



Attendance Policy 2025

Attendance Policy
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1. Statement of intent

Improving attendance is everyone's business. Hopton Primary School believes that in order to facilitate high achievement, good attendance is essential.

The barriers to accessing education are wide and complex, both within and beyond the school gates, and are often specific to individual pupils and families. Good attendance begins with school being somewhere pupils want to be and therefore the foundation of securing good attendance is that school is a calm, orderly, safe, and supportive environment where all pupils are keen and ready to learn. Some pupils find it harder than others to attend school and therefore at all stages of improving attendance, schools and partners should work in partnership with pupils and parents collaboratively to remove any barriers to attendance by building strong and trusting relationships and working together to put the right support in place.

We take a whole-school approach to securing good attendance and recognise the impact that our efforts in other areas – such as the curriculum, behaviour standards, bullying, SEND support, pastoral support, and the effective use of resources such as pupil premium – can have on improving pupil attendance.

2. Aims

- Appropriate action is taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children's welfare.
- All staff are aware of their responsibilities with respect to attendance and understand the correlation with safeguarding.
- Parents, carers, and pupils are informed about the procedures for attendance and take an active role in promoting good attendance and punctuality.
- To build strong relationships with families to overcome barriers to strong attendance.
- Effectively work with outside agencies to further improve attendance.
- Good attendance is rewarded and relentlessly promoted.

The responsibilities set out in this policy apply (as appropriate) to all members of the school community including pupils, parents, staff, and governors. It is fully incorporated into the whole school ethos and culture.

3. Legislation and Guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's guidance [Working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#) and the Early Years Framework 2025.

The Education Act 1996 states that:



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- All pupils of compulsory school age receive a suitable full-time education by regular attendance at school or otherwise.
- The Local Authority must provide school places to parents who wish their children to be educated at school.
- The school must complete attendance registers at the beginning of the morning session and during the afternoon session.
- The school must report to the Local Authority pupils who are absent for more than ten days without explanation.
- The Local Authority has a duty to ensure that parents fulfil their legal responsibilities.
- Failure by parents to ensure the regular attendance at school of a registered pupil is an offence punishable by law.

[Education Act 1996 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/part6) - Part 6

[Education Act 2002 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/26/part3) - Part 3

4. The Law

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school.

Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school.

(Paragraphs 10 and 11 Working Together to Improve School Attendance)

5. Attendance and success

Research has shown that children who have high attendance do better in national examinations than those whose attendance is lower. In KS2 SATs – the children with the highest attendance generally have higher scores than children in the lowest attendance groups.

In GCSEs - the children with the highest attendance generally have higher scores than children in the lowest attendance groups. It is clear that if a child does not attend on a regular basis their opportunities for success are challenged and possibly diminished.



6. Roles and responsibilities

The Headteacher

The Head is responsible for:

- Ensuring every member of staff knows and understands their responsibilities for safeguarding and how this links with poor school attendance – ensuring compliance with Keeping children Safe in Education 2025. [Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/keeping-children-safe-in-education)
- Developing good support for children with medical conditions (including the use of individual healthcare plans), mental health problems and special educational needs (SEND). Ensuring compliance with Statutory Guidance for governing bodies of maintained schools and proprietors of academies in England December 2015 - Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions - [Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/supporting-pupils-at-school-with-medical-conditions)
- Ensuring every member of staff knows and understands their responsibilities for attendance.
- Ensuring accurate completion of admission and attendance registers.
- Ensuring staff are actively working to maximise attendance rates, both in relation to individual pupils and whole school attendance.
- Having clear processes in place to address persistent and severe absence - pupils who are severely absent may be at risk of CCE/CSE/grooming etc. and this cohort must be made the top priority for action and support. Ensuring all staff are aware of any potential safeguarding issues, ensuring joint working between the school, Children's Social Work Services and other statutory safeguarding partners. Often severely absent pupils have additional needs and therefore it is vital that schools ensure all appropriate services are informed and aware of the pupil's absence so suitable support can be considered, and education provided/accessed.
- Ensuring that all staff adopt a consistent approach in dealing with absence and lateness.
- Monitoring and analysing data and trends.
- Reporting to the Governing Body and Trusts the attendance figures and progress to achieving the set targets.
- Reminding parents of their commitment to this policy.
- Building and modelling respectful relationships with staff, pupils, families, and other stakeholders to secure their trust and engagement. Making sure there is a welcoming and positive culture across the school.
- Open and honest communication with staff, pupils, and families about their expectations of school life and performance so that they understand what to expect and what is expected of them.
- Liaising with other agencies working with pupils and their families to support attendance, for example, where a young person has a social worker or is otherwise vulnerable.
- Sharing information on and working collaboratively with other schools in the area/cluster, LAs, and other partners when absence is at risk of becoming severe or persistent.
- Ensuring the school attendance policy is applied fairly and consistently and recognises the individual needs of pupils and their families who have specific barriers to attendance. Schools should consider their obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.



