

Hanbury's Farm and Oakhill Primary Schools Federation



Attendance Policy 2024



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Our Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Promoting good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [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 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [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.

Our School Roles and Responsibilities

The school will:

- Ensure that pupils attend regularly and punctually.
- Ensure efficient and accurate registration of pupils.
- Produce official registers for the Educational Welfare Worker (EWW) inspection.
- Operate a first day contact system for absent pupils.
- Contact parents/carers if a child is consistently late.
- Obtain explanations for any absences from the parent/carer.
- Publish individual attendance figures to parents annually and report overall school attendance to governors termly.
- Provide overall attendance percentages on a weekly basis in order to monitor, plan and take relevant action on poor attendance and punctuality.
- Ensure that there are clear communication routes to discuss any difficulties which may be preventing a pupil from attending school.
- Discuss/refer any pupils causing concern to the EWW.
- Encourage the support of parents/carers in the school's role.
- To effectively manage the termly "Traffic Light" Attendance Scheme.

	More than 95%
	91% to 94%
	Less than 90%

The governing board will:

- Promote the importance of school attendance across the school’s policies and ethos
- Make sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly review and challenge attendance data
- Monitor attendance figures for the whole school
- Make sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Hold the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

The Parent/Carer will:

- Support the school in its objective to improve attendance and punctuality.
- Ensure that their child attends regularly.
- Ensure that their child arrives at school on time.
- Contact the school, by telephone or text message if their child is unable to attend. Reasons for the absence and the expected time they will be away from school should be provided. In exceptional circumstances further evidence of a child's illness, such as a doctor's note will be requested.
- Ensure all dental/medical appointments are made before or after school or during school holidays not term time.
- Support the school in its aim to raise the achievement of their child through full attendance at school.

Children will:

- Attend school regularly.
- Enter school via the school office if they arrive late.

Responsibility of the Head teacher:

- To oversee the implementation of attendance policies and procedures.
- To ensure the collection of accurate statistical data.
- To develop efficient monitoring and evaluation systems.
- To form positive links with outside agencies e.g. The EWW, Early Help Teams, Social Services, etc.
- To refer pupils to the EWW if necessary.
- To report back to the Governing Body on attendance.

Responsibility of the Class Teacher:

- To ensure accurate register keeping.

- To communicate with the Attendance Officer any individual pupils' punctuality or attendance concerns.
- To positively promote good attendance within the classroom.
- To make positive links with parents/carers (which may involve informal discussions concerning punctuality or absence).
- To save the register each morning as soon as possible.
- To report to the office any child needing to go home during the day, ensuring accurate attendance record keeping.

Responsibility of the School Attendance Office

- To set up class registers at the beginning of each year and provide the class teacher with an up to date class list.
- To record late arrivals in the 'lateness' book. To record pupils who leave or return to the school site during the school day on pupil signing in sheet.
- To print out official registers for inspection by the EWW.
- To store letters from parents/carers to be available for inspection by the EWW.
- To text parents/carers requesting reasons for pupil's absence.
- To receive telephone calls and text messages from parents/carers regarding non-attendance and record this information to be communicated to teaching staff.
- To authorise attendance following school policy.
- To bring attendance concerns to the attention of the Headteacher and discuss any action to be taken.
- To create a termly attendance newsletter to share statistical information with the community.

Attendance register

We will keep an attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first and second session of each school day. 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.

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Pupils must arrive in school by **8:45am** on each school day.

The register for the first session at Oakhill and Hanbury's Farm will be taken at **8:45am** and will be kept open until 9am. Arrival after 9am will be marked as an unauthorised absence.

The register for the second session at Oakhill will be taken at the following times;

- Reception, Year 1 and Year 2: 12.45pm
- Years 3 to 6: 1.15pm

Children arriving for the afternoon session only must arrive in time for their class afternoon registration. Arrival after this time will be marked as unauthorised.

The register for the second session at Hanbury's Farm will be taken at 1:15pm.

Children arriving to the afternoon session only, must arrive in time for their class afternoon registration. Arrival after this time will be marked as unauthorised.

Attendance and punctuality targets:

- The overall weekly percentage attendance target at Hanbury's Farm and Oakhill Primary School is consistently over **97%** (the National Government acceptable target), the school aims to ensure this good practice is maintained.
- Our attendance module SIMS provides accurate and timely information about the levels of absence and lateness within the school.

Authorised/Unauthorised absence and Lateness:

- The Attendance Officer will enter the register information onto SIMS daily.
- Weekly attendance reports are created and persistent absentee reports are printed half termly.
- The Attendance Officers/ senior leadership team will be responsible for authorising absence. A written note, verbal message, text message or phone call does not in itself oblige the school to authorise absence, if the Attendance Officer does not accept the explanation offered as a valid reason the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.
- Absence may be authorised for school visits/attending interviews, for religious reasons, for exclusions, or other circumstances that are unavoidable, e.g. serious emergency, bereavement, domestic violence, or moving house.
- It is advised that dental appointments be made after school or during the school holidays.
- Registers close at 9 a.m.
- **If your child arrives after the close of the register, then school is obliged to record them as absent for that half-day session, unless there is a valid reason for lateness, such as a doctor's appointment. In these cases, the lateness may be authorised depending on the circumstances.**

Leave of Absence - Term time

- **Leave of absence for holidays during term time will not be granted.**
- Leave due to exceptional circumstances, such as the death of a close family member, will be considered if put in writing to the Head Teacher.

