



HOPE VIEW SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCE POLICY

Introduction

Good attendance at school is essential for a pupil's education and establishes a positive working ethos early in life. 100% attendance is certainly possible, but in the event of your child being away from school it is essential that you, the parent or carer inform the school of the reasons for absence.

Under current government legislation, all absence figures, together with the reasons for absence have to be reported to the, Local Authority (LA), and the Department for Education (DfE).

Parents, guardians and carers must ensure that they are fully aware of the school's attendance policy as any absence will have a huge impact on your child's learning. Regular school attendance is essential and parents, guardians and carers, together with our school staff all have a part to play in ensuring full potential is achieved. Pupils are expected to attend school 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.
- **Unauthorised Absence:** is when the school has not received a reason for absence or has not approved a child's absence from school after a parent's request.
- Please be aware that when a parent or carer telephones the school with information that their child is unable to attend due to illness, or other circumstances, this may not be automatically authorised.
- Your child's current and previous school attendance will be taken into consideration and as a result the absence may not be authorised.
- Keeping your child off school with minor ailments such as a headache or slight cold is not acceptable. Repeated absences will require us to request that you obtain medical evidence from your doctor's surgery. This may be in the form of a date stamped compliment slip confirming your visit, or prescription or medicine bottle. Any of the above is to be shown to a member of the school office. (Please note: that the school is not asking any parent or carer to incur a charge for such information and will not be liable for the cost.)

There is a clear connection between regular attendance and achievement. As attendance deteriorates, so does performance, achievement, friendship circles and self-esteem.

The achievement and maintenance of high levels of attendance is the shared responsibility of parents, guardians or carers, the school and the Local Authority.

Aims of the policy

This policy aims to show our commitment to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance, including those laid out in the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024), through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including.

- Setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils
- Promoting good attendance and the benefits of good attendance
- 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 make sure pupils have the support in place to attend school

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

Objectives of the policy

- Create a clearly understood attendance procedure that is effectively communicated to and understood by parents/carers.
- Ensure pupils are in school for the maximum number of days.
- This Policy is designed to help all concerned adults to enable children to attend school regularly and thus be offered the most consistent access to learning as is possible.

School responsibilities

- To communicate clearly the attendance procedure and expectations of the school.
- Maintain appropriate attendance data.
- Have appropriate registration processes in place.
- To follow up absences and lateness if parents/carers have not communicated with the school: initially with a first-day absence telephone call.
- Inform parents/carers of what constitutes authorised and unauthorised absences.
- To have systematic and consistent daily records which chart absence and lateness.
- To report to the local authority on attendance on a termly basis.
- To consistently administer the attendance procedure.
- To ensure that registers are taken twice daily: at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions
- To promote good attendance.

Parent and carer responsibilities

- To have children ready for collection by the taxi by the required time as informed by the taxi company.
- To inform school on **every** day of any absence
- To request leave as far in advance as possible. Please note that requests for holidays during term time will not be authorised.
- To make applications for leave in writing, giving the reason for the request.
- To work with the school to improve lateness and attendance.
- To avoid medical and dental appointments during the school day.

If parents, guardians or carers are worried about their child's attendance at school they should:

- Talk to their child; it may be something simple that needs your help in resolving
- Talk to your child's class teacher or the SENCO in the first instance.

The process for monitoring attendance

The school office will log instances of absence and lateness and discuss daily with the Headteacher and Senior attendance champion.

Where issues persist the following will be initiated:

Stage 1: Where there are concerns about attendance and punctuality the school will make verbal contact with home.

Stage 2: If the concerns persist the school will write to the parents/carers.

Stage 3: If the concerns persist the school will arrange a meeting between the parent/carer and school representative. This may involve the school carrying out a home visit.

Stage 4: If the concerns persist the school will make a formal referral to the Local Authority Educational Welfare Service to deal with the on-going issues.

Should concerns persist the senior attendance champion will agree action (as above) and where necessary meet with the parents/carers. Please note that ultimately the Local Authority can take legal action.

Stage 5: The school will contact the Local Authority and initiate procedures to find alternative provision for the child.

Absences during term time

- Application for term-time leave of absence must be **made at least two weeks in advance in writing to the Headteacher** by the parent or carer with whom the child normally resides. **Holidays during term time will not be authorised under any circumstances.**
- Leave of absence will only be granted where the Headteacher considers it is due to 'exceptional circumstances'. Parent or carer will be informed within 7 school days as to whether the request has been authorised or unauthorised.
- There are approximately 185 school days in a year which your child is expected to

- attend. There are also approximately 71 days of school holidays. This is over 13
- school weeks. Please ensure that your holidays are taken during this period.

Lateness

Punctuality is an important life skill. It is also polite.

