



Attendance Policy

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Date of review	September 2023	Date ratified by Governors	October 2023
Date of next review	September 2024	Reason for review	New Policy

This policy is intended for all pupils at Hampton Pre-Prep & Prep School (HPP&P or the School) and therefore includes children in the EYFS. It should be read in conjunction with other relevant policies including:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Care and Supervision Policy
- Policy to Promote Good Behaviour – Rewards – Sanctions - Exclusions

Introduction

Children need to attend school regularly to ensure that they get full benefit from their education; missing lessons makes them vulnerable to falling behind. Poor attendance can influence attainment.

Attendance at school is a legal requirement and these requirements are contained in:

- The Education Act 1996 - sections 434(1)(3)(4) & (6) and 458(4) & (5)
- 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

Aims

To improve the overall attendance of pupils in school we aim:

- To make attendance and punctuality a priority for all associated with the School,
- To develop a framework which defines agreed roles and responsibilities and promotes consistency in carrying out designated tasks,
- To develop a systematic approach to gathering and analysing attendance related data,
- To implement a system of rewards through termly certificates,
- To investigate any obstacles to attendance,
- To provide support, advice and guidance to parents/carers and pupils.

Expectations

For pupils

- To attend regularly,
- To arrive on time, appropriately prepared for the day,
- To hand any letters from parents regarding absence to class teacher,
- For school attendance to be a priority.

For parents/carers

- To fulfil their responsibility by ensuring their child / children attend school regularly and on time,
- To ensure that they contact the School before 9.00am on the first day their child is unable to attend, and every day of absence that follows,
- To ensure their child arrives on time and is well prepared for the school day,
- To contact the School, in confidence, whenever any problem occurs that may keep their child away from school,
- To inform the School and seek authorisation for any forthcoming appointments and where possible arrange appointments outside of the school day,
- To ensure the continuity of their child's education by taking holidays during the school holiday period unless there are exceptional circumstances,
- To produce documentation supporting appointments and absences,
- To be responsible for travel arrangements to and from school.

For the School

- A broad and balanced education that is dependent on regular attendance at school,
- The encouragement and promotion of good attendance,
- Regular, efficient, and accurate recording of attendance,
- First day contact with parents when a child fails to attend school without providing good reason,
- Prompt action on any problems notified,
- Pursuit of reasons for persistent absence.

Registration

The School is legally required to register pupils. It is therefore essential that all pupils are registered, morning and afternoon, in SIMS.

Pupils should go straight to their form rooms for registration, morning activities and in preparation for assembly or the start of the day 8.50am (Prep) and 8.55am (Pre-Prep) for Reception – Year 2.

Signing Out

The Signing In and Out Book at Main Reception asks for a destination and reason for leaving. Parents need to specify their reason for their child leaving e.g., illness, appointment, etc. Parents must sign their child back in on their return.

School Absence

Non-Medical Absence

Days away from school do matter. Parents are asked to help by, wherever possible, not taking holidays in term time or keeping their child away from school for minor ailments.

The provision of school holidays is sufficiently generous to allow family holidays to occur within them and the dates of holidays are always published at least 12 months in advance. **Requests for absence other than for medical reasons must be made in writing to the Headmaster well in advance – please email his PA, Miss Jolley h.jolley@hamptonprep.org.uk**

Only the Headmaster can authorise absence requests. If permission is not obtained in advance, it will be recorded as 'unauthorised'.

Parents who choose to take their child / children out of lessons, should be aware that the School is unable to provide work for that period.

Medical Absence

If a child is unwell, a parent should contact the School Office daily, at the earliest opportunity, and then daily until the child returns; parents can call the School on 0208 979 1844 or email, secretary@hamptonprep.org.uk.

Emails can also be sent to the child's Form Teacher, and should always be copied to the School Office- secretary@hamptonprep.org.uk. Once a child returns to school, parents should confirm in writing the period of absence and the reason. This can be sent via email to secretary@hamptonprep.org.uk. Such information is necessary for the School registers and is a statutory legal requirement.

