



# HOOK JUNIOR SCHOOL

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## Pupil Attendance Policy

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<b>Review Cycle:</b>	Annual or when required by DFE
<b>Reviewing committee:</b>	Governing Body
<b>Lead Governor Responsible:</b>	Nermin Holland
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<b>Signed by Headteacher:</b>	
<b>Signed by Chair of Governors:</b>	

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2017 and 2023

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## 1. Introduction/Aim

At Hook Junior School we believe that regular school attendance is essential if children are to achieve their full potential. We value the attendance of all pupils. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind and can put them at risk of wider harm. There is a [wide range of evidence](#) as to the health and wellbeing benefits of school-age education. [Research](#) commissioned by the Department for Education shows missing school for even a day can mean a child is less likely to achieve good grades, which can have a damaging effect on their life chances. As set out in this policy, we will work with families to identify the reasons for poor attendance and try to resolve any difficulties at the earliest opportunity.

Our attendance policy aims to give clear guidance to staff, parents, pupils, and governors/trustees to:

- Promote good attendance, enabling pupil's achievement by establishing the highest possible levels of attendance and punctuality.
- Recognise the key role of all staff in promoting good attendance.
- Provide a clear framework for monitoring and responding to pupil absences, acting early to address patterns of absence.
- Build strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school.
- Promote positive support systems and advocate multi-agency approaches to improve attendance.
- Make parents aware of their legal responsibilities and ensure their children have access to the education to which they are entitled.

We recognise that attendance is a matter for the whole school community. Our Attendance Policy should not be viewed in isolation; it is a strand that runs through all aspects of school improvement, supported by our policies on safeguarding, prevention of bullying, behaviour, and inclusive learning. This policy also considers the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010, UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, and other relevant legislation.

## 2. Legal Framework

This policy meets the requirements of the [Working together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE).

Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act states that parents must ensure that children of compulsory school age receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability, and aptitude to any special educational needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. A child is of compulsory school age at the beginning of the term following their 5<sup>th</sup> birthday. A child ceases to be of compulsory school age on the last Friday in June of the school year in which they reach the age of 16.

The government expects all schools and local authorities to:

- Promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent and severe absence.
- Ensure every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled.
- Act early to address patterns of absence.

Parents are expected to perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age who are registered at school attend regularly.

In accordance with the Education Act 1996, we will work with parents and carers and the Local Authority to ensure that parents and carers are supported to secure education for children of compulsory school age. Where required, we will formalise support and where necessary, work with the LA to use legal measures.

A “Parent” is defined as:

- Any natural parent, whether married or not.
- Any parent who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility as defined in the Children Act (1989) for a child or young person.
- Any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person.

### **3. Roles and Responsibilities**

At Hook Junior School, we believe that improving school attendance is everyone’s business. It is a shared responsibility by governors/trustees, all school staff, parents, pupils, the wider school community and multi-agency partners. We aim to always work in partnership with our parents.

The Governors/Trustees of Hook Junior School recognises the importance of school attendance and promotes it through the school’s ethos and across its policies. They may take an active role in attendance improvement by:

- Setting high expectations of all leaders, staff, pupils, and parents so that children attend school every day and are safeguarded.
- Identifying a member of the governing body/trustee to lead on attendance matters and ensuring that there is a named senior manager to lead on attendance.
- Prioritising attendance in strategies, such as raising attainment, behaviour and combatting bullying, special educational needs and disabilities, wellbeing, and safeguarding.

- Ensuring school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties by rigorously evaluating the effectiveness of the school's attendance procedures so that consistent attendance support is provided for all pupils.
- Ensuring the schools' attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent attendance support is provided for pupils who require it most by prioritising the staff and resources needed. This includes ensuring schools engage and work effectively with the local authority School Attendance Support Team and wider local partners and services.
- Regularly reviewing attendance data, discussing, challenging trends, and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on the individual pupils or cohorts who need it most.
- Ensuring high aspirations are maintained for all pupils and processes for support are adapted to the individual needs of pupils including those with long term illnesses, special educational needs and disabilities, pupils with a social worker, those pupils under the Virtual School and pupils from cohorts with historically lower attendance such as those eligible for free school meals.
- Ensuring all school staff receive adequate training on attendance and that relevant staff have access to opportunities to share and learn from good practice in other schools.
- Ensuring that attendance data is shared with the Local Authority or Department for Education in line with statutory reporting deadlines.
- Reviewing the school's Attendance Policy on at least an annual basis, ensuring that the required resources are available to fully implement the policy, which is published and publicised regularly so that it is easily accessible to pupils, parents and staff.

The Senior Leadership Team at Hook Junior School will:

- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to pupils and their parents.
- Form and maintain positive relationships with pupils and parents.
- Ensure that there is a whole school approach which reinforces good school attendance, with good teaching and learning experiences, with a whole school culture that encourage all pupils to attend and to achieve.
- Make sure all teaching and non-teaching staff know the importance of good attendance, are consistent in their communication with pupils and parents, and receive the training and professional development they need.
- Have a clear school attendance policy which all staff, pupils and parents understand. Monitor the implementation and effectiveness of the Attendance Policy and ensure that the policy is reviewed annually.
- Ensure the school have accurate, complete admission and attendance registers and have effective day to day processes in place to follow-up absence.
- Regularly monitor and analyse attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require support with their attendance and put effective strategies in place.

- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities, and other partners where a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe.
- Ensure that there is a named Senior Attendance Champion to lead on attendance and allocate sufficient time and resource.
- Attend the termly school attendance supporting meetings with the local authority, focusing on those pupils with severe absence, making sure a regularly reviewed plan is in place.

All staff at Hook Junior School will:

- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to pupils and their parents.
- Form positive relationships with pupils and parents.
- Contribute to a whole school approach which reinforces good school attendance; with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all pupils to attend and to achieve.
- Know the importance of good attendance, are consistent in their communication with pupils and parents, and receive the training and professional development they need.

The Attendance Officer will work to further develop relationships with families to bring about improved attendance. This may involve seeking multi-agency support.

