Attendance policy

The William Hogarth School

Approved by:	Full Governing Body	**Date:** T.B.R
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1. Aims

At The William Hogarth School, we want every child to feel safe, valued and included, and to experience success in their learning. Positive relationships with children and families underpin our approach to attendance. We recognise that difficulties attending school can indicate barriers within or beyond school, and we work together to understand and address them.

This policy sets out our commitment to meeting our attendance responsibilities, including those in the Department for Education's statutory guidance, Working together to improve school attendance**.** We aim to**:**

- Maintain high expectations for the attendance and punctuality, helping every child access the education to which they are entitled
- Create a welcoming, safe and supportive school where children feel that they belong
- Build trusting relationships with families, listening to their experiences and working together to remove barriers to attendance
- Identify emerging difficulties early and provide timely, practical support
- Reduce absence, including persistent and severe absence, through appropriate support and, where necessary, lawful intervention
- Recognise individual needs, fulfil our duties to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils, and provide appropriate support for pupils with SEND, physical or mental health needs, or other barriers to attendance
- Ensure that attendance, safeguarding, inclusion and behaviour support work together, including addressing any aspect of school life that may contribute to absence (or create a barrier to attendance)
- Support children to return confidently after absence and reconnect with their learning, friendships and school routines.

Our approach reflects our three golden rules: **Try our hardest; Keep ourselves and each other safe; Show respect.** Adults model these expectations through respectful communication, practical support and a shared commitment to children's wellbeing and education. Children are supported to attend and participate positively, without being blamed or shamed for attendance difficulties outside of their control. We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy has been developed with regard to the DfE's statutory guidance on Working together to improve school attendance, including the national framework for penalty notices and *Children missing education: statutory guidance for local authorities and schools*, and School attendance parental responsibility measures.

The principal legislation relevant to this policy includes:

- Part 6 of the Education Act 1996 (including provisions concerning parental responsibilities, school attendance, children missing education and education for children unable to attend school)
- Part 3 of the Education Act 2002 (including the school's duty to safeguard and promote children's welfare)
- Part 7 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- The Equality Act 2010 (including the duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils)
- The Children and Families Act 2014 (including responsibilities towards pupils with special educational needs and disabilities)
- The Children Act 1989 and Anti Social Behaviour Act 2003 (where relevant to attendance support and legal intervention)

This policy also takes account of:

- School census guidance
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026
- Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools
- Ofsted's 2026 State-funded Schools Inspection Toolkit
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years
- Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions
- Arranging education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs
- Current statutory guidance on suspension and permanent exclusion
- The statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage
- Hounslow's published local code of conduct for issuing school attendance penalty notices and relevant local attendance and safeguarding procedures.

We apply this framework alongside our commitment to positive relationships, early support, inclusion and children's safety. Decisions about attendance support, authorised absence and legal intervention take account of individual circumstances and the school's safeguarding and equality duties.

This policy should be read alongside the school policies listed in section 11, particularly the Relationships and Behaviour Policy and the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

3. Roles and responsibilities

Improving attendance is a shared responsibility. Staff work together to maintain high expectations, build trusting relationships and identify the support children and families need. Attendance concerns are considered alongside learning, relationships, behaviour, health, SEND and safeguarding.

3.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

- Prioritising attendance as part of children's education, wellbeing and safety, and holding the Headteacher to account for implementing this policy
- Ensuring this policy meets statutory expectations, is published and is communicated regularly to pupils, families and staff
- Reviewing attendance and punctuality information regularly, including persistent and severe absence, trends over time and relevant similar school, local and national comparisons
- Considering the experiences of pupils with SEND, disabilities, long-term health conditions, social care involvement, caring responsibilities, or other barriers to attendance
- Challenging leaders to demonstrate that support and reasonable adjustments are appropriate, timely and effective
- Ensuring that leaders fulfil their responsibilities for accurate registers, information sharing, safeguarding and partnership working
- Recognising and promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Ensuring that attendance is covered in staff induction and ongoing training, including accurate registration, absence follow-up, safeguarding responses and working with families
- Ensuring that staff with specific attendance responsibilities receive additional training appropriate to their role, including analysing attendance information, identifying attendance barriers and coordinating support
- Ensuring that sufficient leadership attention and resources are directed towards improving attendance
- Evaluating the impact of attendance strategies, including whether recognition, communication and intervention arrangements are fair and inclusive.

Routine governor reporting will protect the confidentiality of individual children and families.

3.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementing this policy and establishing a welcoming, safe and inclusive school culture that supports attendance
- Ensuring that attendance responsibilities are understood and ensuring staff have appropriate training, support and oversight
- Monitoring attendance and punctuality, evaluating interventions and reporting to governors half-termly
- Ensuring that attendance, behaviour, inclusion and safeguarding arrangements work together
- Ensuring that school-based barriers are investigated and addressed, including bullying, relationship difficulties, inaccessible learning and unmet needs
- Overseeing decisions about term-time leave, leave of absence and any exceptional, temporary part-time timetable
- Ensuring that statutory attendance, admission, deletion and sickness returns are made to the local authority as required
- Ensuring appropriate liaison with the local authority where a pupil with an Education, Health and Care Plan experiences attendance difficulties linked to their needs or provision

- Authorising referrals to Hounslow's School Attendance Support Service for consideration of penalty notices or other legal intervention, in accordance with the local code of conduct and individual circumstances

The Headteacher retains overall responsibility where operational tasks are delegated.

