will continue to endeavor to make contact.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving CBC Schools Attendance Team and Access and Inclusion Team.
- A home visit may be undertaken should school not be able to speak to a parent or cared regarding unexplained absence

Reporting to parents/carers

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels via a termly email. Where absence is 10% or more of contact time.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as the death of a close relative, attendance at a funeral of a close relative, respite care for a Looked After Child or a housing crisis which prevents attendance. This is not an exhaustive list.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 3 weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSffxl7W_tUgA24SMM_2T72RdCA_sn_ogJoTlNwSNyGJg3CADw/viewform The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- 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

5.2 Legal sanctions

Fixed Penalty Notices: (FPN) (Anti-Social behaviour act 2003). Penalty notices are intended to prevent prosecution and court action. Only two penalty notices can be issues to the same parent/carer in respect of

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the same child within a three-year rolling programme and any second notice within that period is charged at the higher rate. Notice Penalty notices will be considered when:

- Intervention has failed to bring about improvement and further unauthorised absence has occurred following written warning to improve.
- A pupil absent from school for the purpose of a holiday in term time and the absence has not been authorised by the school.
- Parents/Carers allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without justification during the first 5 days of a fixed period or permanent exclusion.

As of September 2024, the Penalty Notice is a £80 fine, per parent/carer, per child and must be paid within 21 days of issue. The fine increases to £160 per parent/carer, per child if paid after 21 days but within 28 days of the date the Notice was issued. A second penalty notice issued to the same parent/carer in respect to the same child is charged at a flat rate of £160. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice may result in a prosecution under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

Once three years has elapsed since the first penalty notice was issued a further penalty notice can be issued, but in most cases this would be the most effective tool for changing what now may have become an entrenched pattern of behaviour. At this point a prosecution may be sought by the Local Authority.

Where a pupil has moved schools, an additional check should be made by the Local Authority/School to try and ascertain whether previous penalty notices have been issues in respect of the pupil.

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

> First day contact system in place
> Promoting good attendance through the newsletter
> Rewarding good attendance & celebrating through assemblies
> Ensuring all staff and parents know the impact poor attendance has on children
> Tracking attendance data rigorously
> Working closely with parents and pupils (e.g. mentoring and wellbeing support)

7. Attendance monitoring

Attendance is monitored on a regular basis by the Attendance Officer and Headteacher. Any pupils causing concern are discussed and appropriate steps taken to support improving attendance.

Monitoring attendance

The school will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern

Pupil-level absence data will be 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. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing board.

Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

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Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Send letters to parents
- Make phone calls to parents
- Involve the parents, class teacher and child (where appropriate) in discussions
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum yearly by Aoife Greaves, Headteacher. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

9. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy

Local Governing Body, Hockliffe Lower School

Adopted on 17th June 2026

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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
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
K	Education Provision	Attending education provision arranged by local authority
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
Q	Lack of arrangements	Unable to attend school because of a lack of access arrangements
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

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Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
C1	Authorised leave of absence	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance
C2	Authorised leave of absence	Leave of absence for compulsory school age pupils subject to a part-time timetable
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

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Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y1	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available
Y2	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel
Y3	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed
Y4	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	Unable to attend due to whole school being closed
Y5	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention
Y6	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	Absent in accordance with public health guidance or law
Y7	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	Unable to attend because of other unavoidable cause
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

Original Policy credited to The Key and reviewed, adapted and updated July 2024 by A Greaves in line with new guidance.

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Studybugs

A Simple Guide to the New Attendance Codes

What they are, when to use them, and their statistical meaning.

= Attending an approved educational activity (present for statistical purposes)
= Authorised absence
= Attendance not possible (doesn't affect attendance score)

K	Attending educational provision arranged by LA, other than at a school where they're a registered pupil. ***Note:*** *Schools must also record the nature of the provision, eg home tutoring or attending courses at college.*
C1	Absent with leave for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance.
C2	Absent with leave, of compulsory school age and temporary reduced timetable does not require them to attend.
J1	Absent with leave for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution.
Q	Unable to attend because of lack of access arrangements by LA to facilitate their attendance.
Y1	Unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of pupil's home and transport to and from school normally provided is not available.
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national, or international emergency.
Y3	Part of the school premises is unavoidably out of use and pupil cannot be accommodated in parts of the premises that remain in use.
Y4	Whole school closed when school was due to meet for a session, but session has been cancelled.
Y5	Unable to attend because pupil is subject to a sentence of detention.
Y6	Travel to or attendance at school would be contrary/prohibited by guidance/law relating to incidence or transmission of infection or disease.
Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause. ***Note:*** *Schools must also record the nature of the unavoidable cause.*

Notes

- The new codes come into effect on 19 August 2024.
- These codes have been introduced to improve consistency and accuracy of recording attendance.
- For codes K and Y7 you'll need to enter a note detailing the reason alongside the code, as the DfE has asked that this information be available on request.

Got a Question? We can help with all things attendance. Get in touch at **info@studybugs.com**

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