



Attendance Policy

Hunsley Primary

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1. Aims

Hunsley Primary is committed to ensuring all its pupils receive a full-time education which maximises opportunities and achievement for all. For pupils to gain the most from their time at Hunsley Primary, it is vital that they maintain excellent attendance and punctuality and we are committed to supporting pupils and their parents and carers in sustaining this throughout their time at school. In doing so, we will:

- Set high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils
- Ensure that all students access full-time education which meets their needs and allows them to reach their potential.
- Strive to provide a welcoming, caring and safe environment where each pupil can engage in all opportunities offered
- Promote good attendance and punctuality and discourage unjustified absence
- Act early to address patterns of absence
- Commit to building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school
- Continue to emphasise that it is everyone's responsibility to improve attendance and punctuality

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](#) (applies from 19 August 2024) 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:

- Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

It also refers to:

- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

This policy also complies with our trust's funding agreement and articles of association.

3. Expectations

3.1 What you can expect from our school

To continually improve attendance, our school will:

- Promote good attendance and punctuality and investigate any unexplained and/or unjustified absence
- Encourage pupils to attend school regularly through the provision of engaging learning opportunities that are appropriate to their needs
- Support pupils to secure good attendance and punctuality
- Work hard to build supportive relationships with pupils and their parents/carers
- Provide parents/carers with a clear statement of attendance on pupil's reports
- Work closely with parents/carers where pupil absence is a cause for concern
- Support pupils returning to school following prolonged absence
- Work closely with the LA Education Welfare Service and relevant external agencies
- Only remove a pupil from the school roll when they have legally left
- Inform the Governing Body of attendance levels as part of each KPI report
- Where required, provide information for the prosecution of parents/carers whose children do not attend school and who do not have a substantive reason

3.2 What we expect of our pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day on time

3.3 What we expect of our Parents/Carers

Where this policy refers to a parent/carer, it refers to the adult the school and/or local authority decides is most appropriate to work with, including:

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not
- All those who have parental responsibility for a child or young person
- Those who have day-to-day responsibility for the child (i.e. lives with and looks after them)

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time, dressed in the appropriate agreed uniform and ready to learn
- To ensure their child attends every day the school is open unless they are too ill to do so.
- To avoid keeping their child away from the school for any other reason than illness or authorised explanation.

To avoid arranging term time holidays

- Call the school to report their child's absence before 9am 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 children
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
- Work with the school where support to improve their child's attendance is being offered

4. Specific roles and responsibilities

4.1 Class teachers

All class teachers are responsible for:

- Building supportive relationships with pupils in their group
- Recording accurate details of attendance by 9.15am and 1.15pm.
- Marking pupils who arrive after 9am but before 9.15am as L (late) and add the number of minutes late.
- Passing information regarding absence to the office if this is in planners or parents/carers have passed information on at drop off.
- Speaking to every pupil and / or parent on returning to school to ensure they are supported and given the opportunity to catch up with missed work
- Arranging for work to be sent home if a child is likely to be absent for a known period of time
- Liaising with the school SENCO, parents and wider professionals to ensure support is in place for children with SEND who are being supported for attendance and punctuality
- Report any IT difficulties to IT systems managers via the relevant IT Team email

4.2 School Attendance Team (School Headteacher and Administrator)

The School Attendance Team is responsible for:

- Monitoring attendance levels of all pupils
- Meeting on a regular basis to discuss pupils with under 95% attendance, including reporting on persistent absence patterns and Student Pupil Premium attendance
- Sharing information with wider school staff as appropriate
- Liaising with parents or carers to identify any problems which may be affecting attendance and offer support if appropriate to parents or carers and pupils
- Informing parents or carers of legal responsibility for regular attendance and possible sanctions – via standardised letters where attendance has become a concern, penalty fines and prosecution
- Following up with the Local Authority EWO where a decision is made to take action against parents/careers for the non-attendance of a pupil
- Monitoring attendance and implementing appropriate procedures
- Providing attendance and punctuality data as part of the weekly Trust monitoring