3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The Deputy Headteacher, is the school's designated senior leader for attendance (also known as the 'senior attendance champion'). The Deputy Headteacher is responsible for:

- Leading and coordinating the school's work to improve attendance and punctuality across the school
- Maintaining effective systems for identifying, following up and reviewing absence
- Analysing attendance information and identifying emerging concerns before patterns become established
- Building productive relationships with children and parents/carers, listening to their experiences and agreeing practical support to improve attendance
- Coordinating attendance support and reintegration plans with families, class teachers, the Inclusion Lead, SENCOs and relevant professionals
- Ensuring plans identify actions for the school as well as for the child, family and other agencies, with named responsibilities and review dates
- Reviewing the effectiveness of support and adjusting approaches where progress is limited
- Participating in targeting support meetings with the local authority and coordinating agreed actions
- Explaining attendance expectations, available support and any potential legal intervention clearly and sensitively
- Working with the Headteacher to ensure that significant concerns receive appropriate safeguarding or specialist attention.

The designated senior leader for attendance is Katie Rees. She can be contacted on **020 8994 4782** or at admin@hogarth.hounslow.sch.uk, marking correspondence: **For the attention of Katie Rees – Attendance Lead**.

3.4 The attendance officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Maintaining accurate attendance records and following the school's procedures for checking and updating absence codes
- Monitoring attendance and punctuality and bringing concerns promptly to the senior attendance lead
- Coordinating routine absence enquiries and ensuring unresolved concerns are escalated
- Preparing attendance information and reports to support timely intervention and review
- Supporting communication with families and keeping accurate records of contact and agreed actions
- Liaising with the local authority's attendance service as directed
- Supporting the preparation of statutory returns and attendance referrals

The attendance officer is Karen Frain. She can be contacted via telephone on **020 8994 4782** or by e-mail at admin@hogarth.hounslow.sch.uk.

3.5 Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for:

- Completing morning and afternoon registers accurately and promptly, submitting them through Arbor by 9.05am and 1.05pm (1.20pm for Year 6), in accordance with section 4.
- Creating a classroom environment where children feel welcome, included and able to ask for help
- Noticing and sharing concerns about lateness, absence, changes in presentation or difficulties participating in school
- Working with families and relevant colleagues to understand and address barriers
- Implementing agreed adjustments and attendance or reintegration support
- Welcoming children back after absence and helping them reconnect with friendships, routines and learning without blame or public comment about their attendance.

3.6 School administrative staff

School administrative staff will:

- Receive and record absence notifications through the school's approved communication channels
- Seek clarification where needed so that the reason for absence can be recorded accurately on Arbor
- Follow first-day and continuing absence procedures
- Pass requests for support to the attendance officer or senior attendance lead
- Escalate concerns about a child's safety or unexplained whereabouts promptly through safeguarding procedures

3.7 Parents, carers and families

For this policy, "parent" includes natural parents, those with parental responsibility, and those who have day-to-day care of a child.

Parents are expected to:

- Ensure that children of compulsory school age attend regularly and punctually, except where there is a lawful reason for absence
- Support agreed attendance arrangements for children below compulsory school age
- Report absence before 9am, or as soon as practicable, explaining the reason and expected return date, and provide updates during continuing absence
- Keep contact details current and provide more than one emergency contact wherever possible, with additional contacts for children in the EYFS where available
- Arrange appointments outside of school hours where possible, and minimise time away when appointments during the school day are unavoidable
- Request planned leave in advance through the school's procedures
- Share relevant information about difficulties affecting attendance and work with the school to identify appropriate support
- Participate in discussions and reviews of agreed attendance support, raising concerns if arrangements are not working.

Families can expect to be listened to, treated respectfully and given clear information about expectations, decisions and available support.

3.8 Pupils

Children are supported, in ways appropriate to their age, development and needs to:

- Attend school regularly and arrive on time, with the support of their parents or carers
- Tell a trusted adult about worries or difficulties affecting attendance or their experience of school
- Contribute their views to support plans and reviews (where appropriate)
- Take part in agreed routines and support that help them attend and participate successfully.

Adults recognise that primary-aged children do not have sole control over their attendance or punctuality. Children will not be blamed or shamed for circumstances outside of their control.

3.9 Inclusion and safeguarding responsibilities

The Inclusion Lead and SENCOs support colleagues to identify SEND-related barriers, plan reasonable adjustments, review provision and coordinate specialist advice where needed.

The DSL and DDSL ensure that attendance concerns indicating possible harm, neglect or exploitation receive a timely safeguarding response. Staff must report concerns immediately and must not wait for an attendance threshold, review meeting or support programme to be completed.

Relevant staff share information through the school's approved systems and coordinate their work so that families receive clear, consistent support.

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

The school maintains its electronic statutory attendance register on Arbor. Every pupil on the admission register is included, including pupils below compulsory school age.

Attendance is recorded at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session. Morning registration begins at 9am and closes at 9.30am. Afternoon registration begins at 1pm for Nursery–Year 5 and at 1.15pm for Year 6; afternoon registers close at 1.30pm.

Year 6 has a longer morning session, ending at 12.15pm, and a correspondingly shorter afternoon session. Overall teaching time is the same as for other year groups.

Staff use the national attendance and absence codes to record whether a pupil is present, attending education elsewhere or absent, and the circumstances of any absence. The codes are set out in Appendix 1.

Registers are completed promptly and checked by the school office. Where the reason for absence is not known, staff follow the procedures in section 4.5 and update the entry as soon as the reason is established.

Any amendment preserves:

- The original entry and the amended entry.
- The reason for the amendment.
- The date of the amendment.
- The name of the person making it.

Attendance register entries are retained for six years from the date of entry.

Where required by the attendance regulations, the school also records the nature of the educational provision or approved activity taking place elsewhere, and the nature of any unavoidable cause preventing attendance. This information is recorded alongside the appropriate attendance code on Arbor.

