

Attendance Policy:

Whole School Policy including EYFS

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy and the Missing Child Policy.

1. Introduction

At Hall Grove School, we believe that regular school attendance is essential for all pupils to enjoy their learning and to achieve their full potential. This policy sets out the expectations and procedures for attendance, in line with the Department for Education's (DfE) guidance outlined in *Working Together to Improve School Attendance (2024)*. The purpose is to ensure that all pupils attend school regularly, arrive punctually, and are supported in addressing any barriers to attendance.

The school's Senior Attendance Champion is:

Mr. Chris Pilgrim – Head of Year 8; Head of Maths; DDSL; Senior Attendance Champion

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2. Aims

- To promote good attendance and punctuality as a key aspect of safeguarding and pupil welfare.
- To ensure all pupils receive their full entitlement to a quality education.
- To foster a supportive environment where attendance issues can be addressed effectively.
- To work in partnership with parents/carers to identify and address any barriers to attendance.

3. Expectations of pupils and their families

We expect the following from our pupils and their families:

- **Parents/carers** have a legal duty to ensure that their child attends school regularly and punctually, and are expected to notify the school by 0830 on each day of absence with the reason for the absence.
- **Pupils** are expected to attend every day that the school is open unless the reason for absence is unavoidable.

4. Attendance Targets

We set our attendance targets in line with national averages and expect all pupils to strive for full attendance.

5. Registration Procedure

- 5.1 A record of attendance registration takes place in Form Rooms each morning, and in classrooms or at the end of lunch each afternoon. The registers are then checked by the School Office, and are closed at 0900 and 1400. Unexplained absences are followed up.
- 5.2 The school uses government registration codes to maintain its register of attendance. Electronic records of attendance are maintained and held available for ISI inspection.

6. Procedures for Reporting Absence

- 6.1 All absences should be reported to the School Office by no later than 0830 on each day of absence. The school cannot assume continued absence is due to illness if it has not been informed, so daily updates should be provided where appropriate.
- 6.2 Absence notification made on the day of the absence should be made via the Absent Today form on MSP, the Absence phone line or email contact with the School Office.
- 6.3 Notification or requests for future absences should be made via the Future Absence form on MSP. The school is not permitted to authorise absences for family holidays during term time. Medical appointments should be arranged outside of school hours where possible.
- 6.4 ***Illness:*** Parents/carers must notify the school by 0830 on the first day of absence due to illness using the Absent Today form on MSP and provide daily updates if the absence continues.
- 6.5 ***Medical Appointments:*** Where possible, medical appointments should be arranged outside of school hours. If this is unavoidable, parents should notify the school in advance using the Future Absence form on MSP.
- 6.6 ***Leave of Absence:*** Any requests for leave for any other reason during term time must be submitted in advance using the Future Absence form on MSP. It should be noted that we are not permitted to authorise holidays during term time.

7. Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

- 7.1 ***Authorised Absence:*** Absence can only be authorised for illness, medical appointments unable to be arranged outside the school day, senior school

visits/assessments, religious observances, or other exceptional circumstances approved by the Headteacher.

- 7.2 **Unauthorised Absence:** Absences will be marked as unauthorised if no valid reason is provided, if the reason cannot be authorised, or if the Headteacher does not approve leave. Persistent or severe unauthorised absences may lead to further intervention (see below).

8. Punctuality

- 8.1 Pupils in Years 1 to 8 are expected to be in school by no later than 0830 each day. Early Years pupils are expected to be in school by 0900 each day.
- 8.2 Lateness will be monitored and followed up with parents where it becomes an ongoing issue. Persistent or extreme lateness can be recorded as unauthorised absence if not addressed.

9. Monitoring and Intervention

- 9.1 School staff will actively promote regular attendance, provide a welcoming and inclusive environment, and identify any patterns of absence early. To achieve this, attendance is monitored closely by Form Teachers and the School Office daily, and patterns or incidents of concern are flagged early. The Senior Attendance Champion will also analyse attendance data on a half-termly, termly and annual basis, and benchmark this data against local, regional and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement. In all cases, the school's Senior Attendance Champion will make patterns of severe and persistent absences a key focus of data analysis.
- 9.2 The school recognises that there may be genuine barriers to good attendance, which will be managed on a case-by-case basis. We are particularly mindful of pupils absent from school due to physical or mental ill-health, or their SEND characteristics, and provide them with additional support where appropriate.
- 9.3 If a pupil's attendance drops below expected levels, Form Teachers will reach out to parents to discuss how it can be improved. Concerns will also be raised to the school's Senior Attendance Champion, who may also involve the DSL. Informal support may be put in place, and the pupil's attendance will be monitored closely by the Senior Attendance Champion. If attendance does not improve, a formal attendance improvement plan may be issued, working in collaboration with parents and senior leaders.
- 9.4 In rare cases of persistently absent or severely absent pupils, the school will work with external agencies including the local authority to support pupils, which may involve safeguarding partners and children's social care services. Interventions at this level are designed to support pupils and their families to ensure good attendance. Where formal

support at this level is not working or being engaged with, attendance can be enforced through legal intervention. In all cases, the school's Senior Attendance Champion will make patterns of severe and persistent absences a key focus of data analysis.

10. Rewarding Good Attendance

We aim to positively reinforce good attendance through a traffic light system on reports and grade sheets (green for excellent attendance, amber for good attendance needing some improvement, and red where attendance is a concern).

11. Parental Responsibilities

Parents play a crucial role in ensuring their child attends school regularly and punctually. We expect parents to:

- Encourage their child to have a positive attitude towards attending school.
- Inform the school promptly of any issues affecting their child's attendance.
- Avoid taking holidays during term time.
- Proactively engage with support offered where necessary.

12. School Responsibilities

The school will:

- Accurately complete admission registers (see Admissions Policy).
- Keep a record of attendance for each pupil (see attendance codes).
- Expect and support good attendance from its pupils.
- Inform parents of expectations on attendance and changes to school policy
- Follow up any unexplained absences with a phone call on the first day of absence.
- Keep parents informed about their child's attendance.
- Work with parents and external agencies to address any attendance issues promptly.
- Have a dedicated senior leader with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance (the Senior Attendance Champion).
- Train staff responsible for registration of pupils to complete their role effectively.

The Senior Attendance Champion will:

- Ensure staff complete attendance responsibilities in line with this policy and other school policies and procedures
- Proactively use attendance data to identify patterns and trends and understand which pupils and pupil cohorts to focus on, including identifying pupils at risk of persistent absence
- Work with identified pupils and their parents to understand and address reasons for absence

- Engage with the DSL and external agencies where necessary to support the attendance of pupils in need.

Teaching Staff will:

- Promote good attendance and punctuality in their classes.
- Ensure accurate registers are taken in a timely fashion for morning and afternoon sessions.
- Ensure that communication from parents about absences is shared with relevant parties including the School Office.
- Report any concerns about attendance or punctuality to the Senior Attendance Champion, the pupil's Section Head and/or the DSL as appropriate.

September 2024
NT/CP

This policy will be reviewed at least annually, or in response to updates from the DfE.

This policy has been written in accordance with the DfE's *Working Together to Improve School Attendance* document alongside other statutory guidance documents to meet the unique needs of our school community while adhering to national standards and expectations.

