

## Pupil Attendance Policy

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## 1. Introduction

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

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

- The Education Act 1996 - sections 434(1)(3)(4) & (6) and 458(4) & (5)
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 ( & amendments dated 2010, 2011, 2013 and 2016)

- 1.1 This is the Attendance policy of Hampton School (the **School**).
- 1.2 The School aspires to high levels of attendance from all pupils. Good attendance is essential for all pupils to get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, well-being and wider life chances.
- 1.3 The Designated Safeguarding Governors maintain oversight procedures and their implementation as part of their overview of safeguarding and welfare. The Assistant Head (Pastoral) ([p.holmes@hamptonschool.org.uk](mailto:p.holmes@hamptonschool.org.uk)) is the School's Senior Attendance Champion and has overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance.
- 1.4 The aims of this policy are as follows:
  - 1.4.1 to develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance;
  - 1.4.2 to ensure, as far as possible, that every pupil in the School is able to benefit from and make their full contribution to the life of the School;
  - 1.4.3 to prioritise and where possible improve attendance and punctuality across the School, reduce absence and set out the School's approach to the management of absence / non-attendance;
  - 1.4.4 to recognise the linkages between attendance / absence and pupil wellbeing, specifically ensuring a consistent whole school approach to safeguarding; and
  - 1.4.5 to help to promote a whole school culture of safety, equality and protection.

## 2. Scope and application

- 2.1 This policy applies to the whole School
- 2.2 This policy is designed to address the specific statutory obligations of the School to record attendance and absence.

## 3. Regulatory framework

- 3.1 This policy has been prepared to meet the School's responsibilities under:
  - 3.1.1 Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014;
  - 3.1.2 Education and Skills Act 2008;
  - 3.1.3 Children Act 1989;
  - 3.1.4 Childcare Act 2006;
  - 3.1.5 Sponsorship Duties (UKVI, July 2023);
  - 3.1.6 The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024;

- 3.1.7 Equality Act 2010; and
- 3.1.8 Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulation (**UK GDPR**)
- 3.2 This policy has regard to the following guidance and advice:
- 3.2.1 Working together to improve school attendance (DfE, applies from 19 August 2024);
- 3.2.2 Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance (DfE, applies from 19 August 2024);
- 3.2.3 Toolkit for schools: communicating with families to support attendance (DfE, September 2023);
- 3.2.4 Guidance for parents on school attendance (Office of the Children's Commissioner, September 2023);
- 3.2.5 'Is my child too ill for school?' guidance (NHS, April 2024);
- 3.2.6 Keeping children safe in education (DfE, September 2024);<sup>1</sup>
- 3.2.7 School behaviour and attendance: parental responsibility measures (DfE, May 2020);
- 3.2.8 Children missing education (DfE, September 2016);
- 3.2.9 Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school (DfE, August 2017);
- 3.2.10 Behaviour in schools: advice for headteachers and school staff (DfE, February 2024);
- 3.2.11 Mental health and behaviour in schools (DfE, November 2018);
- 3.2.12 Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools (DfE, February 2023);
- 3.2.13 Support for pupils where a mental health issue is affecting attendance (DfE, February 2023);
- 3.2.14 Remote education guidance (DfE, updated February 2023); and
- 3.2.15 SEND Code of practice: 0 to 25 years (DfE and Department of Health, May 2015).
- 3.3 This policy has regard to *Working Together to Improve School Attendance (2024)* and should be read in conjunction with the following School policies:
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures;
  - Missing Pupil Policy
  - Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)
  - Behaviour, Rewards, Sanctions, Discipline and Exclusions Policy
  - Code of Conduct
  - Parent Contract (Terms and Conditions)
  - Remote Classroom Teaching

#### **4. Hampton School Aims**

##### **To ensure a high level of attendance the School aims:**

- To make attendance and punctuality a priority for all associated with the School.
- To develop a framework which defines agreed roles and responsibilities and promotes consistency in carrying out designated tasks.
- To develop a systematic approach to gathering and analysing attendance related data.
- To investigate any obstacles to attendance, understanding that at times, some pupils find it harder to attend school than others.
- To provide support, advice and guidance to parents/carers and pupils.
- To monitor attendance data and use this to liaise with parents/carers, other schools (at the point of transfer), the local authority and other external agencies.

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

#### **5. Expectations**

##### **For pupils:**

- To attend regularly,
- To arrive on time, appropriately prepared for the day, which starts at 8.45am and finishes at 4.00pm
- For school attendance to be a priority.

##### **For parents/carers**

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

##### **For the School**

- A broad and balanced education that is dependent on regular attendance at school,
- The encouragement and promotion of good attendance,
- Regular, efficient, and accurate recording of attendance,
- First day contact with parents when a pupil fails to attend school without providing good reason,
- Prompt action on any problems notified,
- Pursuit of reasons for persistent absence,
- To report concerning absence to the relevant authorities
- The pupils' attendance is reported to and discussed with Governors, including the attendance of any pupils that may be a cause for concern.

## 6. Registration

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

Pupils should go to their Form Rooms for registration, in preparation for the start of the day, by 8.45am. Pupils must sign in on the InVentry system in the Reception area if they arrive too late for morning registration, but before 9.20am. If they arrive after 9.20am they should register with staff at Reception.

Registration in the afternoon takes place in Form Rooms at 1.50pm. Pupils who arrive too late for afternoon registration should sign in at Reception, using the InVentry system.

On the rare occasion that no member of staff arrives to take a register, one pupil from the Form should notify Reception staff.

Attendance at lessons will be recorded in SIMS via lesson monitor by subject teachers at the start of each lesson.

## 7. Signing Out

Pupils must sign out on the InVentry system screens in School Reception when leaving the premises, and back in when returning. First to Fifth Year pupils may only sign out during the school day with the written permission of their parents. Sixth Form pupils may sign out at the times specified in the Sixth Form guide / School Code of Conduct.

## 8. School Absence

### Non-Medical Absence

A high level of attendance is essential if a pupil is to reach their full potential, and pupils must attend School every day unless they are ill or have an authorised absence. Pupils who deliberately absent themselves from School will face a significant School sanction.

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

The provision of school holidays is sufficiently generous to allow family holidays to occur within them and the dates of holidays are always published at least 12 months in advance. **Requests for absence other than for medical reasons must be made in writing** or via email to the Head of Year as soon as the need for absence is known, and well in advance. If permission is not obtained in advance, it will be recorded as 'unauthorised'.

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

### Medical Absence

If a child is unwell, parents should telephone Reception or complete the absence reporting form, which can be found on My School Portal, on that day, and any subsequent day(s), until he returns.

### Medical/Dental Appointments

It is generally better if these can be arranged outside school hours, but we know this is not always possible. If a pupil has a dental or medical appointment during School hours, notice of this should be given in advance to the School by completing the planned absence request form that can be found on My School Portal.

### **Emergency Occasions**

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

### **Recording Absence**

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

## **9. Authorised Absence**

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

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

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

Absence may be authorised for the following reasons:

- Illness, medical or dental appointments,
- Days of religious observance,
- Exclusion pursuant to Behaviour, Rewards, Sanctions, Discipline and Exclusions Policy,
- Family bereavement,
- Involvement in a public performance,
- Off-site examination,
- Special occasions - the acceptability of absence on such special occasions will be determined by the school on an individual basis,
- Lateness (when the pupil arrives after the register has closed and offers a satisfactory explanation),
- Study leave for mock or public examinations – supervised study areas are always available for pupils who wish to revise in School.

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

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

## **10. Approved Educational Activity**

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

The activity must be of an educational nature approved by the School and supervised by someone authorised by the School. The activity must take place at the agreed time and be recorded accurately in registers.

## **11. Unauthorised Absence**

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

Absence will not be authorised in the following circumstances:

- The parent(s) offers no explanation,
- The explanation offered is unsatisfactory (shopping, minding the house),
- Family holidays (especially those which are taken without the School's prior consent or knowledge and/or are in excess of any time agreed with the School),
- Lateness when the pupil arrives after 9.20am and fails to offer a satisfactory explanation,
- Special occasions (when the School does not agree that these should be given).

### **Responding to Unauthorised Absence**

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

If a pupil is absent without parental permission, the guidelines below ('Procedure to be followed when a pupil is identified as missing during the School day or on a School activity') will be followed.

### **Persistent Absence (PA)**

The parent of a child of compulsory school age is required by law to ensure that the pupil regularly attends the School at which they are registered. Children being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues (Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024).

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

### **Responding to Persistent Absence**

A pupil's current percentage attendance is highlighted in reports and grade cards; attendance below 95% has a measurable impact upon academic outcomes. If a pupil's absence from school exceeds 5%, it is therefore cause for concern. Where the School has concerns about excessive absence patterns this will be discussed with parents to gain a better understanding of the problems and offer support.

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

The School will always contact the relevant local authority children's services where a child is absent without an authorised reason for ten days or more. It will also provide the local authority with the full name and address of all pupils of compulsory school age who have been recorded with code I (illness) and who the school has reasonable grounds to believe will miss 15 days consecutively or cumulatively because of sickness. Only one sickness return is required for a continuous period of sickness in a school year. This is to help the School and local authority to agree any provision needed to ensure continuity of education for pupils who cannot attend because of health needs.

The School will also contact the relevant local authority whenever a child's level of unauthorised attendance exceeds 5% or whenever any absence appears to the School to raise a safeguarding concern.

Percentage absences will be calculated every fortnight and any children reaching the 90% absence threshold (whether authorised or unauthorised) will be monitored on a fortnightly basis to ensure that attendance improves. Parents will be informed when their child's attendance falls below 90%.

Support for pupils back into school following a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence will be provided by pastoral and academic staff, both to build confidence and bridge gaps. Occasionally, online learning may be provided on a case-by-case basis after discussion with the Deputy Head Academic.

## **12. Punctuality**

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

Pupils who arrive after the start of the school day (8.45am) will be recorded as 'late for school'.