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Teaching staff

Teaching staff are responsible for:

- Ensuring the effective whole school culture of high attendance is underpinned by setting an example of punctuality and good attendance.
- Implementing the policy and ensuring it is applied fairly and consistently.
- Ensuring that the registers are taken at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session and are accurate and up to-date.
- Reviewing class and individual attendance patterns.
- Informing the school attendance champion/line manager of any concerns.
- Emphasising with pupils the importance of punctuality and good attendance.
- Reminding parents of their commitment to this policy.
- Building respectful relationships with staff, pupils, families, and other stakeholders in order to secure their trust and engagement. Making sure there is a welcoming and positive culture across the school.
- Communicating openly and honestly with staff, pupils, and families about their expectations of school life and performance so that they understand what to expect and what is expected of them.
- Liaising with other agencies working with pupils and their families to support attendance, for example, where a young person has a social worker or is otherwise vulnerable.
- Modeling respectful relationships and appropriate communication for staff and pupils. This will help relationships between pupils and staff to reflect a positive and respectful culture. All staff members should:
 - treat pupils with dignity
 - build relationships rooted in mutual respect and observe proper boundaries
 - take into consideration the vulnerability of some pupils and the ways in which this might contribute to absence
 - handle confidential information sensitively
 - understand the importance of school as a place of safety where pupils can enjoy trusted relationships with staff and pupils, particularly for children with a social worker and those who have experienced adversity
 - communicate effectively with families regarding pupils' attendance and well-being
- Rehearse and reinforce attendance and punctuality expectations continually.
- Emphasize the importance of attendance and its impact on attainment.
- Promote lessons and the sequence lessons to motivate pupils to be in the classroom.
- Promote rewards and celebrate progress but continue to outline sanctions.
- Apply rewards and sanctions consistently.
- Follow up on absence and lateness with pupils to identify barriers and reasons for absence.
- Contact parents and carers regarding absence and punctuality.
- Periodically review practice and consistency both across and between departments.
- Consider the individual needs and vulnerabilities of pupils.



7. Our school day

Whilst we maintain registers for our nursery age children, they are not of compulsory school age. For those of compulsory school age the following applies.

Foundation 2: Morning 08:50
Lunch 11:40
Afternoon 12:40
Finish 15:10

Year 1 and Year 2: Morning 08:45
Lunch 12:00
Afternoon 13:00
Finish 15:15

Year 3 to Year 6: Morning 08:45
Lunch 12:30
Afternoon 13:10
Finish 15:15

Children should arrive at school on time for the teachers to collect them to move to class.

Children who arrive after classes have gone into the school will be classed as late 08:45 to 09:15 and will need to be brought to the reception area/front office. They will receive a L mark in the register but will be recorded as present. Children brought to school after 09:15 will receive a U mark in the register and this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence. Children being collected during the school day must be collected by an adult of 18 years or above. Children being collected at the end of the school day will be collected by the people identified on the school contact list unless the person with parental responsibility communicates a change.

8. Parents and carers notification of absence

Parents and carers have an obligation to let us know that their child will be absent due to illness.

This can be done by:

1 Phoning school on 01924 489736, leaving a message or speaking to staff by 9am on the same day as their absence

2 Emailing admin.hopton@kirkleeseducation.uk



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The school will follow up any unknown absences – This will be done by office staff who will text requesting that the parent or carer calls the school. If the parent or carer does not call the school, the office staff will then phone the emergency contacts in order. If we are unable to ascertain why a child is absent, we may visit the home address for a 'safe and well check', if we are still unable to locate a child, we may decide to contact the police or other services. 'Safe and well' checks may be carried out too in the circumstance of absence that is longer than three days and school has been informed.