Arrival and individual arrangements

The school day begins at 9am and ends at 3.30pm. Gates open at 8.45am for a soft start, helping children settle before the school day begins.

Where a child experiences difficulty arriving on time, staff work with the child and family to understand the barriers and agree appropriate support.

Any arrangement that reduces a compulsory-school-age pupil's education, including a planned later start, must meet the requirements for an exceptional temporary part-time timetable described in section 5.1. It must be documented, agreed with the parent the child normally lives with, regularly reviewed and recorded using the appropriate attendance code. Individual arrangements do not change the school's registration times.

Education elsewhere and internal provision

For pupils attending alternative provision, the school checks attendance with the provider daily, follows up unexplained absence promptly. The placement's safety, suitability and attendance arrangements are reviewed at least half-termly, and sooner if concerns arise.

Children learning in the Beehive or another supervised space within school remain present at school. Their location or participation in an internal support programme does not itself constitute absence.

Arbor remains the statutory attendance record. Behaviour incidents are recorded through Behaviour Smart, while safeguarding concerns are reported and recorded through the school's safeguarding procedures.

4.2 Unplanned absence

Parents and carers must notify the school before **9am on the first day of an unplanned absence**, or as soon as practicable, using one of the following:

- Telephone: **020 8994 4782**.
- Email: **admin@hogarth.hounslow.sch.uk**.
- The school's communication platform, **Reach More Parents**.

Parents should provide the child's name and class, the reason for absence and, where known, their expected return date. Parents should update the school on each subsequent day unless a different contact arrangement has been agreed, for example during a known period of recovery.

Office staff may contact the parent to clarify information, ensure that the absence is recorded accurately and identify whether support is needed. Where no explanation is received, the school follows the procedures in section 4.5.

Absence due to illness

Where a child is unable to attend because of physical or mental ill health, the absence will be recorded as authorised illness absence using code I.

A parent's explanation will normally be sufficient. Medical evidence is not routinely required, and the school does not apply blanket requirements based solely on an attendance percentage or number of days absent.

Where there is genuine and reasonable doubt about the reported illness, staff will discuss this sensitively with the family. Reasonable evidence may be requested to establish the appropriate attendance code. Evidence may also help identify suitable support where health needs are prolonged, complex or recurring.

The school will explain any request and consider information already available. Evidence might include appointment information, prescriptions or relevant professional correspondence; a new GP letter is not automatically required. Alternative evidence will be considered where a family cannot provide the particular document requested.

Where illness or distress causes repeated or prolonged absence, the attendance lead will work with the family and relevant colleagues to understand the child's needs and coordinate support, as described in section 8. Support will not be delayed solely while a diagnosis or professional report is awaited.

4.3 Planned absence

Medical and dental appointments

Parents and carers should arrange appointments outside school hours wherever possible. We recognise that specialist appointments and some other healthcare appointments may only be available during the school day.

Where an appointment requires time away from school, parents should contact the school office as soon as the appointment is known to request leave, providing the date, expected duration and anticipated collection or arrival time. Appointment information may be requested where needed to clarify the arrangements.

Requests will be considered individually. Where leave is agreed and the child is absent at registration because of the appointment, the school will normally use code M. A child who is present at registration and leaves later for an appointment retains their attendance mark for that session; departure and return times are recorded separately for safety.

Children should attend before and after appointments wherever practicable, taking account of travel, treatment and recovery needs. They should be away only for the time reasonably necessary. Wearing school uniform to an appointment may make returning easier, where appropriate.

Advance notice also helps staff identify any missed learning, specialist provision or enrichment activities. Where practicable, staff will rearrange affected support or help the child access missed learning. Necessary healthcare should not be delayed to avoid missing a school activity.

Parents must follow the school's arrangements for collecting children and signing them back in on return.

Other planned absence

Requests for other planned term-time absence must be submitted in advance through the procedure in section 5. Parents should not assume that notifying the school means that leave has been authorised. The school will communicate its decision and record the absence using the appropriate code.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

Arriving on time helps children settle, connect with their class and access learning from the beginning of the session. Where punctuality becomes difficult, we work with the child and family to understand the reasons and agree practical support.

A pupil arriving after registration begins but before the register closes will normally be recorded using code L. A pupil arriving after the register closes will be recorded using code U unless another absence code more accurately reflects the circumstances, such as an authorised medical appointment.

Children arriving after the usual entry arrangements have ended must report to the school office so that their arrival time and reason for lateness can be recorded and staff know they are on site.

Staff welcome late-arriving children calmly and help them join learning without public criticism or embarrassment. Any necessary discussion with parents takes place sensitively and, wherever possible, privately.

The attendance officer monitors patterns of lateness and shares concerns with the senior attendance lead. Where lateness is recurring, the school will:

- Discuss the pattern with the family and listen to the child's views where appropriate.
- Explore barriers, including transport, family circumstances, health, SEND and difficulties with arrival or transitions.
- Agree practical actions, reasonable adjustments where required, and a review date.
- Review whether support is working and involve other services where appropriate.

Where unauthorised lateness persists, the school may seek advice from Hounslow's School Attendance Support Service and consider further action under section 7. Decisions take account of the individual circumstances and support already provided.

4.5 Following up unexplained absence

The school follows up unexpected and unexplained absence promptly to establish the child's whereabouts, understand the reason and identify any support or safeguarding action needed.

Where a child expected to attend is absent without explanation, staff will:

- Check the register, absence messages and any agreed arrangements.
- Contact the parent or carer promptly on the first morning of absence, or promptly following an unexplained afternoon absence.
- Use alternative emergency contacts where necessary.
- Record contact attempts, information received and actions taken.
- Inform the senior attendance lead and escalate concerns to the DSL or deputy where the child's whereabouts or safety cannot be established.