Hook Junior School requests that parents:

- Take a positive interest in their child's work and educational progress.
- Ensure their child has regular attendance at school.
- Instil the value of education and regular school attendance within the home environment.
- Follow the pupil attendance procedures outlined in this policy.
- Avoid unnecessary absences; for example, by making medical and dental appointments for outside of school hours.
- Ask the school for help if their child is experiencing difficulties with any aspect of their schoolwork or home and family life.
- Inform the school of any change in circumstances that may impact on their child's attendance.
- Support the school by becoming involved in their child's education, forming a positive relationship with school, and acknowledging the importance of children receiving the same messages from both school and home.
- Maintain effective routines at home to support good attendance.
- Attend all meetings requested to discuss attendance issues.

Further information can be found at: [Attendance guidance for parents | Hampshire County Council \(hants.gov.uk\)](https://www.hants.gov.uk/attendance-guidance-for-parents)

Pupils will:

- Be aware of the school's attendance policy and when and where they are required to attend. This will be communicated to them by school staff and parents.
- Speak to their class teacher or another member of staff if they are experiencing difficulties at school or at home which may impact on their attendance.
- Attend all lessons ready to learn, with the appropriate learning tools requested and on time for the class.
- Follow the school procedure if they arrive late. This will help the school to monitor attendance and keep accurate records for the child's individual attendance. This is also vital for health and safety in the event of a school evacuation.

## 4. Categorising Absence and Attendance

When marking our registers, we will apply the national codes as outlined and regulated by the Department for Education guidance to accurately record and report attendance.

### 4.1 Leave of Absence

Since September 2013, changes to Government regulations and guidance mean that Headteachers can no longer authorise leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances. Generally, 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. All absences associated with a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation during term time will be marked as unauthorised within the register. Any parents known to have removed their child from school for the sole purpose of a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation may be referred to the Local Authority and be issued with a penalty notice fine or referred to the Local Authority to consider prosecution.

We believe that children need to be in school for all sessions so that they can make the most progress possible. However, we do understand that there are times where a parent may legitimately request leave of absence for a child due to 'exceptional circumstances.' At Hook Junior School, leave of absence is only granted at the discretion of the Headteacher and shall not be granted unless there are 'exceptional circumstances.' Hook Junior School will respond to all applications for leave of absence in writing.

Parents wishing to apply for leave of absence during term time must submit the form, Request to Authorise Pupil Absence from School in Term Time, to the Headteacher at least 10 school days before the planned absence, and include supporting evidence of the 'exceptional circumstances' (see Appendix 1). If the form is not completed and the leave is taken without a request being submitted, the leave will not be considered by

the Headteacher, and it will be marked as unauthorised. Hook Junior School will treat each application individually and may discuss with you the circumstances of the application before a decision is made. Retrospective requests will not be considered and therefore will result in the absence being categorised as unauthorised.

A penalty notice request or a referral for prosecution will be submitted to the Local Authority should: -

- The parent fails to submit a leave of absence request in advance of taking the leave.
- An application for a leave of absence is not agreed by the Headteacher but is still taken.
- A longer period is taken more than the agreed number of days.

When absence is granted by the Headteacher, the parents will need to agree a date of return. If a pupil fails to return on the expected date and contact is not received from, or made with the parents, school will seek advice from the Local Authority. This could result in possible children missing from education procedures being instigated.

The 1996 Education Act also sets out the circumstances in which a pupil has not failed to attend school regularly and therefore the parent has not committed an offence.

4.2, 4.3, 4.4 are examples of these. The full list is in the Appendix 5.

#### 4.2 Medical and Dental Appointments

No pupil will be allowed to leave the school site without parental confirmation.

- Dental and Medical appointments should only be arranged during the school day if they are **urgent** and cannot be avoided. Taking time out of lessons can be disruptive, and disturb the school day.
- Dental and Medical appointments must be communicated to the school office with at least 24 hours of notice (unless an emergency same day appointment).
- Communication must include a copy of the appointment text/letter/email/appointment card, to be saved as a part of each child's medical file.
- Where appointments are after 9am (locally), children are expected to be at morning registration and thereafter collected for their appointment. This timing changes to 9:30 if the appointment is further away in distance.
- Optician appointments, unless advised as urgent by a medical professional, should be taken outside of school hours.

If the required evidence or notice is not provided, we will request this in return.

In line with Department for Education guidance, if we do have a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness, we may ask the parent to provide medical evidence, such as a prescription, consultation notes, or other appropriate form of evidence. If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Where a child has an emerging a pattern of non-attendance, we will discuss the reasons for absence with the child's parent. We will invite parents to attend a support meeting as an appropriate early intervention strategy. As part of this support, we may seek consent from parents and the pupil as appropriate to make a referral to the School Nursing Team and/or to liaise with the child's healthcare professional.

Where a pupil has a verified and chronic health condition, we will aim to work with parents to ensure children have access to education and provide appropriate support in line with [Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school](#) and Hampshire policies regarding supporting children with health issues, [Behaviour and attendance resources for schools | Hampshire County Council \(hants.gov.uk\)](#). We will also consider whether an Individual Healthcare Plan is required.

#### **4.3 Pupil Absence for the Purposes of Religious Observance**

Hook Junior School acknowledges the multi-faith nature of British society and recognises that, on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside school holiday periods or weekends and is recognised as such by a relevant religious authority. Where this occurs, the school will consider either authorising the pupil absence or making special leave for religious observance. Parents are requested to submit the form, Request to Authorise Pupil Absence from School in Term Time, to the Headteacher at least 10 school days before the religious festival.

[Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) page 86

#### **4.4 Parent Travelling for Occupational Purposes**

The pupil is a mobile child and their parent(s) is travelling in the course of their trade or business and the pupil is travelling with them. A mobile child is a child of compulsory school age who has no fixed abode and whose parent(s) is engaged in a trade or business of such a nature as to require them to travel from place to place.

To ensure we can effectively support all our pupils, we ask that parents:

- Advise the school of their forthcoming travelling patterns as soon as these are known and before they happen; and
- Inform the school regarding proposed return dates.