The School understands that sometimes lateness is beyond one's control but where explanations are inadequate, or the lateness becomes frequent, the Head of Year or Form Tutor will discuss this with parents to gain a better understanding of the problems and to offer support. Repeated lateness at the beginning of a school session can amount to a failure to attend regularly for the purpose of Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act.

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

**Staff should also refer to C17 Missing Pupil Policy which can be found on Cezanne - [click here](#)**

As stated above, all pupils are registered before School starts in the mornings and also again after lunch (with the exception of Sixth Form pupils who, on Wednesday afternoons, either register at their sport or sign out via InVentry). Sixth Form pupils are allowed to leave the School site at lunchtime provided they sign out and in at School Reception. Pupils in the Sixth Form may leave School after their last taught afternoon period or after afternoon registration, whichever is later, provided that they have signed out at Reception. Therefore, for the purpose of this Policy, the term 'missing' refers to a pupil being absent without authorisation or explanation. On occasions when a member of staff identifies a pupil as missing from their expected location, immediate action is required as outlined in the procedures below.

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

Communication with parents and/or guardians and the appropriate services (particularly the police) is an integral part of the procedure and all instances of a missing pupil must be reported to The Headmaster, a Deputy Head or another member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and the Safeguarding Team and the appropriate investigation made.

- i. A pupil is identified as missing when:
  - absence at morning registration is not confirmed by a parent or guardian.
  - comparing pupils in a class with the day's absence list and lesson monitor records.
  - a fellow pupil reports a missing friend or classmate.



- ii. Any member of staff discovering a discrepancy must immediately notify the School Reception and Head of Year who will:
  - contact the relevant tutor to find out if the absence is expected and the School Nurse to check for any known medical emergency
  - check all lists of events not on School premises and check the InVentry system register.
- iii. If the pupil is still found to be missing, the School Reception will immediately:
  - inform a Deputy Head and/or other member(s) of the SLT and Safeguarding team who will initiate and oversee a search of the School site and the surrounding roads.
  - advise all teachers due to teach the pupil that day that they must immediately inform Reception if the pupil appears.
- iv. If the site search fails to locate the pupil:
  - The Head of Year or member of SLT will contact the parents and/or guardians; at their discretion, they will arrange for the police to be informed.
- v. If the pupil is found, or the incident is otherwise resolved:
  - the SLT and Safeguarding team and, if they have been contacted, parents and/or guardians will be informed immediately by the School Reception.
  - the police will be informed if they have been involved.
  - a Deputy Head will initiate a full inquiry if appropriate, that will be overseen by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).
  - a written report will be provided and will be recorded either in the pupil's School file or on their Safeguarding file, depending on the incident. If appropriate the matter may be referred to the Health and Safety Committee.

#### **14. Procedure for a 'Missing/Lost Child' on a School Trip off-site**

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

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

## **15. Pupils leaving or joining the school at non-standard times**

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

A record of changes to the admission register is maintained by the Bursary and records pupil name, previous school / future school and address, first / last day of attendance on roll, and for leavers the date of joining a new school.

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

## **16. Staff Training**

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

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

- the law and requirements of schools including on the keeping of registers;
- the process for working with other partners to provide more intensive support to pupils who need it;
- the necessary skills to interpret and analyse attendance data; and
- any additional training that would be beneficial to support pupils and pupil cohorts overcome commonly seen barriers to attendance.

## **17. Information Sharing**

- i. Daily notifications of absence are published on the Common Room notice board. In addition, Heads of Year and relevant members of the SLT receive a daily email which includes the reason for absence and the number of rolling days of absence.
- ii. Fortnightly emails with data are sent to Heads of Year and relevant SLT members. An editable version for those staff is saved centrally on SharePoint, which Heads of Year will update with notes of action taken. This data is used to monitor trends in attendance for cohorts and individuals.
- iii. Personal information regarding attendance is only shared in line with legal obligations and having regard to government guidance on attendance , safeguarding and children missing education.
- iv. The School is legally required to share information from the registers with the local authority. As a minimum, this includes:
  - New pupil and deletion returns;
  - Attendance returns;
  - Sickness returns

- v. Information may also be shared with other schools and external agencies where to do so is of benefit to the pupil.
- vi. The law allows local authority officers access to the attendance and admission registers of all types of schools in order to carry out their functions under the Education Acts to support joint working between schools and local authorities. These officers are also permitted to take digital or physical extracts of a school's registers.
- vii. The School must provide specific pupil information on request to the Secretary of State.
- viii. Where appropriate, the School is expected to inform a pupil's social worker and/or youth offending team worker if there are unexplained absences.
- ix. Registers are legal records and every entry in the attendance and admission register is kept for six years from the date the data was entered.

## **Appendix A: Absence Codes**

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

### **I: Illness**

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

### **M: Medical or dental appointments**

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

### **C: Leave of absence for exceptional circumstances**

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

### **J1: Interview**

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

### **P: Approved sporting activity**

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

### **S: Summer Study Leave**

This code will be used for authorised Study Leave.

### **V: Educational visits and trips**

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

Additional codes which may be used are listed below.

Codes used exclusively by Hampton School will be automatically converted to the DfE approved codes at the time of transfer.

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