If absence continues without explanation, staff make further enquiries each day and review the response in light of the child's circumstances and any known vulnerabilities. Where relevant, the school informs the child's social worker and other involved professionals.

Safeguarding action

Staff do not wait for absence to become prolonged or repeated before acting on a concern. The DSL or deputy assesses the information available and coordinates proportionate enquiries, referrals or requests for a welfare check under the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Where a child is believed to be in immediate danger, staff contact the emergency services without delay. Failure to reach a parent does not automatically result in police involvement; the response is based on the circumstances and assessed risk.

Recording and further enquiries

Where the reason for absence has not been established when the register closes, code N is used temporarily. The entry is updated as soon as the reason is established and within five school days of the session. If the reason remains unknown after that period, the entry is changed to code O. Enquiries and safeguarding action continue where needed.

Where information suggests that a child may have moved away or will no longer attend, the school works with the relevant local authority to establish their whereabouts and educational arrangements. A child's name is removed from the admission register only when lawful grounds for deletion are met and required notifications have been made.

Children who remain registered at school but are persistently or severely absent are not automatically classified as children missing education. Their absence nevertheless requires appropriate attendance support and safeguarding consideration.

4.6 Reporting to parents and carers

The school shares attendance and punctuality information with families through parent consultations and the annual pupil report. Parents may request their child's attendance record at any time by contacting **admin@hogarth.hounslow.sch.uk**.

Where concerns emerge, staff contact families promptly rather than waiting for a scheduled report or consultation.

Information is explained clearly and sensitively, including the period covered, reasons for absence, any patterns identified and the distinction between authorised and unauthorised absence. Percentages are considered alongside the child's circumstances, particularly where a small number of missed sessions can substantially affect the figure.

Where support is needed, communication identifies the actions agreed by the school, family and any other professionals, together with review arrangements. Families are encouraged to raise questions, explain difficulties and identify any inaccuracies in the record.

The school provides accessible communication and language support where needed so that parents can understand and participate in discussions about their child's attendance.

5. Authorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The Headteacher considers requests for leave in accordance with the 2024 school attendance regulations and current DfE guidance. Each request is considered individually, taking account of the specific circumstances, relevant background and the child's needs.

Parents should apply as soon as the need for leave is known and, wherever possible, at least two weeks before the proposed absence. Requests must be made by a parent the child normally lives with, using the school's leave request procedure available through the office or Reach More Parents.

The school may request relevant supporting information and will communicate its decision, including the period authorised. Submitting a request does not mean that leave has been granted.

Leave may be granted where the relevant legal conditions are met, including for:

- Medical or dental appointments, as described in section 4.3.
- Participation in a regulated performance or regulated employment abroad.
- An interview for admission to another educational institution.
- An exceptional temporary part-time timetable.
- Other exceptional circumstances.

Study leave for public examinations is not relevant to the school's primary-age provision.

Exceptional circumstances

Exceptional circumstances may include bereavement, a serious family emergency or another significant individual circumstance. These examples do not guarantee approval or limit the circumstances the Headteacher may consider.

The Headteacher determines whether leave is justified and its duration. There is no automatic entitlement to leave for a particular event. A holiday, leisure activity or recreational trip will not ordinarily constitute exceptional circumstances.

Leave will not be granted for participation in protest activity during school hours. Leave cannot be granted retrospectively.

Temporary part-time timetables

Children of compulsory school age are entitled to suitable full-time education. A temporary part-time timetable will be considered only in very exceptional circumstances, where it is in the child's best interests and necessary to meet their individual needs.

It must not be used to manage behaviour, compensate for staffing shortages or substitute for appropriate provision and reasonable adjustments. Children will not be sent home informally to "cool off".

Any arrangement, including an agreed later start that reduces education, must:

- Be approved by the Headteacher and agreed with the parent the child normally lives with.
- Form part of a written support, healthcare or reintegration plan, informed by the child's views and relevant professional advice.
- Specify attendance times, the purpose of the arrangement, support to be provided and arrangements for the child's safety and supervision while absent.
- Include regular reviews, named responsibilities and a proposed end date, with the aim of restoring suitable full-time education as soon as possible.
- Involve the child's social worker where applicable and discussion with the local authority where the child has an Education, Health and Care Plan.

Extensions require a recorded review and justification. The school follows relevant local authority notification procedures.

Absence during agreed sessions is recorded using the appropriate code, normally C2 for a compulsory-school-age pupil on a temporary part-time timetable. Arrangements for children below compulsory school age are considered separately, including any applicable use of code X.

5.2 Other reasons for authorised absence

Other valid reasons for **authorised absence** include (but are not limited to):

Illness and healthcare appointments

Physical and mental ill health and agreed medical or dental appointments are recorded in accordance with sections 4.2 and 4.3.

Religious observance

Code R applies where absence falls on a day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parent belongs. The school may seek clarification from that body where necessary.

Additional days, including travel days, are not automatically covered and require separate consideration. Families should notify the school in advance wherever possible.

Parents travelling for occupational purposes

Code T applies only where the statutory conditions for a mobile child travelling with a parent for occupational purposes are met. It does not apply simply because a parent travels for work or takes a child on a business trip.

The school discusses arrangements with the family and supports continuity of education, including attendance at another school where appropriate.

Suspension or permanent exclusion

Where a pupil remains on roll but is suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision has been made, the school uses code E. Where alternative education is arranged, the appropriate code reflects that provision.

Decisions, notifications and educational arrangements follow statutory guidance and the Relationships and Behaviour Policy. An informal request for a parent to keep a child at home is not a lawful alternative to suspension.

