



Heathfield Knoll School

Attendance Policy

This policy is supported and complemented by the following policies:

- Behaviour, Discipline and Exclusions
- Complaints
- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- SEND

Key personnel:

Headteacher	DSL	Lawrence Collins
Deputy Headteacher	DSL	Emma White
Head of Wellbeing	DSL	Teresa Stooksbury
Attendance Officer		Aneka Yarnold

This document is reviewed at least annually by A.Yarnold - Attendance Officer or as events change or legislation requires. This is then approved by the Governing Board.

The Governors have the skills to support and advise the school in its decision making.

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Introduction

Here at Heathfield Knoll School, our expectation is for all pupils to have **100% attendance** and **100% punctuality** to school and all lessons. There is strong statistical evidence to suggest that pupils who achieve this are more successful in school, make greater progress, and are more likely to reach their full academic potential. The table below highlights the link between attendance and learning:

If attendance over the school year is ...	The pupil will miss this many days ...	And this many lessons ...
100%	0	0
95%	8.5	51
90%	17	102
85%	25.5	153
80%	34	204
75%	42.5	255
70%	51	306

In addition to the academic reasons for attendance, national research also shows:

- Children with poor attendance often become the targets of bullying behaviour
- A prolonged absence from school can lead to feelings of loneliness. It can make it harder for your child to get along with other children and make friends.

Heathfield Knoll School values achievement of every kind and believes that we all respond well to having high expectations placed upon us.

The [School Attendance Regulations 2024](#) are consulted

Responsibilities

Although the legal responsibility for regular attendance at school rests with parents/carers, we regard the encouragement of good standards of attendance as a partnership with families designed to support the development of each pupil's potential.

If parents/carers have any concerns about their son/daughter's attendance or are concerned that there may be underlying reasons for him/her failing to attend school, then they should contact **Mrs Yarnold - attendance officer** or Mrs Stooksbury,



who is the named senior attendance champion responsible for monitoring attendance.

The school day starts at 8.40 am and ends at 4 pm. Registers are taken in the morning and after lunch using our MIS system - Schoolbase.

We ask that parents/carers support us by:

- not letting their son/daughter(s) take time off school for minor ailments,
- arranging appointments and outings after school hours, at weekends or during school holidays,
- not taking holidays during term time,
- ensuring that their son/daughter attends punctually at the beginning of every day,
- phoning by 8:45 am on the first and subsequent mornings of all absences, stating the child's name, form and reason for absence. We have a dedicated number on our phone line for this purpose,
- informing us if there is any ongoing medical reason that prevents their child from attending school.

School will:

- follow up on all first-day unexplained absences by a phone call as soon as possible,
- continue to monitor the absence of a pupil who does not subsequently return to school as indicated, with no explanation,
- remind parents/carers of the importance of regular attendance and punctuality via letters, newsletters and the school website,
- publish daily attendance on the parent portal,
- inform parents/carers if we have concerns regarding a pupil's attendance,
- challenge regular lateness,
- work with the appropriate authorities if required, and exercise all possible powers we have to enforce attendance,
- inform the local authority and discuss arrangements for the education of pupils on their tenth day of absence,
- communicate with the local authority and alternative education providers to support pupils with medical needs.

Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

Legally, schools are required to distinguish and report on authorised and unauthorised pupil absence.

Lates and Punctuality

We believe that pupils need to develop good habits and be on time for school and every lesson. The school will sanction pupils who are late without a good reason, in line with the school's code of conduct.

Morning registration closes at 8.40 am after which pupils are marked late. Those arriving after form time finishes at 8.55 am must sign in at the front desk.

Government guidance - [Working together to Improve School Attendance Summary of responsibilities where a mental health issue is affecting attendance KCSIE 26](#)

Authorised Absence

A pupil's absence will be treated as authorised if they are unable to attend school due to illness, medical, dental treatment, the death of a close family member or where the Headteacher has granted permission. Other authorised circumstances, such as pupil study leave, work experience and educational visits, will be entered by the school.

Action will be taken to support those pupils experiencing social, emotional or mental health issues. Reasonable adjustments will be made to enable their attendance at school.

Parents/carers should note that, ideally, all medical and dental appointments should be arranged for after school so that pupils do not miss any lessons. Where this proves impossible, parents/carers should email info@hkschool.org.uk to request a leave of absence during the day. The pupil should then sign out at reception before leaving the school.

Unauthorised Absence

If an absence cannot be authorised or a reason for the absence is not forthcoming, the absence will be treated as unauthorised, and the school will contact parents/carers to seek a valid reason. It is at the school's discretion as to whether absence is authorised or unauthorised.

