

POLICY DOCUMENT

ATTENDANCE & REGISTRATION POLICY

(INCLUDES CHILDREN ABSENT FROM EDUCATION)



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Introduction

Hipperholme Grammar School recognises the paramount importance of maintaining high levels of attendance in maximising academic attainment as well as allowing pupils to play a full part in the extracurricular and social side of school. Whilst it is recognised that there are legitimate reasons for absence, these should be kept to an absolute minimum. The school monitors attendance proactively and works with parents and pupils to maximise attendance. The school recognises that persistent non-attendance may be indicative of a child missing from education, requiring immediate intervention. The Assistant Head (Pastoral) is the senior leader responsible for the strategic approach to attendance in school; other roles and responsibilities are set out below.

Other relevant school policies

[Admissions policy](#)

[Child Protection and Safeguarding policy](#)

National policy and regulations

The School follows the regulations set out in the Independent School Standards Regulations, sections 395 - 407:

- For pupils of compulsory school age an attendance register is taken at the start of each morning and afternoon session.
- A pupil is shown as either:
 - Present
 - Absent
 - Attending an approved educational activity
 - Unable to attend through exceptional circumstances
 - Taking authorised absence for example through sickness, religious observance or unavoidable cause
 - Taking unauthorised absence; if no reason is established when the register is taken the entry may be later corrected.
- A pupil may be marked as unable to attend because of exceptional circumstances such as closure of the school site or where transport is unavailable.
- The school uses the standard set of codes as set out by the DfE; this includes the use of N where no reason is provided which is later corrected with the appropriate symbol, ideally within 2 weeks; N does not remain indefinitely.
- Electronic registration is used so a monthly additional backup copy is taken by office staff and stored electronically for at least 6 years (folder in Business Team

Shared Drive); the same is done for the Admissions Register by the Admissions Manager.

The school also acts in accordance with the statutory guidance from the DfE on school attendance as set out in the documents (the guidance became statutory in August 2024):

[Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK](#)

In line with the 2024 guidance the school is cognisant of the following:

- The close link between improving attendance and wider school culture, including the importance of working in partnership with families to find supportive routes to improve attendance.
- Changes to the law on keeping school attendance and admission registers including a revised set of codes, granting leaves of absence and access to, and sharing of, attendance information introduced through the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.
- The new National Framework for issuing penalty notices and reflect changes to the law introduced through the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024.
- Changing the term ‘parenting contracts’ for attendance to ‘attendance contracts’ to better reflect any agreements between parents, schools and/or local authorities.
- The circumstances of pupils who are prevented from attending school due to physical or mental ill health, additional support for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities and part-time timetables.
- The new requirements for schools on data sharing introduced through the Education (Information about Individual Pupils) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024.
The need to identify a schools’ senior attendance champion; this is the Assistant Head (Pastoral).
- The need to inform a pupil’s youth offending team worker (were this to be the case for any pupil) of any unexplained absences.

The school also notes the following advice from the Independent Schools’ Association (April 2024):

- “From the start of the 2024 to 2025 academic year, it will be mandatory for schools to share their attendance data with the Department for Education (DfE). This however does not apply to all independent schools but does apply to independent special schools. ISA contacted the DfE for clarification: “It’s still the longer term ambition to include all schools in the data collection so local authorities and schools can best work together. At this stage, the legal requirement to share daily attendance data will only apply to state funded schools and we’ll work with the sector (including yourselves) as we hopefully expand that in future. Therefore at this stage independent schools do not have to provide data daily”.
- “LA support to independent schools should be more consistent in future as from 19th August the Working together to improve school attendance guidance will be

statutory. Independent schools should receive the same 4 core functions of the LA's attendance support team as any other school." Hipperholme Grammar liaises closely with local authority education welfare teams including a meeting during 2024 with the Calderdale EWO.

Management information system

Attendance is recorded, stored and monitored via the school's MIS, SchoolBase. This includes the facility to:

- Register forms and classes
- Disseminate register notices
- Check daily attendance and produce daily report of absentees
- Monitor individual, class and whole school attendance patterns
- Parent access to attendance record via Parent Portal

All staff can access any class to register via SchoolBase online, using either fixed PCs in the classroom or their allocated Chromebooks.

Registration process

It is vital that the process is carried out promptly, correctly and accurately. This is carried out by the form tutor (Seniors) and is shown on timetables as a regular commitment, or by the class teacher (Juniors). Where the regular staff member is absent cover arrangements will be made for registration. Staff are required to follow the steps set out in:

[Registration Procedure](#)

Registration codes

The school uses a comprehensive list of codes to denote different reasons and categories of absence. These are essentially those listed in the DfE document [Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK](#). The list of codes as used in school is summarised in the document:

[Registration Codes](#).

Ensuring appropriate absence recording

The immediate priority on a daily basis is to account for an absent pupil's whereabouts and to establish that there is a legitimate reason for the absence. This will usually have been supplied by parents ahead of registration. Where no reason has been given the office staff will contact parents; registers will be updated from N to the appropriate code.

The office staff will circulate to all staff the daily report of absent pupils, usually by 10.00 am depending on the number of absences needed to be followed up. Where no reason is yet established this will be noted by the relevant DSL who will consider whether the absence may be indicative of a safeguarding concern and respond accordingly.