Sanctions & Fixed Penalties

The information below, is from the Staffordshire County Council's Code of Conduct and clarifies where penalty notices may be issued. **Please note that the following criteria is currently under review and is likely to change under new national framework.**

A Penalty Notice can only be issued in cases of unauthorised absence.

Penalty Notices may be considered appropriate if one of the following criteria is met:

There is unauthorised persistent absence. "Persistent" means at least 20 sessions of unauthorised absence over a period of twelve school weeks, excluding holidays. These absences do not need to be consecutive.

There is a period of absence not authorised by the head teacher, or in excess of the period authorised by the head teacher. (e.g. family holiday)

Persistent late arrival at school, i.e. after the register has closed. "Persistent" means at least 10 sessions of unauthorised late arrival over a period of 12 school weeks, excluding holidays. These late episodes do not need to be consecutive.

The presence of an excluded child in a public place at any time during school hours in that child's first five days of exclusion. An "excluded child" is one who has been excluded from school for a given period under the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

A Penalty Notice will not be issued in respect of children in the care of the LA with whom other interventions will be used.

Promoting positive Attendance

We aim to promote positive attendance and to encourage parents/carers to support the school in its aim to reduce unauthorised absence and lateness in the following ways:

- Clear expectations explained at admission interview.
- Discussions with parents/carers on an informal basis and during teacher, parent/carer consultations.
- Collecting and analysing attendance statistics on a termly basis.
- Early intervention with parents/carers of children causing concern. Inviting the parent/carer to discuss the situation and giving clear consistent messages about what the school will accept as a valid reason. Inviting parents to enter a Parenting Contract to support school attendance and punctuality.
- Sending standard letters and individual letters to parents/carers if there is a cause for concern.
- Award certificates and 'prizes' for 100% attendance and punctuality termly and for the year as part of a whole school certificate award system.
- Award certificates for most improved attendance throughout the year.

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
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupil is attending a place for education provision arranged by a local authority
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J1	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
C1	Leave of absence – regulated performance or employment	For the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad
C2	Leave of absence – part-time timetable	For a child of compulsory school age who is subject to a part-time timetable

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
Q	Unable to attend due to lack of access arrangements	Pupil unable to attend because a local authority has a duty to make access arrangements to enable the pupil's attendance and has failed to do so.

Y1	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School is not within walking distance and usual transport is not available (below the age of 8, 2 miles and age 8 and above, 3 miles)
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel	There is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency
Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed	The pupil cannot practically be accommodated in the in the parts of the premises that remain in use
Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed	Where the school was planned to be open but the school is closed unexpectedly
Y5	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention	In police detention, remanded to youth detention, detained under a sentence of detention
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law	The pupils travel to school would be contrary to guidance published by the Secretary of State/prohibited by any legislation relating to the incidence or transmission of infection or disease
Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable clause	An unavoidable clause not covered by one of the other Y codes
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: Flowcharts to demonstrate school procedures. *Please be aware that these are currently under review and may change in line with new national framework.*

Unauthorised Lateness (after registers close)



If your child has **5 sessions of lateness**, you will receive **an awareness letter** from the school informing you that your child's attendance will be closely monitored for any further lateness.



If there are any further sessions of lateness, you will receive a letter inviting you to attend an attendance clinic, where your child's attendance will be discussed, any issues or support offered such as a parenting contract.



If this clinic is **not attended** and there has been 10 sessions of lateness within a 12 week period, the case will be referred to the local authority, where the local authority will issue you with a **20 day warning letter**.



During the 20 days set by the local authority, if there are any further unauthorised absences, a **penalty notice** will be issued. The fine consists of:

£60 per child per parent/ carer if paid within 21 days. (Rising to £80 per parent/carers from August 2024)

£120 per child per parent/carers if paid within 28 days. (Rising to £160 per parent carer from August 2024)

Failure to pay the fine will result in court action.

Unauthorised absence - where a holiday has been requested



Parents make a holiday request, stating any reasons for leave of absence.



A letter will be sent to parents stating if the leave of absence has been granted or declined.



If this leave is declined, a penalty notice will be requested from the local authority .If the local authority issue a penalty notice the fine is:

£60 per child per parent/carer if paid within 20 days.(Rising to £80 from August 2024)

£120 per child per parent/carer if paid after 21 days. (Rising to £160 from August 2024)

Failure to pay the fine will results in court action.

Persistent Unauthorised Absence



If your child has **10 sessions/ 5 days off with no reason being given for these absences**, you will receive **an awareness letter** from the school informing you that your child's attendance will be closely monitored for any further absences.



If there are any further absences, you will receive a letter inviting you to attend an attendance clinic, where your child's attendance will be discussed, any issues or support offered such as completion of an Early Help Assessment.



If this clinic is **not attended** and there has been a **20 sessions/ 10 days of absence with no evidence being provided**, the case will be referred to the local authority, where the local authority will issue you with a **20 day warning letter**.



During the 20 days set by the local authority, if there are any further unauthorised absences, a **penalty notice** will be issued. The fine consists of:

£60 per child per parent/ carer if paid within 21 days.

£120 per child per parent/carer if paid within 28 days.

Failure to pay the fine will result in court action.

Fines are increasing from August 2024

£80 per child per parent/carer if paid within 21 days

£160 per child/ carer if paid within 28 days