Medical/Dental Appointments

It is generally better if these can be arranged outside school hours, but we know this is not always possible. Where pupils need to attend such appointments during the school day, they **MUST** be signed out at reception. Parents should indicate in advance whether the pupil will be returning and ensure that they sign back in at reception.

Emergency Occasions

There are some occasions e.g., bereavements, family problems, etc. where it may be inappropriate for pupils to attend school; the School will be sympathetic to such needs.

Recording Absence

Each absence is classed as authorised or unauthorised. Absences are coded as authorised where reasons are considered valid and unauthorised where no explanation or unacceptable reasons are given.

Authorised Absence

Authorised absence is where the School has either given approval in advance for the pupil to be away or where an explanation for absence has been offered afterwards has been accepted as satisfactory.

Parents may not authorise absence; only schools can do this. Should school staff have reason to doubt that the explanation regarding an absence is not genuine, the absence should be treated as unauthorised. Pupils are not allowed, without permission from the Headmaster, to leave early or to be absent for any cause other than illness or emergency.

If no message is received, the School will assume that a child is absent without a parent's permission and will then make every effort to contact the parent(s). In the case of an extended period of absence through illness, parents/carers are asked to regularly update the School of the pupil's progress.

Absence may generally be authorised for the following reasons:

- Illness, medical or dental appointments,
- Days of religious observance,
- Exclusion,
- Family bereavement,
- Involvement in a public performance,
- Family holidays (when the school has given approval in advance and for no more than 10 days.),
- Off-site examination,
- Special occasions - the nature of such special occasions will be determined by the School on an individual basis,
- Lateness (when the pupil arrives after the register has closed and offers a satisfactory explanation).

Excessive amounts of authorised absence may often be as damaging to continuity of learning as unauthorised absence. The School will therefore only authorise absence sparingly and only after careful consideration, particularly where pupils have a history of irregular attendance.

The School uses agreed codes to register an authorised absence – see **Appendix A** for all codes.

Approved Educational Activity

An approved educational activity is where a pupil is taking part in supervised educational activity such as field trips, educational visits, work experience or alternative provision. Pupils can only be recorded as receiving off-site educational activity if the activity meets the requirements prescribed in regulation 6(4) of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006.

The activity must be of an educational nature approved by the School and supervised by someone authorised by the School. The activity must take place during the session for which the mark is recorded.

Unauthorised Absence

Unauthorised absence is where no explanation has been given for the pupil's absence or where the explanation offered is considered by the School to be unacceptable.

Absence will not be authorised in the following circumstances:

- No explanation is offered by the parent,
- The explanation offered is unsatisfactory (shopping, minding the house),
- Family holidays (which are taken without the School's prior consent or knowledge and/or are in excess of any time agreed with the School),
- Lateness when the pupil arrives after 9.00am and fails to offer a satisfactory explanation,
- Special occasions (when the School does not agree that these should be given).

Responding to Unauthorised Absence

The School will make every effort to contact parents of an unauthorised absentee. If this is not possible, and parents cannot be contacted, the local authority Single Point of Access (SPA), or the police may be contacted. If no contact is received from the parents during the first day of absence then the police will be notified in order to check that all is well with the family.

If a pupil is absent without parental permission, Hampton School Trust's **Missing Pupil Policy** will be followed.

Persistent Absence (PA)

The parent of a child of compulsory school age is required by law to ensure that the pupil regularly attends the School at which he/she is registered.

The Department for Education (DfE) defines a 'persistent absentee' as a pupil who, at any point in the year, has accumulated absence at 10% or more of the available sessions regardless of whether any of it is authorised. The PA status may change as the terms progress, but these pupils are at particular risk of achieving poor outcomes at school and beyond.

Should a parent fail to ensure that his/her child attends school regularly, the parent is guilty of an offence and, if convicted, may be fined up to £2,500 and/or sentenced to up to three months in prison. Alternatively, parents may be subject to a fixed penalty notice. When a child of compulsory school age is absent from school, the attendance register must indicate whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised. (See the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006.) Should the absence be authorised by the school, the parent cannot be convicted of any offence, although the implications for a child regarding poor attendance may be the subject of further discussion in the context of the promotion of wellbeing.