#### **4.5 Unauthorised Absence**

Absence will not be authorised unless parents have provided a satisfactory explanation, and it is accepted as such by the school. The decision to authorise absences is at the discretion of the Headteacher. Examples of unsatisfactory explanations include but are not limited to:

- A pupil's/family member's birthday.
- Shopping for uniforms.
- Arrangements or appointments for cutting the pupil's hair.
- Closure of a sibling's school for INSET (or other) purposes.
- An unwillingness to attend school, or inability to attend owing to inadequate personal/family organisation.
- A refusal to attend school on health grounds but where the pupil is considered well enough to attend.
- Absences taken without the authorisation of the school.
- Going on holiday or travelling abroad in term time
- Sickness of a parent, or other family member
- Child being used as a carer
- Feeling tired / Not sleeping at night
- Bad weather
- Non-urgent appointment
- Problems with transport
- Resting after a late night
- Weddings and funerals, other than that of a close family member

## 5. Our Procedures

### 5.1 Register Keeping and Recording

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, as amended by 2016 regulations, require schools to take an attendance register twice a day, once at the start of the morning session and then again during the afternoon session. For the purpose of this policy, the school defines:

“Absence” as:

- Arrival at school after the register has closed.
- Not attending school for any reason.

“Regular” attendance as:

- Attendance at every session the school is open to pupils unless their absence has been authorised.

We keep an electronic attendance register, and place all pupils on the Hook Junior School roll on this register. The register is a legal document and may be used as evidence in a Court of Law.

- Registers must be accurate and completed electronically
- Any alterations must be unambiguous
- Only adults can fill out registers

### **Morning registration**

- The school day begins at 8.40am and all pupils are expected to be in school at this time. School gates open at 8:30am and shut at 8:40am to allow children to get to their classrooms on time and be prepared for the day.
- Morning registration takes place between 8:45am and 8.54am.
- Children arriving after the gates close at 8:40am will be marked as 'late before registration closes' (L)
- Children arriving after 8.55am will be marked as 'late after registration closes' and the absence will be unauthorised (U)
- The total length of time that the register will be open every day is 15 minutes, (10 minutes in the morning and 5 minutes in the afternoon). When the register closes, a pupil will be recorded as 'unauthorised absence.'

### **Afternoon registration**

- Afternoon registration will take place at 1.05 – 1:10pm

Registers are legal records, and all schools must preserve every entry in the attendance or admission register for 6 years from the date the data was entered. As the attendance register is a record of the pupils present at the time it was taken, the register should only routinely be amended where the reason for absence cannot be established at the time it is taken and it is subsequently necessary to correct the entry. Where amendments are made, all schools must ensure the register shows the original entry, the amended entry, the reason for the amendment, the date on which the amendment was made, and the name of the person who made the amendment

On each occasion the register is taken the appropriate national attendance and absence code must be entered for every pupil (of both compulsory and non-compulsory school age) whose name is listed in the admission register at the time. The codes enable schools to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way and are used to collect statistics. The data helps schools, local authorities, and the government gain a greater understanding of the delivery of education and the level of, and reason for, absence.

### **Alternative Provision**

In the vast majority of cases, children remain on school roll whilst accessing alternative provision. The school will maintain close contact both with the provision provider and with the child or young person and their family.

The school will have real-time knowledge of the child or young person's attendance at their alternative provision. This means that for any session that the child or young person is expected to attend, the school will ensure it knows whether that child has attended or the reason for absence. Both the school and the alternative provision will code attendance consistently, with the DfE attendance guidance being always adhered to by the school.

## 5.2 Late Arrival at School

Please note the following:

- If it is known in advance that a child is going to be late (due to exceptional circumstances) a phone message or email should be sent to the school office before 9:00am.
- The school day ends at 3.20pm. Parents and carers are asked to collect their child promptly. Where late collection is persistent and/or significantly late, we will report our concerns to Social Services.
- On the final day of each full term, the school day ends at 1:20. Parents and carers are asked to collect their child promptly on these days, and understand that the transfer of responsibility is exchanged from school to them from the earlier pickup time.
- If consent has been provided for children to leave school grounds unaccompanied by an adult, responsibility is also exchanged to parents and carers from school from the earlier pickup time.
- The busy car park is not an acceptable reason for arriving to school late. Additional time should be factored into morning routines to allow for this known busy time of day.

## 5.3 Absence Due to Illness:

### First day of absence

A child not attending school is considered a **safeguarding** matter. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required.

An active policy of first day contact makes clear to everyone that absence is a matter of concern and will be followed up. The main priority is always to establish that the child is safe.

Parents have a responsibility to inform the school on every day of absence if their child will not be attending school or is likely to be late on a particular day, by no later than 9 am. This can be done via either sending an email to the school's administration team or ringing the attendance line and leaving a message.

Messages about absences should include the child's name, their class and a clear reason for absence. We ask that parents are not vague with their reasons e.g., 'not well' as this will not be authorised until further detail is clarified or guidance about attending school when ill is sought from the NHS. For these parents, the Attendance

Officer will ring in order to establish a more acceptable reason for absence. The reason to grant the absence or not lies with the school.

In some cases of reported absence including illness, the Attendance Officer will call home to find out more information. This is likely to be in cases of repeated absence, or where we want to ensure the child is not displaying school anxiety and/or refusal.

If children are absent with for example anxiety late night or not sleeping at night, the Attendance Officer will ring these parents/carers in order to help remove barriers for these children. Absences for these reasons will be unauthorised.

### **Subsequent days of absence**

Parents must contact the school by 9am on every subsequent day of absence. This allows us to keep track of the child's progress and the lines of communication open between home and school.

Daily absence reporting is still required in cases where the absence is likely to be a longer period of time than 1 day, (ie chickenpox, 48-hours due to a tummy bug. Etc), and in instances where the child has been sent home from school unwell. In instances where this is not the case, (eg the child is having an operation), the Attendance Officer will inform the parents of the absence reporting requirements.

Daily absence reporting is a matter of safeguarding to ensure we know the whereabouts of every child.

### **The '48-hour rule'**

Children can suffer with sickness and diarrhoea for a number of reasons. The '48-hour rule' is in place to specifically stop the spread of a sickness and/or diarrhoea bug. If the sickness and or diarrhoea is likely to be due to other factors, (eg food, tiredness, anxiety, heat. Etc) the 48-hour rule does not apply.

### **Absence without any parental explanation – first day**

If a pupil is absent without explanation the Attendance Officer will contact the parents that same day to check why the child is not in school. This will be via a phone call and/or an email.