Absences which remain as N beyond the relevant day need to be followed up further. This will usually reflect a failure by the parent to inform the school of an absence and their non-availability when the school sought to contact them on the day of absence. The office team will at the end of each week (after Friday am registration) endeavour to contact parents again to elicit an explanation and amend N accordingly; the ISSRs stipulate this should ideally be within 2 weeks. If no reason can be established N will be converted to O

- unauthorised absence. If the child has still not returned to school this will have been noted by the relevant DSL as a potential child missing from education / safeguarding concern (see below for more detail on responding to a child missing from education concerns).

Monitoring attendance and addressing absence

Monitoring attendance and absence patterns is a key aspect of pastoral care. The school uses attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance at individual and cohort level so that parties can work together to address the reasons and remove any barriers to attendance.

Daily: Heads of House / Key Stage review the daily absence report to identify any specific absences that might give rise to concern, whether due to non-explanation or the emergence of a persistent absence. Immediate additional contact with parents may be judged necessary.

Weekly: Heads of House / Key Stage review absences on a weekly basis to identify any emerging causes for concern, or a possible child missing from education. Where relevant, this will be elevated to the relevant DSL who may judge that referral to an external agency such as the local authority EWO is necessary. Building relationships with families to remove any barriers to attendance is also important in cases of persistent absence.

Termly: the school's SLT reviews attendance data on a half-termly basis to identify any patterns of concern requiring policy change or other intervention.

Children Absent from education

- The school follows the requirements set out in the ISSRs Section 231 and 390.
- Where a child does not arrive at school on a regular basis with no legitimate explanation we would regard that as a child missing from education.
- The school seeks to ensure that it holds two emergency contact numbers for parents where reasonably possible to facilitate immediate contact with parents as a first step.
- The school recognises that a child leaving school with no known destination constitutes both a child missing from education and a safeguarding concern.
- All possible steps are taken to establish a child's destination including contact with parents, potential new schools and the local authority.
- The school reports any long term unexplained absences to Calderdale MBC.
- As set out in the Admissions policy the school also reports children leaving or joining the school at non-standard transactions to our local authority, Calderdale MBC.

Reasonable SEND adjustment

The school recognises that in some instances reasonable adjustment to attendance expectations for SEND pupils or those with long term medical conditions may be necessary. This could include a reduced timetable, for the shortest time necessary, to make school attendance more manageable.

Guidance to parents on attendance

Parents have a legal duty to ensure attendance at school, so children must attend school every day it is open except in a small number of allowable circumstances. All pupils should aim for 100% attendance; attendance below 90% is regarded as persistent absenteeism requiring “additional targeted support”. The school will of course sensitively consider the reasons for the absences. In severe cases of absenteeism the school will refer the matter to the local authority.

Unless otherwise agreed attendance is the full published school day:

Preschool	8.45am - 3.30pm
KS1	8.45am - 3.15pm
KS2	8.55am - 3.30pm
Seniors	8.30am - 3.35pm

Registration is open for 10 minutes after the start of the school day; late arrival within this time or prior to 9.10am will be recorded as ‘late to registration’; if arrival is after 9.10am that will be recorded as an absence for the session.

Parents are requested to ensure punctual arrival of their child at school. This is vitally important as pupils who arrive late may miss important notices and assemblies, or actual teaching time. It is also important to develop good habits for future education and employment.

Parent requests for planned leave of absence

Parent requests for leave of absence from school should be addressed to the Head of Foundation and sent via office@hgsf.org.uk. Once a decision is made as to whether this can be granted, this will be communicated to parents, recorded on the child’s Daybook record and copied to relevant teaching and administrative staff, who will make the relevant entry on the register.

The necessary criteria for which leave of absence may be granted are **Exceptional Circumstances**. Absences for family holidays during term time can only be granted where this is **absolutely unavoidable**. Please note that lower holiday prices do not constitute an absolutely unavoidable exceptional circumstance! Parents who take holidays outside these criteria should be aware that this will be recorded on the child’s record as an unauthorised absence. This can potentially have significant implications, for example for college applications and lowering your child’s attendance record.

Parents are encouraged to make routine appointments for **medical or dental appointments** outside school hours. Where this is not possible permission will usually be granted. It is only necessary to inform the school office via office@hgsf.org.uk about such routine appointments.

Other grounds where an absence will usually be authorised include:

- A family event such as a wedding or funeral (close family member)
- Religious observance
- Participation in a performing arts performance
- Participation in an approved sporting event

- Interviews and taster days

Unplanned absences

It is imperative that parents **inform the school immediately** (before 8.30am please) where an unexpected absence arises due for example to child illness including the reason. Failure to do this promptly creates an additional and unnecessary burden for staff in following up the absence and establishing whether there is a cause for concern. Parents can inform the school of an unplanned absence by:

- Emailing office@hgsf.org.uk (preferred route)
- Telephoning the school, or leaving an answerphone message if before 8am

Viewing your child's attendance

You can view your child's attendance record at any time on the Schoolbase Parent Portal, along with reports and timetables. Parents are encouraged to view this periodically and contact the school in case of any queries.

Appendix 1

[Registration Procedure LIVE](#)

Appendix 2

[Registration Codes revised Oct 2024 - LIVE](#)