Responding to Persistent Absence

Where the School has concerns about excessive absence patterns this will be discussed with parents to gain a better understanding of the problems and offer support.

Any pupil whose attendance falls below 95% will be classed as a 'cause for concern', regardless of whether the absence is authorised or not. An email will be sent to parents by the School Office - see **Appendix B**.

A pupil whose attendance falls below 90% is classed as 'persistently absent', regardless of whether the absence has been authorised. In such cases parents will be asked to attend an attendance review meeting with either the Deputy Head Pastoral or the Head of Pre-Prep - see **Appendix C**.

If the justifications for absence are inadequate, or the level of absence is likely to have a significant impact on the child's education, the School will refer the matter to Social Services. Percentage absences will be

calculated each half term and any children reaching the 90% list will be monitored on a fortnightly basis to ensure that the attendance improves.

Punctuality

Parents should try to ensure that their child arrives at school so that they are present each day for registration. Time spent in registration as a form group and with their teacher is important. Notices are given and activities begin. Events such as Assemblies are also timetabled then. Being late for the start of the school day will impact on a pupil's learning.

Pupils who arrive after the start of the school day will be recorded as 'late for school'.

We understand that sometimes that lateness is beyond one's control but where explanations are inadequate, or the lateness becomes frequent, the Deputy Head (Pastoral) or Head of Pre-Prep will discuss this with parents to gain a better understanding of the problems and to offer support. Repeated lateness at the beginning of a school session can amount to a failure to attend regularly for the purpose of Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act.

Appendix A: Absence Codes

The following codes are to be used for authorised absences on the register

M: Illness

Schools can request medical evidence from parents / carers if they feel the authenticity of an illness is in doubt.

M: Medical or dental appointments

Parents / Carers are encouraged to arrange appointments out of school hours but the school will authorise if confirmation of the appointment is provided.

C: Other circumstances

This code will be used for any authorised non-medical reasons for a child's absence from school, i.e. family funeral.

I: Interview

This code will be used when it has been agreed that the pupil can miss school to attend an interview or entrance exam.

P: Approved sporting activity

This code will be used in times of approved sporting activities in school times, i.e. training sessions, trials and sporting events.

E: Educational visits and trips

This code will be used in times of approved educational visits or events in school times, i.e. revision days, subject trips.

Appendix B: Correspondence for concerning absence

This email will be sent by the School Office to parents if a pupil has less than 95% attendance.

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian:

Attendance is an essential component to a pupil's academic success, and thus it is important for us as a school to highlight significant absences. Often, the number of days that pupils are absent accumulate without parents realising how many days have been missed.

This email is to inform you that your child has an attendance rate of less than 95%.

Government regulations state that pupil attendance that falls below 90% (even with authorised absence) is unsatisfactory. We do understand that this might be unavoidable, but the School is keen to encourage attendance that remains above this threshold.

Please do let us know if we can provide any further support.

Appendix C: Correspondence for persistent absence

This email will be sent by the School Office to parents if a pupil has below 90% attendance.

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian:

Attendance is an essential component to a pupil's academic success. Often, the number of days that pupils are absent accumulate without parents realising how many days have been missed.

This email is to inform you that your child's attendance is currently below 90% which according to government guidelines is an 'unacceptable' level.

Although your child's absences may have been authorised, any absence means a loss of contact time with the teacher and a loss of critical instruction. This is very difficult for a pupil to make up, even with parental help at home, and will need a clear plan for the pupil to ensure completion of missed work.

The Department for Education's research into the link between absence and attainment concluded that as the level of overall absence increases, the likelihood of achieving key attainment outcomes at the end of a key stage decreases.

Please see the link below for more detail.

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/509679/The-link-between-absence-and-attainment-at-KS2-and-KS4-2013-to-2014-academic-year.pdf

The link between absence and attainment at KS2 and KS4 2013/14 academic year. Research report March 2016

We will be in contact with you to arrange an attendance review meeting.

We look forward to working with you to improve your child's attendance and thank you in advance for your support and cooperation.