If by 10:00 am, there is no response or reason for the child's absence, attempts will be made to ensure the child's safety by contacting all of the Emergency Contacts on the child's school file. If we are still unable to locate the child, the Attendance Officer will visit the home, and if appropriate assist the child to school. If there is no response at the home the Attendance Officer will leave a note requesting the parent contacts the

school as soon as possible stating why their child is absent. If the school has a concern, we may contact the police and/or Social Services.

The child will be registered as unauthorised absence until contact is made with the school, even then any decision to authorise the absence lies with the school.

If the child is from a known vulnerable family and/or under Social Services, and there is no answer from the home visit, the Attendance Leader will contact Social Services or the police.

School will telephone home if a pupil leaves the school without permission

### **Absence without any parental explanation – second day**

The Attendance Officer will repeat the process above, and inform the Deputy Headteacher of any concerns.

We will make a referral to Hampshire County Council Attendance team, for Safeguarding purposes and advised action from them will be taken.

### **Pupils Missing Out On Education (PMOOE)**

We have a legal duty to report to Hampshire County Council the absence of any pupil who is absent without an explanation for 20 consecutive days. These cases are referred to as Pupils Missing Out On Education, PMOOE.

This would apply to a pupil:

- Granted leave of absence by the headteacher, who then fails to return to school within 10 days immediately following the expiry of the agreed period.
- That has been continuously absent from school for 20 school days and there is no reason to believe that they have been prevented from attending due to sickness or any other unavoidable reason.
- Who has accepted a place on roll but does not attend for the first day or subsequent 20 days (40 consecutive sessions in total).

### **Safeguarding**

In certain circumstances the school may also:

- Write to the parents of a pupil to highlight attendance or punctuality issues.
- Invite parents to discuss how school can support the family to make improvement.
- Refer to Inclusion Support Service for support, guidance, and advice.

- Refer to the Local Authority for joint enquiries to be made to establish the whereabouts of the child through [Inclusion Support Service \(ISS\) | Hampshire County Council \(hants.gov.uk\)](https://www.hants.gov.uk/inclusion-support-service) and [Behaviour and attendance resources for schools | Hampshire County Council \(hants.gov.uk\)](https://www.hants.gov.uk/behaviour-and-attendance-resources-for-schools)
- Refer to the Local Authority to consider issuing a penalty notice or to consider prosecution when all other interventions have failed, or an unauthorised leave of absence has been taken.
- Refer the matter to an appropriate external agency for multi-agency support, such as implementing a Family Support Plan or consulting with the Children's Social Care or the police, where there are safeguarding concerns.

## 5.4 Attendance Interventions

### Monitor and Analyse attendance

Hook Junior School will:

- Monitor and analyse weekly attendance patterns and trends and deliver intervention and support in a targeted way to pupils and families. This will go beyond headline attendance percentages and will look at individual pupils, cohorts and year groups (including their punctuality) across the school.
- Use this analysis to provide regular attendance reports to class teachers or tutors to facilitate discussions with pupils and to leaders (including any special educational needs coordinators, designated safeguarding leads and pupil premium leads).
- Undertake frequent individual level analysis to identify the pupils who need support and focus staff efforts on developing targeted actions for those cases.
- Conduct thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and full year data to identify patterns and trends. This will include analysis of pupils and cohorts and identifying patterns in uses of certain codes, days of poor attendance and where appropriate, subjects which have low lesson attendance.
- Benchmark attendance data (at whole school, year group and cohort level) against local, regional, and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement.
- Devise specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data.
- Monitor in the data the impact of school wide attendance efforts, including any specific strategies implemented. The findings will then be used to evaluate approaches or inform future strategies.
- Provide data and reports to support the work of the board or governing body and local authority when appropriate.

At Hook Junior School we will investigate any pupils who are on track to be persistently absent (PA) and will not wait until attendance is below 90%.

“Persistent absence” (PA) is:

- Missing 10% or more of schooling across the year for any reason.

“Severe absence” (SA) is:

- Missing 50% or more of schooling across the year for any reason.

### **Attendance legal intervention**

School will understand the barriers to attendance and provide support. Where that is not successful, or is not engaged with, the law protects pupils’ right to an education and provides a range of legal interventions to formalise attendance improvement efforts, and where all other avenues have been exhausted, enforce it through prosecuting parents. Attendance legal intervention can only be used for pupils of compulsory school age and decisions should be made on an individual case by case basis.

Legal measures will only be considered when there is unauthorised absence and:

1. The child or family do not require the support from any agency to improve the attendance
2. All other avenues have been exhausted and poor-attendance behaviours continue
3. The child has 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence and parents are complicit in the child’s absence.

The following legal measures will be used for pupils of compulsory school age who are registered at a school:

- Attendance Contracts
- Penalty Notices
- Education Supervision Orders
- Attendance prosecution
- Parenting Orders

Where a child has **unauthorised absence** the school must enforce Hampshire County Council’s *Code of Conduct – issuing penalty notices for unauthorised absence from schools (2024)* or follow its guidance on other legal measures for non-attendance. The *Code of conduct* is a statutory document that ensures that powers for legal sanctions are applied consistently and fairly across all schools and their families within the authority.

### **Before issuing Penalty Notices**

If the Attendance Officer has ongoing concerns about a pupil’s attendance and support has not been engaged with by the parent(s) or has not worked then a Notice to Improve letter will be sent to the parent/carer.

If the Notice to Improve and the offer of support does not affect a significant improvement in attendance, the school will consider every aspect of a pupil's circumstances before deciding whether to issue a Penalty Notice.

### **Penalty Notices for non-attendance – Hampshire's Code of conduct**

If term time leave, including holidays, is taken without prior permission from the school, the absence will be unauthorised and if the number of sessions absent hits the thresholds set down in Hampshire's Code of Conduct (below) parent/carers will be issued with a fixed-penalty fine.

Schools or Hampshire County Council will also issue a Penalty Notice for any unauthorised absence where the pupil has been:

- absent for 10 or more half-day sessions (five school days) of unauthorised absence during any 100 possible school sessions – these do not need to be consecutive (codes *G*, *U* or *O* on the register)
- persistently late (coded *U*) for up to 10 sessions (five days) after the register has closed
- persistently late before the close of the register (coded *L*), but the school has met with parents and has clearly communicated that they will categorise as unauthorised any further lateness (code *O*), and where the threshold of 10 sessions (five days) has been met
- absent for any public examinations of which dates are published in advance
- absent for any formal school assessments, tests or examinations where the dates have been published in advance

The Penalty Notice is a fine that is issued to each parent/carer who condoned (or was responsible for the child) during the period of unauthorised absence for which the fine has been issued. For each case of unauthorised absence, the school or Hampshire County Council will decide whether a Penalty Notice is issued **to one or more parents/carers** for each child.

