

Attendance and Punctuality Policy



Hodge Hill Girls' School

Approved by: [Name]

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1. Aims

At Hodge Hill Girls' School we view regular attendance as an essential part of a pupil's academic and social success. Learning and friendship opportunities are enhanced by sustained periods of unbroken attendance, and we rely on our partnership with parents and carers to ensure that this is achieved. Excellent attendance means that young people usually make excellent, consistent progress in their school work. If a child is registered at school, parents and carers have a duty under the Education Act 1996 to ensure that their child attends regularly and is punctual.

Our school aims to meet its 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 and lateness

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. We expect all pupils to attain a minimum of **96% attendance** and will work with families where their daughter falls below this percentage to identify the reasons.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [school attendance guidance](#) 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:

- [The Education Act 1996](#)
- [The Education Act 2002](#)
- [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2010](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2011](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2016](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the [school census](#), which explains the persistent absence threshold and follows the FAST-track to Attendance guidance as set by Birmingham City Council.

3. School procedures

3.1 Attendance register

By law, all schools (except those where all pupils are boarders) are required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on this register.

The attendance register will be taken 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 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

Every entry in the attendance register will be preserved for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8.25am on each school day. The register for the first session will be taken at 8.35am. The register for the second session will be taken at 12.45pm.

3.2 Unplanned absence

Parents must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence – for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health – by 8.30am or as soon as practically possible (see also section 6).

Parents/carers should ring into school and leave a message on the answer phone with the pupil's name and the reason of absence and an expected date of return. If a pupil is absent without explanation, parents/carers will be contacted by the school to ascertain the reason for the absence.

Absence due to illness will be authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask parents 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 will be notified of this in advance.

3.3 Medical or dental appointments

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; advance notice is required for authorising these absences.

However, we encourage parents 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 appointment card/appointment letter must be seen by the Attendance Welfare Assistant or Pastoral Manager in advance of the appointment.

Pupils who have been diagnosed with a serious medical illness will still be able to access reward activities for good and improving attendance

Applications for other types of absence in term time must also be made in advance. Information relating to whether the school can authorise such absences can be found in section 4.

3.4 Lateness and punctuality

The school has a clear policy for lateness. Through parent newsletters and other forums parents/carers are aware that the school has high expectations regarding punctuality. If a parent or carer knows that their child is going to be late i.e. because of a medical appointment, the school should be informed beforehand. A pupil who arrives after 8.35am but before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.

The official close of register is 9.30am; a pupil who arrives after this time and is unable to provide a satisfactory reason will be marked with the code 'U', which is an unauthorised absence for the whole of the morning session.

A pupil who receives two L marks within a week will have to serve a half hour after school detention on Monday between 2.55pm- 3.20pm with the attendance welfare assistant, who will work with pupils to highlight the importance of punctuality and share the impact of lateness in time missed in learning. Pupils

who are persistently late, e.g. more than two L within a week will serve a one hour after school detention on Tuesday 2.55 pm to 3.55 pm with a Pastoral Manager.

Punctuality is monitored daily. Parents/carers of those pupils who have been late on three or more occasions will be contacted and may be asked to meet with their child's pastoral manager or the attendance welfare assistant to discuss the matter further. The law treats some persistent lateness in the same way as irregular attendance and parents may be prosecuted by the Local Authority if late arrival is not resolved.

Minutes late per day during the school year	Equals days worth of teaching lost in a year
5 mins	3.4 days
10 mins	6.9 days
15 mins	10.3 days
20 mins	13.8 days
30 mins	20.7 days

3.5 Persistent absence

The threshold at which a pupil is defined as 'persistently absent' is 10% of the number of possible sessions. Pupils whose attendance fall below 90% would be classed as a Persistently Absent student. Therefore, if a student who misses 19 or more days over an academic year will be classed as Persistently Absent. The school keeps a detailed list of all Persistent Absentees and the actions that have been taken to support them with attendance issues. Please note 1 session absence is equal to half a day.

Attendance during one school year	Equals this number of days absent	Which is approximately this many weeks absent	Which means this number of lessons missed
95%	9 days	2 weeks	50 lessons
90%	19 days	4 weeks	100 lessons
85%	29 days	6 weeks	150 lessons

3.6 Following up absence

The school will follow up any absences to ascertain the reason, and ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary, and identify whether the absence is approved or not and identify the correct attendance code to use.

The attendance officer will download any messages about pupil absence from the school answer phone from 8.50am. The attendance officer will speak to parents from 8.50am to 9.50am about pupil absence and make contact with parents of pupils with N codes. This information will then be passed to the Pastoral Managers who will follow up on any pupils/parents that the Attendance Officer has not been able to contact.

3.7 Reporting to parents

The attendance of all pupils is strictly monitored following the procedures detailed in this policy. Parents receive their child's attendance record on their child's academic progress report which is given termly. Pupils will receive a copy of their attendance figures with any late marks weekly via their form tutor. Where attendance becomes a concern, parents will be informed by a phone call initially. If there are no improvements, informal meetings will be arranged between the pastoral manager, parent/carers and the pupil to identify barriers to attendance and the setting of targets for improvement. Furthermore, where the school is concerned about the number of unauthorised absences it will inform parents by letter, that the Head Teacher will no longer authorise any absence unless supported by medical evidence.

The school keeps a detailed list of all Persistent Absentees and actions that have been taken to support them with Attendance issues. This is regularly updated. In addition, if any pupil reaches 10 or more unauthorised absences the school will follow LA procedures for FAST-track to Attendance.

3.8 Safeguarding

It is essential that the school knows the whereabouts of all pupils during school times. Parents/carers should advise the school by 8.30am each day at the latest of absence, the reason and an expected date of return. A message can be left on the answer phone. If a pupil is absent without explanation, parents/carers will be contacted by the school to ascertain the reason for the absence.

Children Missing from Education

The school must notify the Local Authority of any pupil/student who fails to attend school regularly after making reasonable enquiries or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 5 days or more.

4. Authorised and unauthorised absence

4.1 Granting approval for term-time absence

Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence to pupils during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'.

The decision to authorise absence is at the Head Teacher's discretion based on the assessment of the situation. Circumstances vary in each situation so there are no absolute rules on this subject. In all situations, evidence will be required, where it is deemed appropriate. The safety of our pupils is paramount, and we will investigate each situation and outside agencies may be informed.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the headteacher's discretion.

Absence can only be authorised by the school and cannot be authorised by parents/carers. All absences will be treated as unauthorised unless a satisfactory explanation for the pupil's absence has been received.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments – as explained in sections 3.2 and 3.3
- 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

4.2 Legal sanctions

The Local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a penalty notice, parents must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Following the local authority's code of conduct for issuing penalty notices. It may take into account:

- A 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

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute the parent or withdraw the notice.

5. Strategies for promoting attendance

The pastoral managers and the attendance welfare assistant works closely with pupils and parents in encouraging, motivating and improving attendance. Where families need support the pastoral managers will work closely with the pupils and parents/carers to put together a manageable action plan that identifies the needs of the family and the support needed.

The school celebrates and recognises excellent attendance and improving attendance through a variety of way including with the meeting of the school governors. The giving of certificates for pupils with excellent attendance or improving attendance during termly awards assemblies. Early lunch with the year group with

the best attendance of the week, receiving of the Attendance Cup with the best attendance in the year group. Points are also awarded to pupils with excellent or improving attendance which can be used towards the termly rewards activity.

Form tutors also provide pupils with a weekly update on the attendance and will discuss with pupils any periods of absence. Parent workshops are made available and led by the Deputy header on how to support my child and their attendance, the use of the weekly newsletter to parents and offering a relevant enjoyable curriculum.

6. Attendance monitoring

The attendance officer monitors pupil absence on a daily basis.

Parents are expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health (see section 3.2).

If a pupil's absence goes above 3 days, we will contact the parents to discuss the reasons for this.

If after contacting parents a pupil's absence continue to rise, we will consider involving an education welfare officer.

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee.

Pupil-level absence data is 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. We compare our attendance data to the national average and share this with governors.

The attendance of pupils is recorded electronically. Attendance data is shared with students weekly through the form tutor. It is shared with parents/carers three times a year in the termly school report. The weekly parent newsletter highlights the importance of good attendance and the attendance of best tutor group in each year. The following is used to monitor attendance

	Action	By Who
100%-96%	Monitor pupil attendance, discuss will attendance, any share concerns with pastoral managers	Form Tutors
96%-90%	Pastoral managers meet with pupils, meet with parents/carers informally to identify and intervention or support and agree action steps/plan and monitor attendance Share with attendance welfare assistant progress. Where there is no improvement in attendance and reaching 90% threshold PM and AWO to meet to discuss further steps	Pastoral Managers/Attendance Welfare Assistant
90%-85%	Attendance Welfare Officer to meet family, monitor pupil attendance consider referral to ELIT team	Attendance Welfare Assistant/ Deputy Headteacher
Below 85%	Actions appropriate to the nature of the concern and may involve a meeting with parents or contact with relevant external agencies.	Deputy Headteacher

7. Roles and responsibilities

7.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

7.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the school, and for monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.

The headteacher delegates the monitoring and reporting on attendance to a senior member of staff.

7.3 The deputy headteacher

- Monitors attendance data
- Meets weekly with the attendance and welfare assistant to coordinate attendance strategies and ensure that practices are regularly reviewed
- Meets with parents of pupils who have persistent absence
- Reports to the governing body and the headteacher
- Ensures registers are kept to expected standards.

7.4 The pastoral managers

- Monitor attendance data at the school and individual pupil level
- Make contact with families whose children are absent from school on that day
- Work with pupils who have unauthorised absence or are persistently late
- Ensure all registers have been taken from am and pm registration and chase up where necessary.
- Reports concerns about attendance to the deputy headteacher and attendance and welfare assistant
- Contact parents and arrange meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues following the FAST-track guidance
- Put in place attendance action plans with families and pupils to tackle attendance concerns and monitor
- Work with attendance welfare assistant to tackle persistent absence
- Place pupils 'On Attendance Report' and monitor where appropriate and keep records
- Initiate referral to SARM meetings for FAST-track

7.5 Attendance welfare assistant

- Monitor attendance data at the school and individual pupil level
- Download answerphone messages on absence and follow up
- Monitor the Late Book and work with pupils and inform pastoral managers of persistent lateness.
- Reports concerns about attendance to pastoral managers and the deputy headteacher
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues following the FAST-track guidance
- Work with pastoral managers to tackle persistent absence/lateness
- Put in place attendance action plans with families and pupils to tackle attendance concerns and monitor
- Place pupils 'On Attendance Report' and monitor where appropriate and keep records

- Support pastoral managers to ensure that all registers have been taken from am and pm registration and to chase up where necessary
- Share with pupils via form tutors' pupils' weekly attendance figures
- Using attendance data identify with year group has the best attendance for the week and therefore early lunch and share with staff and pupils
- Advises the deputy headteacher when referrals to ELIT have been made

7.6 Form tutors

Form tutors are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, (either /,N or L only) and submitting this information to the school official eportal (electronic register) if eportal is not working form tutors must request a paper copy from reception complete and send as a matter of first priority.

- Form tutors to mark registers electronically and accurately
- Promote outstanding attendance and punctuality within their tutor group
- Form tutor to promote the importance of good attendance and punctuality and act as role models.
- Ensure planned absences are communicated to the pastoral managers.
- To monitor attendance patterns and report any concerns to pastoral managers

7.7 Class teachers

- Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance for every lesson, using the correct codes, and submitting this information on eportal. Codes used by class teachers are either /,N,L only
- To take accurate electronic registers for all their classes
- To take the register for period 4 within 10 minutes of the lesson as this is the statutory duty of all teachers.
- Where pupils are marked present in their previous lessons and are not present in the lesson to inform pastoral managers as soon as possible

7.5 Reception staff

- Reception staff are expected to sign in any pupils who have arrived after the registers has closed at 9.30am and inform the pastoral manager
- Reception staff to sign out any pupil once they have checked with and it has been approved by pastoral managers who will speak to the child to identify reasons
- Reception staff to only allow pupils to be collected by parents once checked and approved by pastoral managers

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Deputy headteacher. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

9. Links with other policies

This policy is linked to our child protection and safeguarding policy as well the FAST-track to Attendance guide as set out by Birmingham City Council

Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
I	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
l	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
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