5.3 Education taking place elsewhere

A pupil may receive education away from the school site through an approved educational visit, sporting activity, another school where they are registered, or suitable alternative provision.

The school uses the appropriate attendance code only where its legal conditions are met. Approval of a placement does not automatically establish that a child attended it.

The school confirms attendance with the provider, follows up unexpected absence promptly and maintains appropriate safeguarding oversight. Where the child does not attend the provision they were due to attend, the relevant absence code is used.

Learning in the Beehive or another space within school is internal provision and does not constitute off-site education or absence.

5.4 Absence because attendance is prevented by unavoidable circumstances

Some circumstances preventing attendance require a specific code, including qualifying transport or access difficulties, emergency disruption, school closure or public health restrictions.

These circumstances are distinct from approved education elsewhere and discretionary leave. Staff establish the facts, apply the relevant national code and record any additional information required.

Codes classified as “not a possible attendance” are used only where their specific conditions are met. The school continues to consider the child’s safety, educational needs and any support required.

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

We promote attendance by making school a place where children feel welcome, safe, included and successful. Positive relationships, engaging learning, predictable routines and timely support help children attend regularly and participate confidently.

Staff explain the benefits of attendance and punctuality in ways appropriate to children's age and understanding. Communication with families is clear, respectful and focused on working together.

Recognising attendance and progress

We recognise sustained good attendance, improved attendance and punctuality, and progress towards agreed individual goals. Recognition may include personal encouragement, positive messages to families, certificates or appropriate celebrations.

Our approach takes account of children's circumstances, including disability, physical or mental ill health, medical appointments and other factors outside their control. Children should have meaningful opportunities for recognition even where achieving 100% attendance is not possible.

Recognition is not based solely on perfect attendance or comparative class rankings. We do not use public identification of children with low attendance, collective penalties or arrangements that encourage children to attend when they are too unwell.

Any individual incentive is agreed sensitively, reflects an achievable goal and supports the child's wider attendance plan. Staff review whether recognition arrangements are motivating, inclusive and fair.

Identifying difficulties early

The school monitors attendance and punctuality regularly and responds to emerging concerns without waiting for a fixed threshold.

Attendance below 95% prompts a closer review of the reasons, pattern and context. It does not automatically lead to a warning, attendance contract or legal intervention. Staff also act where concerns arise at higher attendance levels, including repeated lateness, particular days missed or signs that a child is finding school difficult.

Where concerns emerge, staff:

- Check the attendance record and consider known circumstances.
- Speak with the family and listen to the child's views where appropriate.
- Explore barriers within and beyond school, including relationships, learning, health, SEND and family circumstances.
- Agree practical actions, including any changes or support needed from the school.
- Set a proportionate review date and evaluate whether the support is helping.

Written communication supports these conversations by explaining the concern, the help available and the agreed next steps. Families are encouraged to tell us if arrangements are not working or circumstances change.

Working with other services

Where needs extend beyond what the school can address alone, we work with relevant services, including Hounslow's School Attendance Support Service. Advice and support may be sought early; involvement is not reserved until school-based support has failed.

Where attendance difficulties continue, further support or formal intervention is considered individually under sections 7–9. Safeguarding concerns are acted on immediately through the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

7. Attendance support and formal intervention

The school works with children, families and relevant services to understand and address attendance difficulties. Where voluntary support has not secured improvement, the school and local authority may consider more formal support or legal intervention.

Decisions are made individually, considering the reasons for absence, the child's needs, support provided, the school's own actions and its safeguarding and equality duties. Authorised illness absence is not treated as an attendance offence.

Formal intervention is not an automatic consequence of an attendance percentage. Nor must every measure below be followed in sequence: the appropriate response depends on the circumstances. Support may not be appropriate for some unauthorised absences, such as a term-time holiday.

The school records its decisions and reasons, explains proposed action to families and continues appropriate support. Safeguarding action is taken whenever needed and does not wait for attendance procedures to be completed.

7.1 Attendance contracts

An attendance contract is a formal written agreement between a parent and the school and/or local authority. It can help clarify support and responsibilities where voluntary arrangements have not worked or are not appropriate.

The agreement is developed with the parent and, where appropriate, the child. It identifies:

- The attendance concerns and barriers being addressed.
- Actions agreed with the parent.
- Support and actions to be provided by the school, local authority or other services.
- The duration, review arrangements and named people responsible.

An attendance contract is voluntary and not legally binding. Parents cannot be compelled to sign one, and it cannot be agreed in their absence.

If arrangements are not followed, staff seek an explanation and review whether the agreement remains appropriate. Where a parent cannot fulfil an action through no fault of their own, the agreement is reviewed and adjusted. Continued difficulties may lead to consideration of another intervention, with the reasons recorded and explained.

7.2 Education supervision orders

Where voluntary support and attendance contracts have not been successful, the local authority may consider applying to the court for an Education Supervision Order.

The court makes the order; the school does not issue it. An order gives the local authority a formal role in advising, assisting and directing the child and parent to secure suitable education.

The school contributes relevant information and works with the appointed supervisor. An order initially lasts one year and may be extended by the court. It is a civil intervention, although persistent failure to comply with directions can result in prosecution.

7.3 Notices to improve

Where the national threshold has been met and appropriate support has not worked or has not been engaged with, a Notice to Improve will usually provide a final opportunity to improve attendance before a penalty notice is considered.

The school works with Hounslow's School Attendance Support Service in accordance with the local code of conduct.

The notice explains the attendance concern, support already offered, further help available, the improvement required and the possible consequences. It specifies an improvement period of between three and six weeks and any circumstances in which a penalty notice may be issued before that period ends.

A Notice to Improve is not required in every case, including where support is inappropriate, such as an unauthorised holiday, or where a further notice would not be expected to have an impact.