**NB:** This could mean four Penalty Notices for a family with two siblings both with unauthorised absence for holiday, ie one Penalty Notice for each child to each parent.

Arrangements for the payment will be detailed on the Penalty Notices themselves. Penalties are to be paid to the County Council.

- If paid within 21 days of deemed service the first Penalty Notice within a rolling three-year period is £80. If not paid within 21 days, the penalty is automatically increased to £160 to be paid within 28 days of deemed service of the Penalty Notice.
- If paid within 28 days of deemed service the second Penalty Notice within a rolling three-year period is £160.00. There is no option for this second offence to be discharged at the lower rate of £80.

The non-payment of a Penalty Notice within the prescribed period of time will result in the Legal Intervention Team and authorised person who issued the notice, to consider next steps. It is likely that non-payment will lead to a prosecution under Section 444 of

the Education Act 1996. The prosecution is not for the non-payment of the Penalty Notice but will relate to the original unauthorised absences.

For further information parents/carers can request a leaflet from the Attendance Officer.

Fines per parent will be capped to two fines within any three-year period. Once this limit has been reached, other action like a parenting order or prosecution will be considered.

If you're prosecuted and attend court because your child hasn't been attending school, you could get a fine of up to £2,500.

## 5.5 Support Systems

At Hook Junior School we recognise that poor attendance can be an indication of difficulties in a family's life. This may be related to problems at home and or in school. Parents are encouraged to inform school of any difficulties or changes in circumstances that may affect their child's attendance and/or behaviour in school, for example: bereavement, divorce/separation, emerging health concerns. This will help the school identify any additional support that may be required.

We also recognise that some pupils are more likely to require additional support to attain good attendance. The school will implement a range of strategies to support improved attendance based on the individual needs and circumstances of the child.

To plan the correct support, we will always invite parents and pupils to attend a meeting to discuss the concerns and devise a plan to support the child's regular attendance. Support offered to families will be child-centred and planned in discussion and agreement with both parents and pupils.

## 5.6 Persistent Absence, Severe Absence and the use of Legal Interventions

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' (PA) when their attendance drops to 90% and below for any reason. Over a full academic year this would be 38 sessions (19 days). Absence at this level could cause considerable damage to a child's educational outcomes.

A pupil becomes a 'severe absentee' (SA) when their attendance drops to 50% and below for any reason. Over a full academic year this would be 190 sessions (95 days). Absence at this level is causing considerable damage to a child's educational outcomes.

We monitor all absence thoroughly and all attendance data is shared with the Local Authority and the Department for Education.

The Attendance Officer will monitor the attendance of all PA pupils and pupils at risk of being PA. If the child's attendance level is falling the parents will be contacted to discuss our concerns and the reasons for absence. This could be through an email, letter, face-to-face meeting or phone call home.

PA pupils, causing particular concern, and their parents are subject to an Action Plan and /or Parental Contract drawn up by the Attendance Officer. PA pupil's absence that is due to illness will be classified as unauthorised unless the school receives evidence that the child has attended a medical appointment and/or is taking prescribed medication from a recurring condition.

When a child is classed as PA (attendance of 90% or below) no further absence will be authorised unless for an 'exceptional circumstance' for which the parent provides evidence.

Referrals may also be made to external agencies for targeted support. [Inclusion Support Service \(ISS\) | Hampshire County Council \(hants.gov.uk\)](#)

If parents fail to engage with support and their child continues to have unsatisfactory attendance/ punctuality, a request will be made to the Local Authority to pursue legal proceedings either through a penalty notice, consideration of an Education Supervision Order or prosecution via the Magistrates' Court.

Parents found guilty of failing to secure their child's regular attendance at school under the provisions of the Education Act 1996, will receive a criminal record and a maximum penalty of a £1000 fine under a Section 444 (1) offence or a £2500 fine or up to a 3-month prison sentence, under a Section 444 (1a) offence.

## 6. Statutory Framework

This policy has been devised in accordance with the following legislation and guidance:

- [Working together to improve school attendance, DfE, \(August 2024\)](#)
- [School attendance parental responsibility measures, DfE \(January 2015\)](#)
- [Children missing education, DfE \(September 2016\)](#)
- [Keeping children safe in education, DfE \(September 2024\)](#)
- [Working together to safeguard children, DfE \(July 2023\)](#)

## 7. Appendices

### Appendix 1: Request to Authorise Pupil Absence from School in Term Time





# HOOK JUNIOR SCHOOL

## **Request to Authorise Pupil Absence from School in Term Time**

**This leave of absence form serves as a Penalty Notice Warning letter to parent/carers. Any unauthorised absence during this period of time may be subject to a penalty notice for non-attendance being issued.**

**You are advised not to make any arrangements until your request has been considered.**

**Applications must be received, as a minimum, 10 days before the first day of absence.**

**Both parents who have parental responsibility should sign this form, even if the child does not reside with you, as any penalty for removing a child from school for an unauthorised absence will apply to both parents.**

Schools are only able to authorise absence for exceptional circumstances.

There are 13 weeks of the year, during school holidays when absence for a family holiday can be taken.

Details of Hampshire school holidays are available from the Hampshire website well in advance and it is parents' responsibility to know these.

There is no general right to authorise absence for a family holiday and we will not authorise absence for a family holiday in term time.

If you take your child out of school without permission the absence will be unauthorised and we will consider legal action.

**School use only:**

Date application received.....

Is this at least 10 days prior to first day of absence in line with policy?: YES / NO

**SECTION A – I wish to apply to the Headteacher for leave of absence in term time:**

Child's name:..... Class: .....

Child's name:..... Class: .....

Child's name:..... Class: .....

Please indicate inclusive dates and times:

From:.....

To:.....

Number of school days:.....

**SECTION B** - Please explain why you are applying for an authorised absence and the **circumstances** which make your **application exceptional**. If you are requesting authorisation to attend a specific event, travel or an appointment you must provide evidence.