Extended Periods of Absence (including Holidays)

All applications for periods of absence, including holidays, are assessed on an individual basis by the Headteacher. The school's term dates are published a year in advance and are made available on the website in the expectation that parents/carers will ensure that holidays are taken during school holiday times.

The strongest factor in academic underperformance is irregular or poor attendance, and we would be failing in our responsibility if we sanctioned time off school in all but the most exceptional circumstances.

Parents/carers are therefore asked to respect these regulations. If there is a need to take your son/daughter out of school during term time, it must be made very clear in the request how the circumstances are exceptional. In such circumstances, requests

for the school to authorise absence should be made in writing to the Headteacher in advance, **not retrospectively**.

One influencing factor for authorisation is the levels of attendance (see section on monitoring).

Applications for leave of absence, which are made and refused, will result in the absence being unauthorised.

Work and absence

Every lesson missed is an opportunity missed. Although every effort is made to support pupils in catching up on work missed, this cannot be fully made up, so pupils inevitably lose out, and their progress will be affected.

- Pupils who have permission to be absent from school (see above) are expected to obtain work in advance from their teachers and complete any missed written work as soon as possible.
- Pupils who are absent from school for an extended period may be able to obtain work to complete during their absence.
- Pupils who are absent without notice (e.g., due to illness) will be supported in catching up on work missed.

Part-time timetables

All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In very exceptional circumstances, there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet a pupil's individual needs. For example, where a medical condition prevents a pupil from attending full-time education, a part-time timetable is considered as part of a reintegration package. A part-time timetable must not be treated as a long-term solution and **will never be used for behavioural reasons**.

- Any pastoral support programme or other agreement must have a time limit by which point the pupil is expected to attend full-time or be provided with alternative provision.
- A review must take place regularly.
- There must be documented evidence of a parent/carer's agreement to the part-time timetable, effectively agreeing to supervise the pupil when they are not in school.

By agreeing to a part-time timetable, the school acknowledges that a pupil may be absent from school for part of the week or day and therefore must record it as authorised absence.

For pupils with an EHCP, the school will inform the Local Authority of the initial arrangements for part-time timetables for all pupils and of any subsequent reviews where the arrangements continue.

Pupils attending off-site alternative provision

All pupils who attend an off-site provision are members of the school community, and schools must ensure they are safeguarded at all times. The school continues to monitor attendance, and the same absence protocols remain in effect.

Elective Home Education and Deregistration

The 2011 Education Act states that, *'it is the duty of parents to secure an appropriate full-time education for their children of compulsory school age'*. Parents/carers can carry out this duty by ensuring their child attends school or parents/carers may decide to take on the duty to educate their child/children themselves and educate them at home – this is called Elective Home Education.

We respect the right of parents/carers to educate their child at home; however, we are aware that this decision may sometimes be a response to dissatisfaction with school or other difficulties. We encourage parents/carers to discuss concerns with the appropriate school leaders to allow for the opportunity to find solutions and provide support.

Upon receipt of a written request to home educate, school leaders must complete all actions in accordance with the latest Worcestershire guidance, including documenting any meetings/interventions that follow discussions about elective home education. The Local Authority will be notified within five working days of the request being made.

Schools are permitted to remove compulsory school-aged children from the roll only under certain circumstances defined in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) [Regulations 2024](#). Removing a child from the school roll is a very important decision. Children who fall out of the education system are likely to have poor outcomes and may be exposed to increased risk of harm. Schools must follow correct procedures to ensure that they do not breach their legal and safeguarding duties. Pupils must not be deleted from the school roll without authorisation from the Headteacher. The local Authority will need to be contacted if a pupil leaves outside of the September start date.

If, having completed the checks, the pupil's whereabouts have not been determined, the school may remove the pupil from the roll after 20 days of continuous unauthorised absence. The school should then inform the Local Authority.

Schools must keep detailed records of the actions taken as part of the de-rolling checklist.

After a permanent exclusion, schools must ensure that a pupil's name is removed from the school admissions register if 15 school days have passed since the parents/carers were notified of the Governing Board's decision not to reinstate the pupils and no application has been made for an independent review panel; or the parents have stated in writing that they will not be applying for an independent review panel.

Where an application for an independent review panel has been made within 15 school days, the school must wait until the review has been determined, or abandoned, and until the Governing Board has completed any reconsideration that the panel has recommended or directed it to carry out, before removing a pupil's name from the register.

Schools must inform the Local Authority immediately of the decision to exclude a pupil to secure suitable sixth-day provision permanently.