7.4 Penalty notices

A penalty notice is an alternative to prosecution for an attendance offence involving a child of compulsory school age. In Hounslow, the school's usual procedure is to refer cases to the School Attendance Support Service, which considers issuing notices under the national framework and local code of conduct.

When referring a case, the school provides relevant information about previous schools and local authority areas. Hounslow's School Attendance Support Service undertakes the necessary checks for previous penalty notices issued to the same parent for the same child, including enquiries with other local authorities where relevant, before determining the appropriate action.

The national threshold for consideration is **10 sessions of unauthorised absence within a rolling period of 10 school weeks**. A session is half a school day. Absences need not be consecutive, and the period can span terms or school years.

Reaching the threshold requires consideration of the individual case, not automatic issue of a notice. Decisions consider whether further support is appropriate, whether a notice is likely to improve attendance and whether another response would be more suitable.

Amounts and repeat notices

- A first notice is £80 if paid within 21 days, or £160 within 28 days.
- A second notice to the same parent for the same child within three years is £160, payable within 28 days.
- A third notice cannot be issued to that parent for that child within three years of the first notice. Further offences require consideration of alternative action, which may include prosecution.

Each parent liable for an offence may receive a notice. Payment is made to the local authority. Unpaid notices may lead to prosecution for the original attendance offence.

A separate penalty notice may apply where a parent allows a child to be in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification during the first five school days of suspension or permanent exclusion, following the required notification. This is £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days and falls outside the attendance framework's two-notice limit.

7.5 Prosecution and other court orders

The local authority may consider prosecution where other appropriate measures have failed or are unsuitable. The decision to prosecute rests with the local authority, not the school.

The school provides accurate records of attendance, communication, support, adjustments and decisions. Courts determine outcomes and may impose penalties or a Parenting Order where the legal conditions are met.

Families will receive information about any action proposed and the relevant process. The school continues to consider the child's education, wellbeing and support needs throughout.

8. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school

Support is based on understanding the individual child and the barriers they face. Staff listen to children and families, consider their experiences and work together to make attendance and participation achievable.

Plans identify what the school and other services will do, alongside actions agreed with the family. Support is reviewed regularly and adjusted where it is not meeting the child's needs.

8.1 Pupils absent due to complex barriers to attendance

Where attendance difficulties have several contributing factors, the senior attendance lead coordinates support with the family, class teacher, Inclusion Lead, SENCO, DSL and relevant professionals.

Together, they consider factors within and beyond school, including learning, communication, relationships, bullying, sensory needs, health, caring responsibilities, housing and transport. Staff do not assume that absence is caused by parental unwillingness or a child's deliberate refusal.

A coordinated plan will identify:

- The child's strengths, views and identified barriers.
- Practical support and adjustments, including changes needed within school.
- A named contact for the family.
- Agreed actions, responsibilities and review dates.
- How progress, wellbeing and participation will be evaluated.

Where needs extend beyond the school's capacity, staff seek timely advice and support from relevant services. If a child has an Education, Health and Care Plan, the school informs the local authority when their attendance falls or when barriers to attendance relating to their needs or provision are identified. Staff work with the family and the local authority to review support and, where necessary, seek a review of the plan.

Where a parent is considering elective home education, the school offers a discussion with the family and relevant professionals to understand their reasons, explore support and explain the implications. Families will not be pressured to withdraw their child. Any withdrawal and removal from roll must follow the applicable legal requirements; attending a meeting is not itself a condition of exercising a lawful choice to home educate.

8.2 Pupils absent due to mental or physical ill health

Physical and mental health difficulties are taken seriously. Staff are not expected to diagnose or treat health conditions, but they work with families and relevant professionals to understand their effect on attendance and identify suitable support.

Anxiety and distress associated with attendance

Some children experience worries that can be managed through reassurance, predictable routines and support in school. Others experience more substantial distress or mental ill health that affects their ability to attend.

Staff explore the child's experience rather than making assumptions based on a label or attendance percentage. Support may include:

- A familiar adult to welcome the child and provide check-ins.
- A predictable arrival routine or supported transition.
- Adjustments to learning, communication, sensory demands or social situations.
- Access to an agreed regulation space and help to return to learning.
- Action to address bullying, relationship difficulties or other school-based concerns.
- Advice or involvement from appropriate health and support services.

The aim is to enable regular attendance while responding appropriately to the child's health needs. Support does not depend solely on obtaining a diagnosis or specialist report. Illness recording and requests for evidence follow section 4.2. The school shares the NHS guidance *Is my child too ill for school?* with families and helps them access and understand it where needed. This supports decisions about common childhood illnesses and is considered alongside any individual medical advice or healthcare plan.

Ongoing health needs and SEND

Where appropriate, attendance support is linked to an Individual Healthcare Plan, Individual Support Plan or Education, Health and Care Plan. The school makes reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils and reviews whether special educational provision is meeting the child's needs.

With appropriate information sharing, staff work with school nursing, mental health services and other professionals. Where provision requires review, the school liaises with the local authority and relevant services.

Continuity of education

Where there are reasonable grounds to believe that a compulsory-school-age pupil will miss 15 school days or more because of illness, consecutively or cumulatively during the school year, the school makes the required sickness return to the local authority.

Staff liaise promptly about suitable education where the child would otherwise be unable to access it. They do not wait until 15 days have elapsed before raising an anticipated need.

Any temporary part-time timetable follows section 5.1. Remote education, where appropriate, is a last-resort element of a wider education and return plan; it does not replace consideration of reasonable adjustments, suitable provision or local authority responsibilities. A child accessing remote education while absent is not recorded as present at school.