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Please detail the evidence you are providing to support your application for leave of absence in term time (flight details, invitations, letters, appointments, government documentation):

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.....

**SECTION C** - I / We have parental responsibility for the child named above. The information given on this form is correct.

**Role of Parent 1:**.....

Name:.....

Signature: **I agree** to the application for this absence.....

Signature: **I disagree** to the application for this absence.....

Date:.....

**Role of Parent 2:**.....

Name:.....

Signature: **I agree** to the application for this absence.....

Signature: **I disagree** to the application for this absence.....

Date:.....

**SECTION D – School use only**

	<p><b>Request is not approved and is unauthorised</b> as the circumstances are not considered to be exceptional, the absence will negatively impact on your child's/children's educational progress, social development and/or mental health.</p> <p><b>You may be subject to a fixed penalty fine.</b></p>
	<p><b>You are requested to make an appointment with the Attendance Officer to discuss your absence application.</b></p>
	<p><b>You are requested to make an appointment with the Headteacher (Miss Powell) to discuss your absence application.</b></p>
	<p><b>Request for leave of absence in term time is approved and recorded as authorised for the following dates.</b></p> <p>From:.....To:.....</p> <p>Number of days:.....</p>

**Signed Headteacher (or DHT on HT behalf):**.....

**Date:**.....

## Appendix 2: Reply to Request for Absence – Model letter

Dear {Parent's name},

### **RE: Absence during term time – {Child Name (Child DOB)}**

Thank you for your application for absence in term time for Child's name. Whilst we appreciate your circumstances, Hook Junior School do not approve any absences during term time unless they are due to exceptional circumstances as per the guidance from the Department of Education.

The rationale behind this decision is that the Government has provided evidence that satisfactory progress at school is highly dependent on attendance.

Hook Junior School works closely with the Inclusion Support Service and if you choose to take your child out of school for the above unauthorised leave, we will notify the local authority and further action including legal action may be considered.

Please note that such a Penalty is issued to each parent for each child taken out of school. A Penalty Notice is a fine of £80 which increases to £160 if not paid within the first 21 days. Thereafter if the Penalty remains unpaid after 28 days this may result in legal action be taken against you. Parents have a duty to ensure their child's regular attendance at school and failure to do so is an offence under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996.

I have noted the dates that {Child Name} will be absent from Hook Junior School, {Dates of leave} and the registers will be marked with the G code (unauthorised family holiday) for this period.

If you would like to discuss the matter further, please contact our Attendance Officer, Miss Lewis, on 01256 762468 in the first instance.

Yours sincerely

Miss Powell  
Headteacher

## Appendix 3: Attendance Policy Quick Guide for Parents

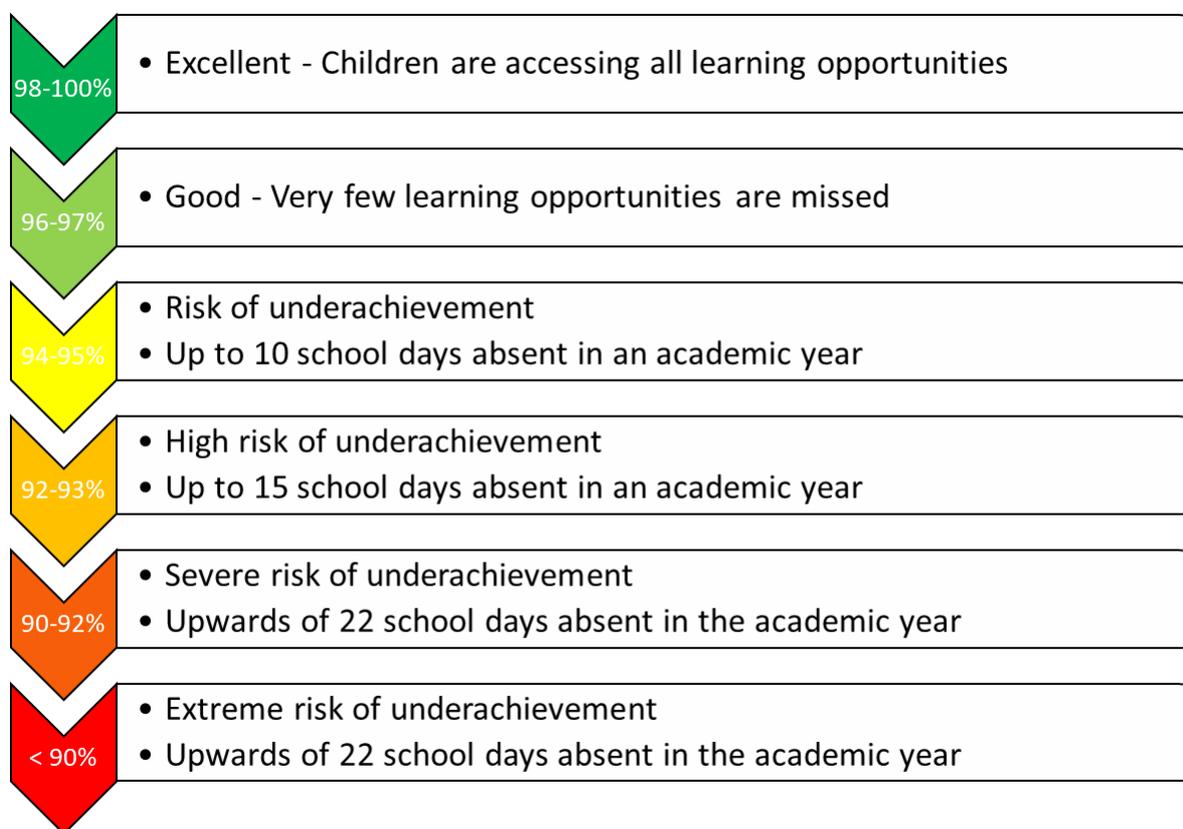
### Attendance Policy Quick Guide for Parents

We expect pupils to attend school for 100% of the academic year.

**You can support your child to have excellent attendance by taking these steps:**

- Ensure your child arrives on time for school every day and is ready to learn. Arriving after registration is recorded as an unauthorised absence. Pupils must be in school by 08:40am.
- If your child appears to be only slightly unwell, send them in to school. We have staff who will contact you if their condition deteriorates.
- Book any medical appointments outside of school hours. If this is unavoidable, please book for as late in the afternoon as possible and inform the school of appointments in advance.
- Supply a copy of the appointment card or hospital letter if your child has an appointment during school hours.