9. Leave of absence requests

Parents and carers wishing to request a leave of absence can do so using a Leave of Absence Request form. Once this is completed and returned to the school office, parents and carers will be notified of the decision of their request.

- The school may consider issuing a **Penalty Notice** if a pupil has **10 or more unauthorised sessions (equivalent to 5 school days)** within a **rolling 10-school-week period**.
- These sessions do not have to be consecutive.
- They can include any type of unauthorised absence.
- They may span across different terms and even different school years.
- This is in line with the **National Penalty Notice Framework 2024**. Please note: **Penalty Notices are issued per parent, per child.**

Consequences of unauthorised leave:

1. The possibility of a penalty notice being issued (to each parent for each child).
2. That the penalty imposed will be £80 within 21 days or £160 within 28 days for the first offence; £160 within 28 days with no option for a lower payment for the second offence within a three-year-rolling period; and that school may prosecute the parent under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996 on the third offence within a three-year-rolling period.
3. The possibility of losing the school place, and the likelihood of being re-admitted to the school.
4. The possibility of a fine of up to £1,000 and receipt of a criminal record if the fine remains unpaid and the matter is heard in court.



10. Absences

Absences will be coded either as authorised or unauthorised. At school we will apply the codes laid down by the government. Please note that the DFE does not consider a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance. Leave of absence should not be granted for a pupil to take part in protest activity during school hours. (paragraph 38 Working Together To Improve School Attendance) A full list of codes can be found at the end of this policy.

11. Children missing in education

A child who is absent as well as missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. Where a child is reported to be missing education we will comply with our statutory duty to inform the local authority of any pupil who falls within the reporting notification requirements outlined in [Children missing education: statutory guidance for local authorities and schools, Keeping children safe in education September 2025](#)

12. Rewards and incentives

At Hopton Primary School we reward good behaviour through a variety of incentives. Each week, the class with the best attendance and the class with the most improved attendance from the previous week is rewarded with a class prize. This is communicated to children during our Headteacher assembly and during weekly newsletters. Individual prizes are provided through termly strategies to recognize, improve and celebrate excellent attendance.

13. Notable benchmarks

Below are notable benchmarks for attendance and the consequences for each:

All parents and carers will receive half termly attendance reports.

96% - This is regarded as good attendance

Below 90% attendance - This is regarded as persistently absent. Parents and carers will receive a more detailed attendance report, internal monitoring with a meeting to outline barriers to good attendance with specific targets outlined with time scales

Below 50% attendance – This is regarded as severely absent. Parents and carers will receive a further detailed attendance report, more frequent internal monitoring – possibly with the support of external services – and concise targets to improve attendance



14. Attendance is everyone's responsibility

Each classroom displays and populates on a daily basis a classroom attendance poster. In addition to Headteacher assemblies and central displays, attendance is promoted throughout school. Subject leaders and monitoring from governors have attendance as part of their agreed formats encouraging stakeholders to consider the impact of attendance on their curriculum area of monitoring. Leadership reports in each Governor Body Meeting highlight attendance data and report on attendance trends and patterns with cross referencing of other analysis to identify specific barriers to good attendance. Weekly meetings as part of our attendance team further analyse and identify families in need of support.



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15. Attendance codes

R	Religious observance	Approved Absence
S	Study Leave	Authorised Absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised Absence
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised Absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Educational Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Educational Activity
X	Non-compulsory school age absence	Not counted as possible attendance
Y1	Unable to attend (transport normally provided not available)	Not counted as possible attendance
Y2	Unable to attend (widespread disruption to travel)	Not counted as possible attendance
Y3	Unable to attend (part of the school closed)	Not counted as possible attendance
Y4	Unable to attend (whole school unexpectedly closed) <i>i.e. due to adverse weather</i>	Not counted as possible attendance
Y5	Unable to attend (criminal justice detention)	Not counted as possible attendance
Y6	Absent in accordance with public health guidance or law	Not counted as possible attendance
Y7	Unable to attend – any other unavoidable cause (Note Required)	Not counted as possible attendance
Z	Pupil not on roll	Not counted as possible attendance
#	Planned whole school closure	Not counted as possible attendance