8.3 Pupils facing other barriers to attendance

Children may experience attendance difficulties associated with disadvantage, caring responsibilities, social care involvement or other individual and family circumstances. Membership of a particular group does not itself explain a child's absence.

Staff work with the family to identify specific barriers and practical solutions. This may include help with routines, uniform, transport enquiries, access to school activities or referrals for wider family support.

Where a child has a social worker, the school coordinates relevant attendance support with them. For looked-after children, staff work with the designated teacher, carers, social worker and Virtual School Head, with support reflected in the Personal Education Plan where appropriate.

Plans recognise the family's circumstances, avoid unnecessary duplication of meetings and identify who will coordinate communication.

8.4 Pupils returning to school after a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence

Staff plan the return with the child and family, drawing on professional advice where appropriate. The plan addresses the child's concerns and identifies the arrangements needed for a safe, confident and sustainable return.

Support may include a familiar adult, an introductory visit, help reconnecting with friends, preparation for changes and manageable arrangements for missed learning. Children are not expected to complete an overwhelming backlog of work on return.

Staff share necessary information sensitively and agree with the child and family how questions from peers will be handled. Children are welcomed without blame or public comment about their absence.

Progress is reviewed through attendance, wellbeing, participation and the child's own experience. Any phased return involving reduced hours must meet section 5.1. Return following suspension also follows the Relationships and Behaviour Policy and is not conditional on a parent attending a reintegration meeting.

8.5 Absence among children in the EYFS

Consistent attendance supports relationships, routines and early learning. The school works with families to establish attendance patterns appropriate to the child's age and agreed provision, recognising the distinction between compulsory and non-compulsory school age.

Unexpected absence is followed up promptly. Staff contact parents and alternative emergency contacts where necessary. To determine whether a child's absence should be considered prolonged, we consider patterns, the child's circumstances and any known vulnerabilities.

Safeguarding concerns are referred immediately to the DSL or deputy, regardless of the child's age or whether attendance is compulsory. Further enquiries, social care referrals and/or requests for a police welfare check are based on assessed risk and our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

9. Attendance monitoring

9.1 Monitoring attendance and analysing attendance data

The attendance officer and senior attendance lead monitor attendance and punctuality weekly to identify emerging concerns. More detailed analysis takes place half-termly, termly and annually to evaluate patterns and the impact of the school's work.

Monitoring considers:

- Whole-school, year-group and individual attendance and punctuality.
- Authorised and unauthorised absence, the reasons recorded and the accuracy of coding.
- Persistent and severe absence, including pupils approaching these thresholds.
- Patterns involving particular days, sessions, transitions or periods of the school year.

- The attendance of disadvantaged pupils, pupils with SEND, disabilities, long-term health conditions, young carers, pupils known or previously known to children's social care and others with identified barriers to attendance.
- The effectiveness of agreed support, adjustments and reintegration arrangements.

The school records identified young carers in the school census in accordance with DfE requirements. Where caring responsibilities may affect attendance, staff work with the child and family to understand the barriers and coordinate appropriate support, including access to local authority Early Help and young carers' services where needed.

Staff consider whether children who are present at school are accessing their planned learning and provision. Internal support, including learning in the Beehive, is distinguished from absence and reviewed in relation to the child's individual plan.

Analysis considers both recent changes and longer-term patterns. Comparisons with local, national and similar-school information help identify questions for further investigation; they do not replace an understanding of individual circumstances.

Reports identify the period covered and use pupil numbers alongside percentages where helpful. Particular care is taken when interpreting small cohorts, short reporting periods and changes in the school roll.

9.2 Using information to improve attendance

Attendance information is used to identify support needs, coordinate action and evaluate impact.

Relevant concerns are shared with class teachers, the Inclusion Lead, SENCOs, the pupil premium lead and the DSL or deputy, according to their responsibilities and the information needed to support the child. Individual cases are considered through RADAR and other appropriate review arrangements, with urgent concerns addressed immediately.

Where relevant, leaders consider attendance alongside:

- Behaviour Smart records and associated CPOMS information.
- Bullying, peer relationships and children's reported experiences of school.
- Disciplinary removals, restrictive interventions and suspensions.
- Learning, communication, sensory and health needs.
- Family circumstances and the views of the child and parent.
- The support and adjustments provided, including whether these have been implemented consistently.

This review includes asking whether aspects of the school's environment, provision or response to behaviour may be contributing to absence or difficulty attending.

Agreed actions have named responsibilities and review dates. Where progress is limited, staff reassess the barriers and effectiveness of provision rather than simply repeating the same intervention. Improvement is considered through attendance and punctuality, together with wellbeing, participation and access to learning.

Where analysis identifies a shared barrier affecting a particular group or cohort, leaders agree a targeted response and review its impact alongside individual support and whole-school attendance strategies.

Working with partners and sharing information

The school works with Hounslow's School Attendance Support Service through targeting support meetings and other appropriate contact. Relevant information is shared with involved professionals to support coordinated action.

Where appropriate, the school shares information and coordinates support with other schools, including where siblings attend different settings or a pupil is moving between schools. Where a pupil has a youth offending team worker, relevant unexplained absences are also reported to that professional.

The school maintains required arrangements for sharing attendance information with the DfE and local authority, including admission, deletion, attendance and sickness returns. Sharing is accurate, timely, secure and proportionate, in accordance with statutory requirements and the school's data protection procedures.

Attendance concerns involving children with a social worker are shared with that professional where appropriate, including unexplained absence. Relevant support for looked-after children is coordinated with the designated teacher and Virtual School Head.

Governor oversight

Governors receive regular attendance reports, including half-termly summaries alongside the school's behaviour and safeguarding reporting. Reports identify significant patterns, actions taken, the effectiveness of support and any further improvement required.

