



Attendance Policy

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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.

Hampton Pre-Prep & Prep (HPP&P or the School) aspires to high levels of attendance from all pupils. Good attendance is essential for all pupils to get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, wellbeing and wider life chances.

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 (& amendments dated 2010, 2011, 2013 and 2016)

The Designated Safeguarding Governors maintain oversight of the Attendance policy, procedures and their implementation as part of their overview of safeguarding and welfare. The Head of Pre-Prep and the Deputy Head Pastoral (Prep) are the School's Senior Attendance Champion and have overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance.

The aims of this policy are follows:

- to develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance;
- to ensure, so far as possible, that every pupil in the School is able to benefit from the and make their full contribution to the life of the School;
- to prioritise and where possible improve attendance and punctuality across the School, reduce absence and set out the School's approach to the management of absence / no-attendance;
- to recognise the linkages between attendance / absence and pupil wellbeing, specifically ensuring a consistent whole school approach to safeguarding; and
- to help promote a whole school culture of safety, equality and protection.

Scope and application

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.

This policy is designed to address the specific statutory obligations on the School to record attendance and absence.

Regulatory framework

This policy has been prepared to meet the School's responsibilities under:

Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014;

Education and Skills Act 2008;

Children Act 1989;

Childcare Act 2006;

Sponsorship Duties (UKVI, July 2023);

The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024;

Equality Act 2010; and

Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulation (**UK GDPR**)

This policy has regard to the following guidance and advice:

Working together to improve school attendance (DfE, applies from 19 August 2024);
Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance (DfE, applies from 19 August 2024);
Toolkit for schools: communicating with families to support attendance (DfE, September 2023);
Guidance for parents on school attendance (Office of the Children's Commissioner, September 2023);
'Is my child too ill for school?' guidance (NHS, April 2024);
Keeping children safe in education (DfE, September 2024);¹
School behaviour and attendance: parental responsibility measures (DfE, May 2020);
Children missing education (DfE, September 2016);
Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school (DfE, August 2017);
Behaviour in schools: advice for headteachers and school staff (DfE, February 2024);
Mental health and behaviour in schools (DfE, November 2018);
Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools (DfE, February 2023);
Support for pupils where a mental health issue is affecting attendance (DfE, February 2023);
Remote education guidance (DfE, updated February 2023); and
SEND Code of practice: 0 to 25 years (DfE and Department of Health, May 2015)].

This policy has regard to *Working Together to Improve School Attendance (2024)* and should be read in conjunction with the following School policies:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures;
- Missing Pupil Policy;
- Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND);
- Care and Supervision Policy;
- Policy to Promote Good Behaviour – Rewards – Sanctions – Exclusions;
- School Code;
- Parent Contract (Terms and Conditions).

Hampton Pre-Prep & Prep School Aims

- To make attendance and punctuality a priority for all associated with Hampton Pre-Prep & Prep (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 investigate any obstacles to attendance, understanding that at times some pupils find it harder to attend school than others:
- To provide support, advice and guidance to parents/carers and pupils;
- To monitor attendance data and use this to liaise with parents/carers, other schools / settings (at the point of transfer), the local authority and other external agencies.

The School's strategy when doing so is founded upon the understanding that the child's welfare is paramount, and that respectful and positive relationships between home and School will be the foundation of good attendance.

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, on 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 Kindergarten, Reception, Years 1 & 2.

Signing Out

Staff use the Signing In and Out Book at Main Reception at Pre-Prep and at Prep, the electronic signing in / out device.

Parents need to specify their reason for their child leaving e.g., illness, appointment, etc. Parents must ensure their child is signed 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 pursuant to the Policy to Promote Good Behaviour – Rewards – Sanctions - Exclusions,
- 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, with 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. Children being absent from education for prolonged periods and /or on repeat occasions can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues (Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2024).

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'.

The School understands 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.

Procedure to be followed when a pupil is identified as missing during the School day or on a School activity

Staff should also refer to C17 Missing Pupil Policy which can be found on Cezanne.

As stated above, all pupils are registered before School starts in the mornings and also again after lunch. Therefore, for the purpose of this Policy, the term 'missing' refers to a pupil being absent without authorisation or explanation. When a member of staff identifies a pupil as missing from their expected location, immediate action is required as outlined in the procedures below.

It is the responsibility of all Staff to search for absent pupils, including working with the police where necessary.

Communication with parents and/or guardians and the appropriate services (particularly the police) is an integral part of the procedure and all instances of a missing pupil must be reported to the Headmaster of HPP&P and members of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT).