Children Missing Education

- We kindly request that all parents/carers provide us with at least two emergency contact numbers. This provides us with additional options to contact a responsible adult when a child is missing education and is also identified as a welfare and/or safeguarding concern.
- The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) follows appropriate procedures when carrying out reasonable enquiries to determine whether a child may be at risk of harm.
- There may be occasions when we are unable to contact parents/carers after 2 days, have no information regarding the pupil's whereabouts, or receive no answer at the home address. In that case, the DSL will request that the police conduct a safe and well check on the second or third day of absence. We inform social services, through the Worcestershire Family Front Door, to let them know we have requested a police safe and well check.
- We inform the local authority of any pupil who has missed 10 school days or more without permission.
- When appropriate, the DSL will make a referral to social services and/or police.

Attendance administration

In line with guidance, all schools maintain registers for a period of **6 years**. Registers are recorded digitally using Schoolbase.

All staff have a responsibility to record registers accurately. These are then checked twice daily (morning and after lunch) by the receptionists.

Monitoring

School monitors attendance and punctuality, which includes designated members of the SLT team, Key Stage leads and form tutors.

School proactively uses data to identify pupils at risk of poor attendance. We will then work together with pupils and parents to understand and address the reasons for absence, including any in-school barriers to attendance.

Where out-of-school barriers are identified, the school will signpost and support access to any required services.

Attendance below 95% is a cause for concern. This means that absence is likely to have a significant impact on learning content.

A score below 90% is a significant concern, and the absence rate has reached a level that is impacting all areas of the curriculum. The Headteacher will request a meeting with parents/carers to discuss attendance.

If the issue persists, the school will participate actively in a multi-agency meeting with other partners and the local authority to provide the best possible early help available.

Working together to improve attendance

Successfully treating the root causes of absence and removing barriers to attendance requires schools and local partners to work collaboratively with families. All partners should work together to:

EXPECT

Aspire to high standards of attendance from all pupils and parents, and build a culture where all can, and want to, be in school and ready to learn by prioritising attendance improvement across the school.



MONITOR

Rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) as soon as possible, so all parties can work together to resolve them before they become entrenched.

**LISTEN AND UNDERSTAND**

When a pattern is spotted, discuss barriers to attendance with pupils and parents and agree on how all partners can work together to resolve them.

**FACILITATE SUPPORT**

Remove barriers in school and help pupils and parents access the support they need to overcome challenges outside of school. This might include an early help or whole family plan where absence is a symptom of broader issues.

**FORMALISE SUPPORT**

Where absence persists and voluntary support is not effective or not being utilised, partners should work together to clearly explain the consequences and ensure that support is also in place to enable families to respond.

**ENFORCE**

Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, enforce attendance through statutory intervention or prosecution to protect the pupil's right to an education.

Notifications to the Local Authority

The Education Act 2011 states that parents/carers must ensure their children of compulsory school age receive appropriate full-time education according to their age, ability and aptitude. This can be achieved through regular attendance at school, an alternative provision, or otherwise.

If a child of compulsory school age fails to attend regularly at a school at which they are registered, or at a place where alternative provision is provided for them, the parent/carers may be guilty of an offence and can be prosecuted by the local authority. Further information can be found at [Worcestershire County Council](#)

A school will refer a pupil to the Local Authority if:

- A pupil is absent for 10 consecutive days
- A pupil is absent for 15 days sickness (consecutive or not)
- A pupil's attendance becomes a concern, for example, if it does not relate to a medical need.
- A pupil's attendance declines rapidly, and there is little evidence of parental/carer engagement.
- A pupil's attendance declines rapidly, and parents/carers refuse to accept their responsibility for ensuring that their son/daughter attends the school every day and on time.
- Parents/Carers condone their son/daughter's absence or truancy.

Sanctions

Pupils who are late (either to school or to lessons throughout the day) will be sanctioned in accordance with the school's behaviour protocols.

Pupils who abscond from lessons and/or leave the school site without permission at any time during the school day will be sanctioned in accordance with the Behaviour Policy.

Attendance Codes

Please see the attached sheet, which provides attendance codes for Heathfield Knoll School: [Attendance Codes](#).

Code C will only be used in exceptional circumstances, with rationale recorded

Amendments to the policy

Jan 2023	Updated information	Emma White
April 2023	Added info - % absences New Government guidance Feb 23	Emma White
20/07/23	Changes to CEO	Teresa Stooksbury
27/03/24	Changes Local Advisory Board to Governors	Teresa Stooksbury
05/08/24	Changes to Company name - new guidance - changes to attendance codes	Teresa Stooksbury
26/06/25	Yearly updates - SchoolBase not Engage	Teresa Stooksbury
15/06/26	Changes in red	Teresa Stooksbury