

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

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1. Introduction

Regular attendance at school correlates closely to raising achievements, thus underlying the importance of improving attendance rates. All staff should be committed to the successful implementation of the whole school policy. At Hampstead Hill School we expect pupils to attend school regularly and to arrive on time. Parents/Carers are expected to let the school know by letter or e-mail if there is any problem which may prevent their child from attending school.

Staff are aware that children being repeatedly absent from school and/or for prolonged periods, as well as children missing education, can act as a warning sign of potential safeguarding issues.

2. Legislation and Guidance

This policy is based on advice from the [Department for Education School Attendance Guidance](#) and is further informed by:

[Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)

[Children Missing Education](#)

[The Education Act, 2002](#)

[The Education \(Pupil Registration\) England Regulations 2006](#)

3. Aims

We are committed to meeting our 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.

4. Role and Responsibilities

3.1 Responsibility of the Headteacher

- Oversee implementation of attendance policies and procedures.
- Ensure the collection of accurate statistical data.
- Develop efficient monitoring and evaluation systems.
- Promote good attendance & punctuality in assembly. Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils.

3.2 Responsibility of the Teachers

- Ensure accurate register keeping, using only those codes agreed by the DfES.
- Communicate with the Headteacher regarding individual pupils' attendance.
- Positively promote good attendance and punctuality within the classroom.
- Make positive links with Parents/Carers.

- Use the school standard letters regarding absence and punctuality.
- Communicate with the DSL if concerns are identified for children of any age.

3.3 Responsibility of the Senior Management

- Our Data Manager is responsible for setting up registers at the beginning of the school year.
- Sending out standard letters on unauthorised absence.
- Receiving telephone communications from Parents/Carers, recording information and arranging how that is communicated to relevant staff and to the Headteacher for consideration or authorisation where applicable.
- Making teachers aware of absence, lateness.

3.4 Responsibility of the Attendance Officer

- Produce half-termly reports to monitor the school's attendance.
- Identify trends with school-age children's absences.
- Communicate with the DSL if concerns are identified for school-age children.
- Advising and helping Parents and Carers to ensure their children attend school regularly.
- Working closely with Parents, Carers and students to improve attendance. Monitors attendance data across the school and at an 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.

5. Registration Procedures

Accurate registration is central to maintaining the school's attendance and punctuality policy. Staff must complete registers in accordance with the instructions inside each class register [see Appendix A].

The Upper School registers are checked daily by the Upper School Administrator. Our registration closes at 09:00 and any unauthorised absence will be followed up with an immediate phone call to the children's Parents or Carers. The afternoon registers will be completed before 13:45 – they are once again checked by the Upper School Administrator.

The Lower School registers are checked by the Lower School Administrator. Children have different start times in Lower School and register codes are used to track reasons for absence. Where no reason is given for an absence, class teachers follow this up with a call to Parents or Carers. In cases where class teachers are unable to make contact, the Head of Lower School will ring on behalf of them.

6. Good Practice

In the Lower School pupils can attend the school all year round and a more flexible approach is taken to their arrival and departure times since they are not covered by the legislation pertaining to primary schools.

For Reception and the Upper School only the Headteacher can authorise an absence. A written note or telephone call by a Parent/Carer does not, in itself, oblige the school to authorise absence if the Headteacher does not accept the explanation offered as a valid reason for absence. The decision lies with the Headteacher. All reasons for absence must be recorded in the register and notes filed. There

must be consistency throughout the school in what is authorised. Agreement should be reached on what explanations for absence are authorised, particularly the 'other circumstances' category and family holidays. In the absence of the Headteacher, the Head of Lower School or Heads of Years can authorise absence.

The school actively discourages late arrival. Keeping the register open all morning or afternoon is unacceptable. Where pupils miss registration altogether and fail to provide an adequate explanation, they should be marked as unauthorised absent for that session, even though they may arrive later, 'late after registers close'. Pupils will be recorded as late in the register.

7. Monitoring Low Attendance

There are a range of standard letters to send out to Parents/Carers in the event of continued absence or lateness [see Appendices B, C, D & E].

Teachers will check registers weekly and send late letters to Parents/Carers of children with more than 3-recorded lates over a period of 10 days. This letter can be found in Appendix B. If a third letter is sent home, the Headteacher and Head of Year is informed, and a meeting arranged with the Parents.

The letter found in Appendix C will be sent to Parents/Carers if their child is absent and the school was not notified of the reason.

Termly Attendance Reports monitor the children's attendance – at the end of each term, the Attendance Officer generates a report of attendance percentages. The Head of Year will send the letter found in Appendix D to Parents/Carers for children whose attendance is less than 90%.

If the children's attendance does not improve after the initial letter is received, then the Attendance Officer will arrange a meeting between the Headteacher and the Parents/Carers and inform the Pastoral Lead – this will be recorded on CPOMS. The Headteacher will send the letter found in Appendix E to the Parents/Carers which invites them into School for a meeting to discuss the next steps to improve the child's attendance.

8. Illness, Medical and Dental Appointments

No offence is committed where a pupil of compulsory school age is prevented from attending school by reason of illness. Teachers should be alert to emerging patterns of authorised absence through illness and consult with the Headteacher if this seems excessive.