If your child becomes reluctant to go to school or you need help, please contact the school immediately; we are more likely to be able to work together to solve any problems if we act early.



### **‘On the day’ absences: what should I do if my child is not ‘fit’ to go into school?**

On each day your child is unfit to come to school, parents must report this absence by calling 01256 762468, or sending an email to [adminoffice@hook-jun.hants.sch.uk](mailto:adminoffice@hook-jun.hants.sch.uk) by 9.00am.

In the message you must leave your child’s full name, year and class name and give the specific reason for absence. The information you give will be recorded on our official register.

### **Leave of Absence**

There may be exceptional circumstances where you need to request a leave of absence for your child. Please use our ‘Request to Authorise Pupil Absence from School in Term Time’ form to make these types of requests.

The form should be submitted at least 10 days in advance of the leave of absence, via [adminoffice@hook-jun.hants.sch.uk](mailto:adminoffice@hook-jun.hants.sch.uk). You will receive a letter in response, to advise if the request has been granted or declined.

## Appendix 4: Attendance codes

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 approved by the school. Schools must also record the nature of the approved educational activity.	Examples of nature of activity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1) Attending taster days at college</li> <li>• 2) Attending courses at college</li> <li>• 3) Attending unregistered alternative provision arranged by the school</li> </ul>
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
K	Attending education provision arranged by the Local Authority Schools must also record the nature of the provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attending courses at college</li> <li>• Attending unregistered alternative provision such as, home tutoring</li> </ul>
P	Sporting activity	The pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is a sporting activity
V	Educational visit or trip	An educational visit or trip arranged by or on behalf of the school and supervised by a member of school staff
W	Attending work experience	The pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is work experience provided under arrangements made by a local authority or the school as part of the pupil's education
Code	Definition	Scenario

<b>Absent – leave of absence</b>		
<b>C</b>	<p>Leave of absence for exceptional circumstances</p> <p>Generally, a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation would not constitute an exceptional circumstance</p>	Schools must judge each application individually considering the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind each request. Where a leave of absence is granted, the school will determine the number of days a pupil can be absent from school
<b>C1</b>	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	All schools can grant leaves of absence for pupils to undertake employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours
<b>C2</b>	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable	All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a pupil's best interests, there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet their individual needs
<b>E</b>	Excluded	Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made
<b>I</b>	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	The pupil is unable to attend due to illness (both physical and mental health related). Schools should advise parents to notify them on the first day the child is unable to attend due to illness
<b>J1</b>	Interview	Attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution
<b>M</b>	Medical appointment	Attending a medical or dental appointment
<b>R</b>	Religious observance	The pupil is absent on a day that is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body the parent(s) belong to
<b>S</b>	Study leave	Studying for a public examination. Must be used sparingly with revision opportunities in school
<b>T</b>	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	The pupil is a mobile child and their parent(s) is travelling in the course of their trade or business and the pupil is travelling with them

X	Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school	
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Code	Definition	Scenario
<b>Absent - unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause</b>		
Q	Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements	This is linked to transport not other access arrangements
Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available	The school is not within walking distance of the pupil's home and the transport to and from the school that is normally provided for the pupil by the school or local authority is not available
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel	
Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed	
Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed	Adverse weather
Y5	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention	In police detention, remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or detained under a sentence of detention.
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law	
Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause	An emergency has prevented the pupil from attending. The unavoidable cause must be something that affects the pupil, not just the parent.

Code	Definition	Scenario
<b>Unauthorised absence</b>		
<b>G</b>	Unauthorised holiday	Holiday not granted by the school
<b>N</b>	Reason for absence not yet established	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)
<b>O</b>	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	Where no reason for absence is established or the school is not satisfied that the reason given
<b>U</b>	Arrival after registration	A pupil has arrived late after the register has closed but before the end of session.

Code	Definition	Scenario
<b>Administrative Codes</b>		
<b>Z</b>	Prospective pupil not on admission register	To enable schools to set up registers in advance of pupils joining the school to ease administration burdens.
<b>#</b>	Planned whole school closure	Whole school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day/use of whole school as polling station

## Appendix 5 – Attendance Strategy

# Attendance Strategy

It is a parents legal responsibility to ensure that their child attends school every day.

Improving school attendance is everyone's business and requires school and parents working together.

## 'Moments Matter, Attendance Counts'

This strategy focuses on children who are taking preventable odd days of absence – or 'avoidable absence' – rather than children who face greater barriers to attendance, such as those with long term medical needs.



**“From the first day of term to the last, the small moments in a school day make a real difference to your child #AttendanceCounts”**

At Hook Junior School, we believe that good attendance is secured by developing a partnership between families, schools and our partner agencies involved in the social and emotional development of children.

Your child's potential and life prospects are significantly enhanced when he/she has high attendance. Good attendance impacts positively on your child's physical, social and emotional development.

Low attendance places your child at a significant disadvantage to meeting their academic potential, social and emotional development, negatively impacts on confidence, affects friendships and creates attendance anxiety.

**The aim of our attendance strategy is to:**

- Increase every child's and the school's overall attendance. We expect regular school attendance and that each child attends school every single day.
- Promote good school attendance across the whole school community.
- Reduce the number of children with persistent absence (below 90%) through clarity of expectation, effective support and adherence to policy.
- Promote effective inter agency work. This includes working with appropriate external agencies to develop action plans.