Routine reports protect the confidentiality of children and families. Governors consider whether school arrangements are effective, inclusive and consistent with the principles of this policy.

9.3 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence means missing **10% or more** of possible school sessions. Severe absence means missing **50% or more**. These measures include both authorised and unauthorised absence.

The thresholds identify pupils who may need additional attention and support; they do not establish the cause of absence or automatically determine enforcement action. Staff intervene earlier where concerns emerge.

For pupils who are persistently or severely absent, or at risk of becoming so, the school will:

- Review the reasons and pattern with the child and family.
- Check that appropriate educational provision, reasonable adjustments and agreed support are in place.
- Coordinate a support plan with clear responsibilities and regular reviews.
- Involve relevant services promptly where needs require a wider response.
- Prioritise severely absent pupils for coordinated, intensive support.
- Consider formal attendance intervention under section 7 where appropriate.

Depending on assessed needs, coordinated support may include a whole-family support plan, consideration of a request for an Education, Health and Care needs assessment, review of an existing EHC plan, or suitable alternative educational provision. These options are considered to address identified needs and secure suitable education, rather than arising automatically from an attendance threshold.

Safeguarding and severe absence

Absence may indicate neglect, exploitation or other harm. Staff refer concerns to the DSL or deputy without waiting for a threshold to be reached or attendance support to be exhausted.

Where severe unauthorised absence continues despite appropriate support and suitable educational provision, the DSL considers possible educational neglect and makes a referral to children's social care where indicated. Children's social care determines and undertakes any statutory assessment; the school contributes information and works with the resulting plan.

Attendance figures alone do not establish neglect. Decisions take account of the child's circumstances, access to suitable education and the safeguarding information available.

10. Monitoring arrangements

The Governing Board monitors implementation of this policy half-termly through the school's SEF–SDP dashboard and accompanying Headteacher reporting. Governors review attendance and punctuality patterns, the effectiveness of support and interventions, and any emerging safeguarding or equality concerns. They use this information to challenge and support leaders, agree any necessary follow-up and check progress against previously identified actions.

Routine reporting protects the confidentiality of individual children and families. The detailed attendance monitoring arrangements are set out in section 9.

This policy will be reviewed at least annually by Katie Rees, Deputy Headteacher and senior attendance lead, working with the Headteacher. At each review, it will be submitted to the full Governing Board for approval.

The review will consider:

- Changes to legislation, DfE guidance and relevant local authority procedures.
- Attendance and punctuality patterns and the impact of support and interventions.
- Feedback from pupils, parents, carers and staff, including concerns or complaints.
- Whether implementation is consistent, accessible and fair, including its impact on pupils with SEND, disabilities, health needs or other barriers to attendance.
- Learning from safeguarding concerns and the relationship between attendance, behaviour, wellbeing and access to suitable education.
- Whether staff responsibilities, recording procedures and partnership arrangements remain clear and effective.

The policy may be reviewed earlier following a significant change in guidance, a serious incident or evidence that arrangements are not working as intended.

Reviews will check alignment with the Relationships and Behaviour Policy, the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and other linked policies. Changes will be communicated to staff and families, with briefing or training where needed.

The current policy will be published on the school website. Paper copies and support to access or understand the policy will be available through the school office.

11. Links with other policies

This policy should be read alongside the school's:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy, including responses to unexplained, repeated or prolonged absence and concerns about a child's safety
- Relationships and Behaviour policy, including the shared relational approach, support for regulation, responses to bullying and behaviour, and reintegration following suspension
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions policy, including healthcare planning and support for children whose health affects attendance
- Pupil mental health and wellbeing policy, including early identification and support for emotional difficulties

- EYFS policy, including attendance arrangements, transitions and safeguarding for younger children
- SEND policy and SEND Information Report, including identifying needs, removing barriers, reviewing provision and working with families and professionals
- Equality policy and Accessibility Plan, including reasonable adjustments and equitable access to education
- Anti-Bullying policy, including responding to bullying that affects a child's safety, wellbeing or attendance
- Use of Restrictive Interventions Policy, including post-incident support and review where an intervention may affect a child's confidence in attending school
- Mobile Phone policy, including agreed exceptions for medical, disability, safeguarding or other individual needs
- Data Protection policy, including secure recording, appropriate access and information sharing
- Complaints policy, explaining how families can raise concerns about decisions, support or implementation.

Staff apply these policies consistently and coordinate support so that children and families receive clear information and joined-up responses.

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
Attending a place other than the school		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registered	The pupil is scheduled to attend another school at which they are also registered. The school they are due to attend records their actual attendance or absence; this school records code D for that session.
Absent – leave of absence		
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	The pupil has leave to participate in a regulated performance or undertake regulated employment abroad, with the required licence, approval or exemption and school leave arrangements in place.
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment

S	Study leave	Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
C2	Part-time timetable	A pupil of compulsory school age is absent with leave for a session they are not required to attend under an agreed, exceptional temporary part-time timetable
C	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
Absent – other authorised reasons		
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a 'mobile child' who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance	The pupil is absent on a day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which their parent belongs. Additional travel or celebration days are not automatically covered by this code
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
E	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause		
Q	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
Y1	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
Y3	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open

Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
Y5	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are: • In police detention • Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or • Detained under a sentence of detention
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
Y7	Any other unavoidable cause	An emergency or other qualifying unavoidable cause affecting the pupil prevents attendance and is not covered by another unavoidable-cause code. The school records the nature of the circumstances. A parent's difficulty bringing the child to school does not, by itself, justify this code
Absent – unauthorised absence		
G	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
Administrative codes		
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	An administrative code used to prepare records for a prospective pupil who is not yet on the school's admission register
#	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays