



<b>Policy Name</b>	Attendance
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<b>Policy Creator</b>	Cathryn Fogg – Attendance Lead

## **Heathfield Attendance Procedures**

Regular and punctual school attendance is important. Pupils need to attend school regularly if they are to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. Children who are persistently late or absent may develop large gaps in their learning which will impact on their progress and their ability to meet age-related learning expectations.

Heathfield Primary School fully recognises its responsibilities in ensuring that pupils attend school and are punctual, therefore allowing pupils to access learning for the maximum number of days and hours. This policy applies to all children registered at this school and it is accessible to parents/carers on the school website. This policy has been written to adhere to the relevant Education Acts, Regulations and Guidance from the Department for Education in addition to guidance from the Local Authority:

- The Education Act 1996
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2011
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016

Although parents/carers have the legal responsibility for ensuring their child's good attendance, the Executive Headteacher, Head of School, Senior Leadership Team and Governors at this school work together with other professionals and agencies to ensure that all pupils are encouraged and supported to develop good attendance habits. Procedures in this policy are followed to ensure this happens

## **Procedure Aims and Objectives**

This attendance policy ensures that all staff and governors in this school are fully aware of and clear about the actions necessary to promote good attendance.

- Improve pupils' achievement by ensuring high levels of attendance and punctuality.
- Achieve a minimum of 96% attendance for all pupils, excluding children who have, for example, significant health issues, are from a traveller family or who have left school within the academic year.
- Create an ethos in which good attendance and punctuality are recognised as the norm and seen to be valued and rewarded by the school.
- Raise the awareness of parents, carers and pupils of the importance of uninterrupted attendance and punctuality, at every stage of a child's education.
- Ensure that our policy applies to Early Years' children in order to promote good habits at an early age.
- Work in partnership with pupils, parents, staff and the Education Welfare Service so that all pupils realise their potential, unhindered by unnecessary absence.
- Promote a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which pupils feel safe, secure, and valued, and encourage in pupils a sense of their own responsibility.
- Establish a pattern of monitoring attendance and ensure consistency in recognising achievement and dealing with difficulties.
- Recognise the key role of all staff – but especially class teachers – in promoting good attendance.

**The school maintains and promotes good attendance and punctuality by:**

- Raising awareness of attendance and punctuality issues among all staff, parents and pupils.
- Ensuring that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on them for making sure their child attends regularly and punctually.
- Equipping children with the life skills needed to take responsibility for good school attendance and punctuality, appropriate to the child's age and development.
- Maintaining effective means of communication with parents, pupils, staff and governors on school attendance matters.
- Developing and implementing procedures for identifying, reporting and reviewing cases of poor attendance and persistent lateness (Heathfield Attendance Strategy).
- Supporting pupils who have been experiencing any difficulties at home or at school which are preventing good attendance.
- Developing and implementing procedures to follow up non-attendance at school.

**Heathfield Attendance Strategy**

The attendance strategy below outlines the steps in supporting pupils' attendance at Heathfield Primary School.

**Step 1: Child is absent from school**

The Admin Team will make a first day call if parents/carers have not contacted school regarding their child's absence and leave a message on the primary contact number, if no-one answers. If contact still has not been made, a second call is made. If contact is still not made, the Head of School or Assistant Headteacher will decide whether a welfare check (home visit) is required. If the parents/carers are not at home for the welfare check, a compliments slip is left alerting them to the fact that someone from school has made a visit. Step 1 is repeated for each absence.

**Step 2: Attendance has dropped below 96%**

The Attendance Team will provide a list of children to the Class Teacher, outlining children whose attendance has fallen below 96%. The Class Teacher is required to have an initial conversation with parents regarding their child's attendance. This may be informal, but key details should be recorded on CPOMS.

**Step 3: Attendance is between 91% and 94%**

Parents/carers will receive a phone call and/or attendance letter (Letter 1) from the Attendance Team, informing them that their child's attendance is being closely monitored. If there is no improvement over a 3-week period, parents/carers will then be invited into school (Letter 2) for an Attendance Planning Meeting with the Assistant Headteacher, Home School Mentor and/or Education Support Officer. Permission to contact the school nurse may be obtained. Further medical evidence may be requested. If parents/carers do not attend this meeting the meeting will be conducted in their absence and minutes sent home to parents.

**Step 4: Attendance has fallen below 90%**

Parents/carers will be invited (Letter 3) to an Attendance Planning Meeting with the Assistant Headteacher, Head of School and/or Chair of the LGB.

**Step 5: Unauthorised Absence**

Unauthorised absence process begins, including legal procedures and multi-agency professional involvement, if attendance remains below 90%.

**Holidays in Term-Time**

Please note that holidays during term-time will not be authorised by the Head of School. If you do have a holiday booked during term time, you are required to complete a Leave of Absence form, **prior** to going on the holiday. All holidays requested will be referred to CAP for a Fixed Penalty Notice to be issued. You will receive a letter from school informing you that the holiday has not been authorised.

**Leave of Absence**

If you require your child to be absent from school for an exceptional circumstance, then you must complete a Leave of Absence Form, **prior** to the event. Leave of Absence submissions will be reviewed by the Head of School. Please note that these absences may not be authorised.

**Lateness and Punctuality**

Heathfield Primary School employs a flexible arrangement at the start of the school day. Classrooms are open from 8.40am and all children need to be in class no later than 8.55am. If a child arrives at school after 8:55am, they must enter via the main reception doors. A late mark (L) will be noted on the child's record with the reason for lateness. Any child arriving after 9:30am will be signed in and an unauthorised absence mark (U) will be recorded, which could result in a referral to the Local Authority and legal action taken. If there is an unavoidable reason for your child getting to school late, please contact us to let us know.

**Definitions:*****Authorised Absence***

An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent/carer; for example, if a child has been unwell and the parent telephones the school to explain the absence. Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents do not have this authority. Consequently, not all absences supported by parents will be classified as authorised.

***Unauthorised Absence***

An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of the school. Therefore, the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent.