



Hempland
Primary School

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Approval Date: September 2023

Review Date: September 2024

Member of staff responsible: Abbie Innes & Helen Andrews

1. Aims

Excellent attendance and punctuality are key in helping the school to ensure that all children achieve their full potential. Hempland Primary School will do all that we can to ensure that all children attend school and that any barriers to full attendance are identified and acted upon as soon as possible. We aim to ensure good habits are formed for later in life and that we are effective in our safeguarding of all children.

Our school aims to meet its obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Regular monitoring of attendance and acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families: listen to, understand the barriers to attendance and work with families to remove them
- Sharing information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authority, and other partners when absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe.

This policy reflects current practice within school. It's fair and consistent implementation is the responsibility of all staff.

Our school takes an active approach to promoting good attendance. With support of parents, the wider community, the local authority and the children themselves, we take a positive approach to safeguard the well-being of all pupils and staff.

The schools target is to aim to achieve 95% whole school attendance, reduce persistent absentees and punctuality.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of working together to improve school attendance 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 7 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
- Children missing Education 2016
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023
- City of York Council Code of Conduct for the use of Education related Penalty Notices (August 2018)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The Governing Committee

The governing board is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the Headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

3.2 The Headteacher – Mrs Innes

The Head teacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at Hempland Primary School
- Monitoring school level absence data and reporting to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary
- Making home visits when appropriate
- Attend any CPD appropriate to the role

3.3 The Attendance Lead – Mrs Andrews

The Attendance Lead is responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the whole school
- Contacting parents/carers regarding day to day absence
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Monitoring and analysing attendance data
- Devising specific strategies to address poor attendance identified through data
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families
- Making home visits when appropriate
- Attend any CPD appropriate to the role

3.4 Class teachers

The class teachers are responsible for:

- Providing a welcoming and safe environment, which encourages attendance and promotes the best performance from children
- Recording attendance accurately on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information on to integris.

3.5 School Office staff

School office staff will:

- Take calls from parents about absence/lateness on a day to day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents to the Attendance Lead, Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance
- Ensuring all attendance codes for each individual pupil are recorded by 9.20am
- Provide attendance information to teachers before termly parents evenings and reports.

3.6 All School Staff

All school staff will:

- Promote a positive ethos through school around attendance and punctuality
- Help parents to understand what is expected from them and why attendance is important to their child's attainment, wellbeing and wider development.

3.7 Parents/Carers

All parents and carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Call school to report their child's absence before 9am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence.
- Call school to report any lateness
- Provide school with at least 2 emergency contact details for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
- Ensure any holidays are taken out of term time

3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day on time and be appropriately prepared for the day
- Inform a member of staff of anything that may be preventing them from attending school or getting to school on time

3.9 Local Authority

Local authority are expected to:

- Provide support through the School Attendance support Team

4. Recording Attendance

4.1 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.

We take the attendance register at the start of the each school day (8:45 for Early Years and Key Stage 1 and 8.50am for Key Stage 2) and at the start of the afternoon (12:45 for Early Years and 1pm for Years 1-6).

It will mark, using the appropriate code, whether every child is:

- Present
- Absent

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.

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

School doors open at 8:35 and close at 8:45 (Early Years and Key Stage 1)

School doors open at 8:40 and close at 8:50 (Key Stage 2)

Children are expected to be in school for the start of the school day which is at 8:45 (Early Years and Key Stage 1) and 8:50 (Key Stage 2)

Children arriving after 8:45/8:50 must enter school via the main reception area.

Children who arrive after 8:45/8:50 but before 9:20 will be marked using the code L (late before the registers close)

Children who arrive after 9:20 will be recorded using the code U (late after the registers close)

4.2 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 office staff.

Please notify school by phoning school number 01904 806506 or emailing the school office at office@hempland.pmat.academy

We will mark absence due to illness as 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 the pupils parents/carers 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/carers will be notified of this in advance.

4.3 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.

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.

Parents must sign their children out at the main Reception if they are taking them to a medical appointment and the children have already been registered.

4.4 Lateness and Punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed (between 8:45/8:50 and 9:20) will be marked as late, using the code L
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code
- The reasons why the pupils are late and the times they arrive are recorded on integris

The Attendance Lead monitors punctuality. If the pupil is consistently late over a period the school will follow the local authority fast track system.

4.5 Following up unexplained absence

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

- Call the pupil's parent/carers on the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason.
- If the school cannot reach the pupil's parent/carer, a text message will be sent.
- If the school cannot reach any of the pupils emergency contacts, if the absence is part of an ongoing pattern, causes concern to school leaders or is part of on-going monitoring then the Attendance Lead, Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher may make a home visit.
- If an older sibling is known, school will contact their school to see if they are present in school.
- Any concerns will be raised with the Designated Safeguarding Leads.

4.6 Reporting to parents/carers

The school will regularly inform parents/carers about their child's attendance and absence levels via termly parents evening and end of school year report.

5 Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval of term-time absence

The Headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil 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 facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 4 weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible from the school office or via the school website.

The Headteacher may require evidence to support any request for the leave of absence.

Valid reasons for authorised absence include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments (see section 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- Religious observance
- 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
- If the school knows that the pupil has a siblings in another school, we will make contact with the other school to come to an agreement when coding the leave of absence (ie whether the leave of absence is authorised or unauthorised).

5.2 Legal Sanctions

The school and 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 fine, or a penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by the Headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

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 holiday taken in term time without permission

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

6. Strategies for supporting good attendance

The school will:

- Issue positive messages to encourage attendance

- Share school's attendance policy annually with parents and also on the school website
- Provide regular updates in the school's newsletter

7. Attendance Monitoring

7.1 Monitoring Attendance

The school will:

- Monitor attendance absence and punctuality across school at an individual pupil level
- Monitor whole school attendance and absence data half termly, termly and yearly across the school
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern
- Compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing committee.

7.2 Analysis 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 families
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

7.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers, and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

7.4 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
- Use the local authority's Fast track initiative
- Hold regular meetings with the parents who the school (and/or local authority) 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

8. Alternative Providers

The alternative provider will notify school if the child has not arrived at provision this will be done before 11am for morning registration and 1:30pm for afternoon.

The provider normally will pick the child up from home so will have conversations with parents at the household about the absence that day. If there is no answer from the property, then a phone call to the household by the provider is made to determine why the child is off. Also our school office will follow this up and get confirmation of absence from the parent.

The provider will hold half termly review meetings, which involves school and parents/carers to discuss progress against targets, attendance and next steps. The provider will update their assessment information termly as a minimum.

The Headteacher also supports other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils and issues fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

9. Removing and adding pupil's to the school register

School will notify the local authority when a child is about to be removed off the school admission register. This duty does not apply when a child's name is removed from the admission register at standard transition points – when the child has completed the final year of education normally provided by that school – unless the local authority requests that such returns are to be made.

When removing a child's name, the school will notify the local authority of the following information:

- (a) the full name of the child,
- (b) the full name and address of any parent with whom the child normally resides,
- (c) at least one telephone number of the parent,
- (d) the child's future address and destination school, if applicable, and
- (e) the ground in regulation 8 under which the child's name is to be removed from the admission register (DFE Children missing education 2016)

When a child leaves and parents have not provided the school with the above information, and the school cannot contact you, then your child is considered to be a 'Child Missing in Education'. This means that the school and Local Authority have a legal duty to carry out investigations, which may include liaising with the MASH team, the Police and other agencies to try to track and locate your child. By providing us the above information, unnecessary investigations can be avoided.

The school will also notify the local authority within five days of adding a child's name to the admission register at a non-standard transition point. The notification must include all the details contained in the admission register for the new child. This duty does not apply when a child's name is entered in the admission register at a standard transition point – at the start of the first year of education normally provided by that school – unless the local authority requests that such returns are to be made.

10. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum every year by Mrs A Innes (Headteacher) and Mrs H Andrews (Attendance Lead) and at every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing committee.

11. Links to other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy

Appendix 1: 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
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

Appendix 2