<b>Attendance Categories</b>		
<b>100%</b>	<b>Outstanding – no learning missed</b>	
<b>98 – 99%</b>	<b>Excellent</b>	
<b>96 – 97%</b>	<b>Good</b>	
<b>95 – 92%</b>	<b>Cause for concern- high level of absence that could impact your child's progress and development</b>	
<b>90 – 92%</b>	<b>Unsatisfactory – high level of absence that is impacting directly on child's learning and social and emotional development</b>	
<b>Below 90% (Persistently Absent)</b>	<b>Serious cause for concern – high level of absence will seriously inhibit your child's potential and life chances</b>	
<b>Whole School Approach to maintain attendance of at least 97%</b>		
<b>This level of attendance will ensure that a child has the greatest opportunity to fulfil their potential</b>		
<b>Daily Actions</b>	<b>Weekly Actions</b>	<b>Termly Actions</b>

<p>Accurate recording of daily registers</p> <p>All children accounted for with clear reasons for absence registered</p> <p>Follow procedures and processes in the Attendance Policy and Strategy</p> <p>Feedback where relevant to SLT any significant changes/breaks in trend</p> <p>Increase calls home during transitional periods to offer pastoral support</p> <p>Ensure vulnerable families are contacted, including those where children have a history of school avoidance.</p>	<p>Analyse weekly data, tracking specifically PA, SA and Amber children.</p> <p>Monitor weekly data against FFT National and 'Like for Like' school data.</p> <p>Attendance whole school / class figures printed in the newsletter and communicated to all staff</p> <p>Attendance 'message' in newsletter (using 'Attendance Communications toolkit' DFE)</p> <p>Feedback on any attendance 'messages' at weekly SLT meeting</p>	<p>Half-termly communication to be sent to pupils whose attendance is over 97% - celebrating positive attendance</p> <p>Attendance reported by class teacher at Autumn and Spring Learning Consultations – recorded on End of Year Summer Report</p> <p>Website updated with latest DFE guidance (more frequently as required)</p> <p>Report Termly whole school and group attendance to Governors</p> <p>Track YOY progress/decline and feedback to SLT</p> <p>SLT to plan school events on days/periods that school attendance is historically vulnerable</p>
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**Targeted Approach when attendance falls below 97%**

**Over the course of a full academic year, this level of attendance will begin to impact negatively on a child's progress and attainment.**

Daily Actions	Weekly Actions	Termly Actions
<p>Any 'uncertain' absences to be challenged with parent and unauthorised if necessary by the Attendance Officer.</p> <p>Any unexpected absence taken pre or post a school break or holiday to be challenged.</p> <p>Track 'odd day' absentees and encourage pupils into school with support of medicine administration and regular adult check ins.</p> <p>Pay close attention to Monday/Friday trends and challenge where appropriate.</p>	<p>Attendance Officer to contact any parents of pupils causing particular concern with open communication – identify potential barriers to absence and put actions in place to address as necessary (CPOMs of these conversations and actions)</p> <p>Attendance Officer and SLT to discuss this group at weekly meeting to see if any further provision / actions need to be put in place to prevent further decline in attendance.</p> <p>Identify groups of children tracking below the National/'Like for Like' average and implement strategies to improve.</p>	<p>Half-termly communication to be sent home to update parents on their child's attendance – any improved attendance to be celebrated or decline in attendance highlighted.</p> <p>Implement support strategies/interventions to overcome barriers to school.</p> <p>Termly report to Governors on attendance figures.</p> <p>Identify group of children where school anxiety may become a future barrier to attendance and offer pastoral support.</p>

## Targeted Approach when attendance falls below 92%

**Over a full academic year, this is a high level of absence and a child's progress and attainment and potential is being held back.**

Daily Actions	Weekly Actions	Termly Actions
<p>Prioritise monitoring of individual children below 92% - inform parents of concerns, providing academic and mental health context.</p> <p>Offer support available to parents and encourage collaborative goals to improve.</p> <p>Discuss this group on an individual basis at the weekly Attendance meeting. Any 'uncertain' absences to be challenged with parent and unauthorised if necessary by the Attendance Officer.</p> <p>Track patterns of absence, repeated attendance behaviours, work with class teachers to understand overall school experience of the child.</p> <p>Other relevant staff are informed of absence of 'at risk' children (SENDCO and SLT to be informed)</p>	<p>Parents to be sent a letter informing them that their child is at risk of PA, detailing what that means.</p> <p>Attendance Leader to monitor / track children under 92% – identify potential barriers to absence and put actions in place to address as necessary (CPOMs of these conversations and actions)</p> <p>Attendance Officer and SLT to discuss this group at weekly meeting to see if any further provision / actions need to be put in place to prevent further decline in attendance.</p> <p>Review any possible involvement of external agencies e.g. EMTAS, school nurse, Early Help</p> <p>Parents to be made aware when close to being issued with a fine.</p>	<p>Half-termly communication to be sent home to update parents on attendance – any improved attendance to be celebrated or decline in attendance highlighted.</p> <p>Joint attendance and class teachers meeting with parents to discuss the implications of the low attendance on the child's progress and put plans in place.</p> <p>Termly reporting to Governors on attendance data, with particular reference to the PA list, Disadvantaged children and children with SEND.</p>

**Targeted Approach when attendance falls to 90% or below**

**If attendance falls below 90% over a full academic year, this will seriously impact and inhibit your child's progress, attainment and confidence.**

Daily Actions	Weekly Actions	Termly Actions
<p>Inform parent that the child is recognised as persistently absent, and invite them to a face to face meeting.</p> <p>Absences of these children only to be authorised with medical evidence.</p> <p>Attendance Officer to challenge absence and do all they can to get child into school. If required, home visit to take place.</p> <p>Regular contact with child to offer pastoral support and understand ongoing challenges.</p> <p>First day phone calls/text, where a child is vulnerable, these calls are prioritised. Other relevant staff are informed of absence of 'at risk' children (SENDCO and SLT to be informed)</p>	<p>Parents to be sent a letter informing them that their child is persistently absent, detailing what that means.</p> <p>Issue 'Notice to Improve' letter when support is not engaged with</p> <p>Issue Penalty Notices where appropriate</p> <p>Attendance Officer to monitor / track children under 90%. Identify potential barriers to attendance and put actions in place to address as necessary (CPOMs of these conversations and actions – targets for improvement to be set).</p> <p>Monitoring to take place for referrals to Legal Intervention Team (10 sessions of unauthorised absence in 10 weeks)</p> <p>Children on PA list highlighted to SLT at weekly meeting Make referrals for any possible involvement of external agencies e.g., EMTAS, school nurse, Early Help</p>	<p>Half-termly communication to be sent home to update parents on attendance – any improved attendance to be celebrated or decline in attendance highlighted.</p> <p>Joint attendance and class teachers meeting with parents to discuss the implications of low attendance on the child's progress. Attendance contract to be completed/signed. Where age appropriate, child to be included.</p> <p>Termly reporting to Governors on attendance data, with particular reference to the PA list, Disadvantaged children and children with SEND.</p>