

Hemblington Primary School

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Hemblington Primary School procedures and responsibilities.

Attendance Practice Document to be read in conjunction with Broad Horizons Education Trust [Attendance Policy T31](#)

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This guidance has been written in conjunction with the updated (for Sept 23) Working Together to Improve School Attendance.

Here are two useful sources of information for school leaders: Health Protection in Children and Young People Settings including Education Joint protocol for medical absence.

Attendance practice Document

At Hemblington, we are committed to all pupils reaching their full educational achievement. Regular attendance enables children to both maximise the educational opportunities available to them and to become responsible, organised and motivated adults.

The trust statutory attendance policy covers all expectations, general procedures and responsibilities. Our attendance policy should not be viewed in isolation; it is a strand that runs through all aspects of school improvement, supported by our Safeguarding incorporating Child Protection, Keeping children Safe in Education (DFE 2022) prevention of bullying, behaviour, inclusion and equality and (SENDV) policies.

We want to do all that we can to support children and their families with attendance and this document states our management to improve attendance. 5% absence from school over the year equates to 10 missed full days - 2 weeks of learning lost.

School targets:

- 97% or above attendance rate
- 1.9% persistent absence rate
- Any pupil with attendance below 90% over the school year is known as a persistent absentee, whatever the reason for the absences.

Registration times

Morning:

School gates open at 8.30 am

Doors open at 8.35 a.m

Gates are locked at 8.45 am

Electronic registration opens at 8.45 and closes at 9.15 am

Afternoon:

Electronic registration to be completed by 1.30 pm

Parents/children are expected to be on site with enough time to ensure their child is in the class before registration closes.

Parents will not gain access to the site when the gate is locked and need to ensure they are off site by 8.45 am.

Any child arriving late to site must access the building through the front door and will be registered late by the office staff. (see codes in appendix)

Any child who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity (attendance out of school). Only the Executive Headteacher or member of staff acting on their behalf can authorise absence.

If there is no reason for the absence at registration, then the absence will be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised. The coding for any absences will be in accordance with the guidance provided by the Department of Education (*see codes in appendix*).

Registers

Registers are completed electronically, using the management information system Arbor, by the class teacher or any person covering the class. (*see codes in appendix*)

Morning registration will take place at the start of the school day at 8.45 am and close at 9.15 am. The afternoon registration will be at 1.15pm. The registers will remain open for 30 minutes.

Register security

Registers are taken electronically via the Management Information System which is password protected. Attendance records will be kept in line with our Record Management Policy.

Lateness

Any pupil arriving after this time will be marked as having an unauthorised absence unless there is an acceptable explanation i.e. school transport delayed.

In cases, for example where the absence of registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate authorised absence code will be entered. Pupils arriving after the start of the school day but before the end of the registration period will be coded as late before the registers close.

Absences from school

The school will follow up any absence:-

- Ascertain the reason
- Ensure the proper safeguarding action is taken
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct code to be used before entering onto the school electronic register or MIS which is used to download data for the school census.

First day absence

Parents/carers must telephone or email school before 9.15 a.m to report a child's absence and supply a reason. If school has not been contacted, the school admin staff will attempt to contact the family by telephone, email or text. Information will be uploaded to the register.

If school is unable to contact the family and ascertain the reason for absence, they will inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL); both office and DSL will continue to try and contact the parents throughout the day. In the case of vulnerable children or those under section 17/47, the social worker will be contacted immediately.

Continuing absence

Parents/carers to keep school informed each day a child is absent.

Frequent absence

It is the responsibility of the office staff and teachers to be aware of and bring to the attention of the DSL (Mr Howard) any emerging attendance concerns, including persistent absenteeism and lateness.

In the cases where a pupil begins to develop a pattern of absences, the school will try to resolve the problem with the parent/s. If this is unsuccessful, the school will refer to the School Health Advisor for medical issues, or ask for medical evidence in the form of a medical certificate, prescription, doctor's note, etc.

In other cases the school will seek advice from the local authority liaison officer.