- Pupils must be ready on time for collection by the taxi each day. The taxi driver or escort is not required to knock on your door or wait for more than 3 minutes for your child to come out and get into the vehicle. If a pupil is not ready on time and the taxi has to leave, they will not return, the school are not responsible for collecting them so they will be marked as an unauthorised absence.
- Lateness will be monitored.
- If the arrival at school is after the registers have closed at 9am, the pupil will receive a 'L'. This equates to an absence although we are aware that the pupil is on the school premises in accordance with health and safety.
- 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 dentists 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. Lateness is considered to be an equally serious absence. Parents, guardians or carers of pupils who seem to be developing patterns of lateness will be reminded by letter of the importance of good time keeping. If lateness persists parents, guardians or carers will be invited to attend the school and discuss the problem with the SENCO.

Sickness

- Please notify the school on each day of the absence.
- We reserve the right to request a doctor's/consultant's letter regarding recurring and frequent illness.

Promoting good attendance

We celebrate good attendance throughout our School by

- Awarding 100% attendance at the end of each term.
- By awarding a shield at the end of the school year to the pupil with 100% attendance for the whole year.

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader (also known as the 'senior attendance champion) is responsible for:

- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis

- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance
- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff
- Liaising with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed
- Building close and productive relationships with parents to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Mr Andrew Welsh and can be contacted via 01227 738000

Implications of persistent non attendance

Each child who attends Hope View School is expected to do so on a daily basis. The school has a duty to meet the objectives of a pupil's Education and Health Care Plan. The school cannot fulfil this obligation if a pupil does not attend school regularly. If a pupil's attendance continues to be a cause for concern despite a variety of different strategies and measures being implemented the school will contact the Local Authority directly and initiate procedures for terminating the school placement.

In cases where a pupil is coming to the end of their time in statutory education and wish to remain at Hope View School for their Post 16 education, this will not be supported by the school if a pupil's attendance has been a cause for concern.

Penalty Notices

The headteacher (or someone authorised by them), local authority or the police can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age, by issuing a penalty notice.

If the school issues a penalty notice, it will check with the local authority before doing so and send it a copy of any penalty notice issued.

Before issuing a penalty notice, the school will consider the individual case, including:

- Whether the national threshold for considering a penalty notice has been met (10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks)
- Whether a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve attendance for that pupil
- Whether further support, a notice to improve or another legal intervention would be a more appropriate solution
- Whether any obligations that the school has under the Equality Act 2010 make issuing a penalty notice inappropriate

Each parent who is liable for the pupil's offence(s) can be issued with a penalty notice, but this will usually only be the parent/parents who allowed the absence.

The payment must be made directly to the local authority, regardless of who issues the notice. If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

If issued with a **first** penalty notice, the parent must pay £80 within 21 days, or £160 within 28 days.

If a **second** penalty notice is issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil, the parent must pay £160 if paid within 28 days.

A **third** penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of the issue of the first penalty notice. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time within those 3 years, alternative action will be taken instead.

A penalty notice may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification, during the first 5 days of a suspension or exclusion (where the school has notified the parents that the pupil must not be present in a public place on that day). These penalty notices are not included in the National Framework, not subject to the same considerations about support being provided, and do not count towards the limit as part of the escalation process.

In these cases, the parent must pay £60 within 21 days, or £120.

Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils, groups or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and
- Identify pupils whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence
- Conduct thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and full-year data to identify patterns and trends
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Develop targeted actions to address patterns of absence (of all severities) of individual pupils, groups or cohorts that it has identified via data analysis
- Provide targeted support to the pupils it has identified whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence, and their families (see section 8.4 below)
- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers and TAs, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families, and to the governing board and school leaders (including special educational needs co-ordinators designated safeguarding lead and pupil premium leads).

- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities and other partners where a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe, including keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate

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. Reducing persistent and severe absence is central to the school's strategy for improving attendance.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Consider potential safeguarding issues and, where suspected or present, address them in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable or at risk of persistent or severe absence, or who are persistently or severely absent, to:
 - Discuss attendance and engagement at school
 - Listen, and understand barriers to attendance
 - Explain the help that is available
 - Explain the potential consequences of, and sanctions for, persistent and severe absence
- Review any existing actions or interventions
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance, in conjunction with the local authority, where relevant
- Consider alternative support that could be put in place to remove any barriers to attendance and re-engage these pupils. In doing so, the school will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence

Taking a Pupil off the Register

The Headteacher will authorise the taking of a pupil's name off the register in accordance with the current Regulations.

Equality and Diversity

Hope View School is committed to equality of opportunity for all pupils and staff in which people treat each other with mutual respect, regardless of: age, disability, family responsibility, marital status, race, colour, ethnicity, nationality, religion or belief, gender, gender identity, transgender, sexual orientation, trade union activity or unrelated criminal convictions. We strive to educate, promote and celebrate the wider diversity of society within our school community.

Links with other policies:

Safeguarding Policy.

Examinations Policy

Teaching and Learning Policy

Policy review date: September 2025

Responsible Person: Mrs C Lorne - Proprietor