The Headteacher and School Administrator (the Attendance Team) can be contacted via the school office on enquiries@hunsleyprimary.org.uk

4.3 School administrative staff

School administrative staff will:

- Ensure registers are being completed and inform School Leaders (where there are persistent concerns)
- Clear and enter absence notes, (ensuring correct codes are used) absence emails and phone calls re absence
- Update and maintain pupils' personal data/contact details
- Collate and process Absence in Term Time forms (e.g. holiday request forms)
- Conduct first day calling as appropriate
- Provide attendance data for the Local Authority EWO as required
- Provide data for weekly CSI monitoring or trust KPI monitoring
- Make necessary amendments to Arbor data
- Prepare referral documentation, complete reporting paperwork to the Local Authority and issue letters
- Provide data to class teachers as required
- Provide data for Local Governing Body reports
- Provide data for the LA and DfE returns
- Provide individual attendance reports
- Provide data to the Headteacher as required
- Report any IT difficulties to IT systems managers via the appropriate email address
- Provide tracking data for attendance and punctuality as required
- Add or remove pupils from the school's roll, ensuring that this is only done within the guidelines outlined within Working Together to Improve School Attendance (DfE)

4.4 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance at each school (Senior Attendance Champion)

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Monitoring attendance levels of all pupils, including analysis of attendance and patterns of absence amongst different groups.
- Making home visits and welfare checks as appropriate to meet with parents/carers.
- Overseeing the reporting of attendance concerns in CPOMS
- Having an oversight of data analysis
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data

- Building relationships with parents/carers to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention and/or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils, their parents/carers and appropriate wider professionals
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families
- Liaising with the Local Authority Education Welfare Service where persistent or significant concerns arise regarding a child's attendance at school.
- Attending child protection conferences/core group meetings under the direction of Social Services or deploying the DSL/DDSL to do so as a deputy.
- If a pupil's absence is supported by a hospital consultant or a specialist medical team, referral to Home Tuition Service will be led by the EWO.
- Taking part in truancy sweeps under direction of the police or SLT.

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Lucy Hudson, Headteacher and can be contacted via enquiries@hunsleyprimary.org.uk

The school attendance team is able to use a wide range of strategies to improve the attendance of all children, including but not limited to:

- Parenting Contracts
- Penalties
- Reintegration timetables
- Fast Track Procedures
- Prosecution
- Ensuring that those children identified by the school as being vulnerable are monitored closely to support high levels of attendance.

4.5 Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible overall 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
- Where necessary, issuing fixed-penalty notices

4.6 The local governing body

The local governing body is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the trust's policies and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring attendance figures for the school

- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the headteachers to account for the implementation of this policy

To support this, governors receive information about school attendance and absence rates at each local governing body meeting

5. Recording attendance

5.1 Attendance register

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

We will take our attendance register 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 2 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- 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 9am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 9am and will be kept open until 9.30am. The register for the second session will be taken at 1pm and will be kept open until 1.30pm.

5.2 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 9am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school 01482 330883 / enquiries@hunsleyprimary.org.uk

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

Where the absence is longer than 5 days or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the school will ask for 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 parent/carer will be notified of this in advance.

5.3 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 by telephoning or emailing **on 01482 330883 / enquiries@hunsleyprimary.org.uk**. Parents/carers should also provide the school with a copy of the appointment confirmation.

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 6 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

5.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code (L)
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code (U)

We define (L) as pupils who arrive after 9am/1pm but before 9.30am/1.30pm.

We define (U) as pupils who arrive after 9.30am/1.30pm.

5.5 Following up unexplained absence

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

- Call and email the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If we cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, we may contact police and other relevant local authority agencies
- 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 an education welfare officer

5.6 Reporting to parents/carers

The school will regularly inform parents/carers about their child's attendance and absence levels. This will be done twice a year unless a child's attendance is causing concern and the school will contact a parent by letter in order to make them aware of the attendance level and offer support to improve attendance.