- i. A pupil is identified as missing when:
 - absence at morning registration is not confirmed by a parent or guardian.
 - comparing pupils in a class with the day's absence list and lesson monitor records.
 - a fellow pupil reports a missing friend or classmate.
- ii. Any member of staff discovering a discrepancy must immediately notify the School Office to:
 - contact the relevant members of staff to find out if the absence is expected.
- iii. If the pupil is still found to be missing, the School Office will immediately:
 - inform member(s) of the SLT, who will initiate and oversee a search of the School site and the surrounding roads.
 - advise all teachers due to teach the pupil that day that they must immediately inform the School Office if the pupil appears.
- iv. If the site search fails to locate the pupil:
 - The Headmaster (HPP&P) or a member of SLT will contact the parents and/or guardians; at their discretion, they will arrange for the police to be informed.
- v. If the pupil is found, or the incident is otherwise resolved:
 - The SLT and, if they have been contacted, parents and/or guardians will be informed immediately by the School Office;
 - the police will be informed, if they have been involved;
 - The Deputy Head Pastoral and/or the Head of Pre-Prep will initiate a full inquiry if appropriate;
 - A written report will be provided and will be recorded either in the pupil's School file or on their Safeguarding file, depending on the incident. If appropriate the matter may be referred to the Health and Safety Committee.

Procedure for a 'Missing/Lost Child' on a School Trip off-site

In the extremely unlikely event that a child becomes detached from the group and becomes 'lost' whilst on a trip away from the School premises then staff should follow the following procedure unless another procedure has been set out in the trip Risk Assessment:

- i. All staff and helpers to be alerted and a thorough search made of the immediate and surrounding areas.
- ii. Depending on location, others should be alerted, for example the relevant staff of the location.
- iii. A member of staff should inform the School Office so that the SLT are alerted. On trips in the School holidays, the relevant duty member of the SLT should be contacted.
- iv. If the search does not result in the pupil being found, then the Headmaster and/or other member(s) of the SLT must be informed and they, in turn, will contact the parents and/or guardians.
- v. At their discretion, the Deputy Headmaster (Pastoral) and/or other member(s) of the SLT will arrange for the police to be informed.
- vi. Staff must ensure the welfare, both physical and emotional, of other children in their care.
- vii. The Trip Leader will provide the police/other agencies with details of the child and incident if necessary.
- viii. The member(s) of the SLT are responsible for gathering all relevant information and liaising with the required authorities and parents.
- ix. A full report of the incident will be made as described above.

Pupils leaving or joining the schools within the Trust at non-standard times

The School must notify the local authority when they remove or add a pupil to the admissions register at non-standard transitions, i.e. where a compulsory school-aged child leaves a school before completing the final year or joins a school after the beginning of the first year. In relation to deletions from the register, the duty arises as soon as the grounds for deletion are met and, in any event, before formally deleting the child's name.

As to non-standard admissions, the notification is to be made within five days of the entry on the admission register.

Further information on schools' duties regarding children missing education, including information schools must provide to the local authority when removing a child from the school role at standard and non-standard transition points, can be found in the Department for Education's statutory guidance: Children Missing from Education - [click here](#)

Staff Training

The School provides regular training and guidance on attendance to ensure that staff understand the importance of good attendance and that absent may be a symptom of wider circumstances, and the School's procedures for monitoring, following up and improving attendance.

Dedicated attendance training is provided to any member of staff with a specified attendance function in their role, including administrative, pastoral and senior leaders. This training includes:

- the law and requirements of schools including on the keeping of registers;
- the process for working with other partners to provide more intensive support to pupils who need it;

- the necessary skills to interpret and analyse attendance data; and
- any additional training that would be beneficial to support pupils and pupil cohorts overcome commonly seen barriers to attendance.

Information Sharing

- Personal information regarding attendance is only shared in line with legal obligations and having regard to government guidance on attendance, safeguarding and children missing education.
- The School is legally required to share information from the registers with the local authority. As a minimum, this includes:
 - New pupil and deletion returns;
 - Attendance returns;
 - Sickness returns.
- Information may also be shared with other schools and external agencies where to do so is of benefit to the pupil.
- The law allows local authority officers access to the attendance and admission registers of all types of schools in order to carry out their functions under the Education Acts to support joint working between schools and local authorities. These officers are also permitted to take digital or physical extracts of a school's registers.
- The School must provide specific pupil information on request to the Secretary of State.
- Where appropriate, the School is expected to inform a pupil's social worker and/or youth offending team worker if there are unexplained absences.

Appendix A: Absence Codes (from September 2024)

Definition	Code
Present (am)	/
Present (pm)	\
Late	L
Illness	I
Medical or dental appointment	M
Reason for absence not yet established	N
Holiday not granted by the school	G
Approved sporting activity	P
Leave of absence for exceptional circumstances	C
Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination	S
Interview	J1
Music Lesson	&
Educational visit or trip	V
School Exam	%
Attending any other approved educational activity (not sporting activity or work experience)	B
Religious observance	R
Late Coach	\$
In the library	H
Arrived in school after registration closed	U
Lesson Attendance not required (Sixth Form only)	1
Music/Drama Rehearsal	A
Unapproved Absence (Sixth Form Only)	F
Parent travelling for occupational purposes	T
Attending work experience	W
Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.	C1
Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable	C2
Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements	Q
Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school	X
Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made	E
Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	K
Dual registered at another school	D

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.