Absences will be recorded as authorised where it is not possible for a pupil to attend School due to illness – both physical and mental health related. There is no need to routinely ask for medical evidence to support recording an authorised absence for mental health reasons.

Part-time timetables can be used to meet children's individual needs but should maximise face-to-face School time as much as possible. In agreeing to a part-time timetable, the School and parents/carers have agreed to the child being absent from school for part of the week or day, and therefore must treat absence as "absence with leave" – a type of authorised absence.

9. Extended Holidays & Overseas Visits

Parents who wish their child to be away from school must apply in writing to the Headteacher. The Headteacher needs to be satisfied that the visit constitutes 'exceptional circumstances'. All children on 'holiday leave' will be asked to complete a workbook during their time away. If the child fails to return to school on the agreed date, the continued absence will be unauthorised.


The Headteacher will inform Parents/Carers that more than 4 weeks unauthorised absence may result in the Headteacher removing the child's name from the school's admission list.

10. Monitoring and Evaluation

- Our Attendance Officer will produce half-termly reports to monitor the school's attendance.
- The data will be analysed to identify trends with attendance and punctuality.
- The school aims to maintain a minimum attendance percentage of 96.

Our Attendance Officer will follow up all absences to:

- Ascertain the reason.
- Ensure the proper safeguarding action is taken.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not.
- Identify the correct code to use before entering it on to the school's electronic register or management information system.

Last Review	September 2023
Next Review	September 2024
Name	 Ross Montague Headteacher

Appendix A: Important Instructions to Staff on Completing Register

Advice on using the Absence & Attendance Codes

The register must be completed at the beginning of the a.m. and p.m. sessions.

Attendance should be marked with a black diagonal line	/ or \
Absence should be marked with a red circle	○

If a child is absent for the following reasons and the school has been notified the appropriate letter should be entered the register:

Off-site educational activity (approved by the school)	B
Dual registered (at another educational establishment)	D
Interview/assessment	J
Educational visit or trip	V
Leave of absence authorised by the school	C
Excluded, but no alternative provision made	E
Holiday authorised by school	H
Family holiday (NOT agreed or days in excess of agreement)	G
Reason for absence not provided	N
Absent from school without authorisation	O
Illness (NOT a medical/dental appointment)	I
Medical/dental appointment	M
Late	L
Approved sporting activity	P
Late (after registration closed)	U
Religious observance	R
Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School is closed due to an unavoidable cause Transport provided by authority is not available Local emergency with widespread disruption to travel Pupil is in custody 	Y
Planned whole or partial school closure	#
Pupil not yet on roll	Z

- Totals of children attending should be made for a.m. and p.m. and daily total attendance.
- If a child is absent due to illness the Parent should send an email to the Class Teacher explaining their child's absence.

Appendix B: Late Letter Template to Parent

Dear [Parents/Carers' names],

Re: Late morning/afternoon drop off

I am writing to remind you how important it is to allow sufficient time to drop off your child in the morning/afternoon. We are aware that you have been late dropping off [child's name] on three or more occasions during the week commencing [date].

Dropping off your child late is very disruptive both to the teachers and to other children in the class when activities have already started. It also can be unsettling for your child since the teachers are not able to spend important time welcoming them into the school and helping them to prepare to start the day.

Please ensure that you bring [child's name] into school on time in future. Thank you.

Yours sincerely,

Appendix C: Absence Letter Template to Parents

Dear [Parents/Carers' names],

[Child's name] was absent from school from [date] to [date] and the school was not notified of the reason.

May we remind you that when your child is absent from school due to illness, you must please send an email explaining your child's absence on the first day they are away from school. Emails can then be passed to one of your child's teachers so the absence can be verified in the class register.

Obviously in the case of any infectious illness the school should be informed by telephone/email as soon as possible.

Thank you for your co-operation.

Yours sincerely,

Appendix D: Letter Template Attendance Less Than 90%

Dear [Parents/Carers' names],

We are improving the monitoring of our school's attendance and punctuality. In an attempt to maintain an overall school attendance percentage of 96, we need to work together to ensure all children attend school during the published term dates.

We are writing to inform you that your child's attendance is below 90%. Throughout the remainder of this term, please can you ensure that this does not reduce. Please note, we understand why your child has been off school as we use register codes to acknowledge this - of course many are linked to an infectious disease, other illnesses or holidays.

We have a legal requirement to safeguard our children – monitoring attendance is one of the many steps we take to ensure we actively promote safeguarding. Furthermore, we can encourage greater academic progress when children are at school with us.

Thank you for your understanding and co-operation.

With best wishes,

Appendix E: Letter Template Attendance Less Than 90% - not improved since letter (Appendix D) was sent

Dear [Parents/Carers' names],

We are writing to inform you that your child's attendance is still below 90% and that your child's attendance has not improved since our last communication. Throughout the remainder of this term, you must ensure that this does not reduce further. Please note, we understand why your child has been off school as we use register codes to acknowledge this - of course many are linked to an infectious disease, other illnesses or holidays.

We would like to organise a meeting to discuss your child's attendance with the aim to offer support to improve your child's and the School's attendance percentages. Please contact Jenni@hampsteadhillschool.co.uk to organise a date and time for the meeting. Thank you.

Yours sincerely,