6. Authorised and unauthorised absence

6.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to pupils 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.

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 two weeks before the absence. An 'Exceptional Absence Request Form' should be completed which is accessible via the school office or website. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Physical or mental illness and medical/dental appointments (see sections 5.2 and 5.3 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/carers belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents'/carers' 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

Exceptional circumstances could include:

- 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 1 to 4 above, the headteacher agrees to consult with the principal education welfare officer prior to any authorisation being given to the parent. The principal education welfare officer will discuss each case with an independent Headteacher and will make a recommendation to the referring school.

Please note: Evidence would be required in each case.

If a request meets the above exceptional circumstances but falls within the following times, the headteacher must be convinced that absence from school is the only option:

1. The first half-term of any academic year (applies to all pupils)
2. Year six transition day (for pupils in year six)
3. Year six SATs week (for pupils in year six)
4. Year nine options time (for pupils in year nine)
5. At any time during years 10 and 11 (for all pupils in these year groups)
6. At any time specified by the school (this will be communicated to parents by each school).

6.2 Legal action to enforce school attendance

Local authorities and schools can fine parents/carers for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent/carer must pay the local authority £80 within 21 days or £160 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority. If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

In line with statutory guidance ([working together to improve school attendance](#)) headteachers will decide whether it is appropriate to issue a penalty notice for any student where their attendance meets the national threshold for issuing a penalty notice

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- 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

As stated at the start of this policy, The Education Alliance Board of Trustees is committed to building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school. With this in mind, they have agreed that headteachers will not issue penalty notices where they are of the view that:

- The parent/carer is working proactively with the school to improve their child's attendance
- Issuing a fine would be counterproductive.

7. Strategies for promoting attendance

To support high levels of attendance, the school will continually monitor and act to improve attendance. Attendance data will be analysed weekly by the school administration team (Louise Hitchin), and Lucy Hudson (Head). Where action is required this will follow a staged approach as outlined below.

Stage 0 - refers to the approaches taken to promote high attendance for all pupils across school. This involves continued monitoring of attendance to identify and intervene with attendance concerns early. Parents / carers of all pupils who are absent without reason, will be contacted on the first day of absence. Spotlight on Attendance - where a pupil's attendance falls below 95% parents/guardians will be sent a Spotlight on Attendance letter.

Stage 1 – where a pupil's attendance continues to fall following Spotlight on Attendance letter, parents/ carers will receive a Stage 1 letter to notify of monitoring and to support an improvement in attendance.

Stage 2 - parents/guardians will be sent a Stage 2 letter where a pupil's attendance falls below 92%, inviting them to a meeting with the Headteacher or appropriate school senior leader. This meeting will be to discuss ways to support sustained improved attendance for the pupil. An Attendance Action Plan will be put in place with targets for improvement.

Stage 3 – where a pupil's attendance does not improve and continues to fall and the targets set in the Attendance Action Plan have not been attained, a Stage 3 letter will be sent out. This will invite parents/guardians to an Attendance Panel Meeting with the Headteacher or appropriate senior member of school staff and the Local Authority Education Welfare Office (EWO) to review the action plan and ascertain next steps under the guidance of the Local Authority.

8. Attendance monitoring

8.1 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 local governing body

8.2 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

8.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

8.4 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
- Hold regular meetings with the parents/carers of pupils who the school 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

9. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum yearly by the Headteacher/Senior Leader with responsibility for attendance. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full local governing body

10. Links with other school policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding policy
- Behaviour, Sanctions and Rewards Policy

- SEND Policy

Appendix 1: Key School Contacts

Name	Role	Email
Lucy Hudson	Headteacher Senior Attendance Champion	lucy.hudson@hunsleyprimary.org.uk
Julie Boyes	Assistant Head – Wellbeing and Behaviour, SENCo and DSL	julie.boyes@hunsleyprimary.org.uk
Louise Hitchin	School Administrator	enquiries@hunsleyprimary.org.uk

Appendix 2: 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
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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