Families may be signposted to Norfolk Early Help

Persistent absence

The school will contact parents to inform them when their child's attendance is below 92%. All pupils whose attendance level falls below 90%, unless known due to medical issues, will be subject to an action plan to support their full attendance. These actions will be set up by the Deputy Headteacher/DSL.

Leave of absence in term time.

Leave of absence in term time is discouraged. Parents will be reminded of the effect that absence can have on a pupil's achievement.

The DFE policy document, 'School Attendance: Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities (2020) states, 'Head teachers should not grant leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances. The application must be made in advance and the head teacher must be satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances based on the individual facts and circumstances that warrant the leave. Leave of absence forms are available on the school website or from the school office.

Where a leave of absence is granted, the Executive Headteacher will determine the number of days a pupil can be away from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the Executive Headteacher's discretion. If the school does not receive a request for leave, the Executive Headteacher will be unable to consider individual circumstances and the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. There will be no obligation on the Headteacher to reconsider authorising the leave of an application has not been made in advance.

If the child is absent on the fifth day of a week in which 4 days of unauthorised holiday leave has been taken, the school will expect to have evidence that the child is absent for medical reasons on the fifth day, such as a response to a phone call to the home.

The Local Authority operates a system where any pupil will meet the criteria for legal intervention where they have at least 9 sessions (4.5 school days) lost to unauthorised absence by the pupil during the last 6 school weeks.

The intervention could be in the form of a [fixed penalty notice](#). Any pupil at Hemblington Primary School who meets the criteria will be referred to the Local Authority for action to be considered. If a fixed Penalty Notice is issued the arrangement for payment will be detailed on the penalty notice. The penalty is £60 if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice, rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. The fixed penalty notice is per parent per child. Failure to pay the total amount within the timescale will result in legal action being taken.

Children missing in education

Where the school has reason to believe that the pupil may be a child missing education, the school and Local Authority Child Missing in Education (CME) Team must undertake and exhaust joint reasonable enquiries to establish the whereabouts of the pupil prior to agreeing removal from roll. This is a legal requirement of Education (pupil registration) (England) Regulations 2006 and 2016 and 'Children Missing Education statutory guidance. The school will follow the safeguarding policy in respect of CME.

A Welcome back

It is important that on return from an absence all pupils are made to feel welcome and that as far as possible, they are given an opportunity to catch up on missed work

Categorisation of Absence

Any pupil who is on roll but not present in the school must be recorded within one of these categories:-

1. Unauthorised absence - This is for pupils where no reason has been provided, whose absence is deemed to be without valid reason.
2. Authorised absence - This for those pupils who are away from school for a reason that is deemed to be valid under the Education Act 1996.
3. Approved Educational Activity - this covers types of supervised educational activity undertaken off site but with the approval of the school.

NOTE: pupils recorded in this category are deemed to be present for attendance returns purposes. These could include:-

- Work experience placements
 - Field trips and educational visits
 - Sporting activities
 - Link courses or approved education off site
4. If a pupil is receiving education off site or is attending at a school where they are dual registered, the school will liaise with the other education provider to check on attendance.

The coding for any absences will be in accordance with the guidance provided by the Department of Education (see appendix)

Legal Framework

- Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act states that parents must ensure that children of compulsory school age receive full time education suitable to their age, ability aptitude to any special special educational needs they have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. A child is of Compulsory School Age at the beginning of the term following their 5th birthday. A child ceases to be of compulsory school age on the last Friday in June of the school year in which they reach the age of 16.
- Under the Education Act 1996, the Local Authority has a statutory responsibility to ensure parents secure education for children of compulsory school age where necessary, use legal enforcement. Parents have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends regularly.

This document pays regard to (but not limited to);

- *Keeping Children Safe in Education (DFE2022)*
- *DFE Working together to Improve attendance (DFE2022)*
- *Children Missing in Education (DEF2016)*
- *Working together to Safeguard Children - School attendance parental responsibility measures (2018 updated Feb 2019)*

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
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances

E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
		Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public

S	Study leave	examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence

U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed
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Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day