



Attendance Policy 2022

Date Adopted: November 2022

To be reviewed: _____

Signed by Governors: _____ 

Signed by Headteacher _____

Contents

1.	Aims	3
2.	Legislation and guidance	3
3.	School procedures	4
4.	Authorised and unauthorised absence	6
5.	Strategies for promoting and rewarding attendance	7
6.	Attendance monitoring	7
7.	Roles and responsibilities	8
8.	Monitoring arrangements	9
9.	Links with other policies	9
Appendix 1:	attendance codes	10

1. Aims

Our school aims to meet its obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence

We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly, and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

At Holly Lodge High School we believe that regular attendance at school is crucial in ensuring that every student can reach their full potential. Good attendance helps to build good habits of reliability and timekeeping needed for future study and employment. We want all students to make the most of school by attending regularly, enjoying and achieving.

The minimum expectation for attendance is 97%. Absence below 90% is classed as persistent absence and parents could be at risk of prosecution. 90% Attendance over 1 school year is a total of 4 weeks missed learning.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the Department for Education: School Attendance Guidance - August 2020 and Department for Education Addendum: Recording Attendance in relation to coronavirus (COVID-19) during the 2020 to 2021 academic year. It also refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- [The Education Act 1996](#)
- [The Education Act 2002](#)
- [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [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](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the [school census](#), which explains the persistent absence threshold.

3. School procedures

3.1 Attendance register

By law, all schools (except those where all pupils are boarders) are required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on this register.

The attendance register will be taken at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

Every entry in the attendance register will be preserved for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8.45am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8.45am during morning registration and will be kept open until 9.00am. The register for the second session will be taken during P6 lesson at 2.10pm.

3.2 Unplanned absence

Parents must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence – for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health – by 8.45am or as soon as practically possible (see also section 6).

Absence due to illness will be authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask parents to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified of this in advance.

The parent must inform the school every day that their child is absent with illness. For any illness over 3 days the Attendance manager or Health and Wellbeing manager may call to find out further information about the illness. In some cases we may ask for a medical note.

3.3 Medical or dental appointments

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; advance notice is required for authorising these absences.

However, we encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

If your son/daughter has to attend a medical or dental appointment during school time, the appointment letter or card should be brought into school at least 24 hours before the appointment and shown to Mr Mellor – Attendance Manager or their Head of Year/Assistant Head of Year for authorisation and appropriate register recording. You may be contacted to discuss the appointment further. Students must be collected by a parent only, to attend their appointment.

Applications for other types of absence in term time must also be made in advance. Information relating to whether the school can authorise such absences can be found in section 4.

3.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late but before the register has closed at 9.00am will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.

A pupil who arrives after the register has closed at 9.00am will be marked as late but it will be identified as an absence, using the appropriate code.

The school will monitor pupil punctuality to school and if there appears to be a problem will make contact with the pupil and their family to offer support.

The school will investigate and take further action regarding persistent lateness to school, this will include detentions to make up time missed and may result in a referral to Sandwell Attendance and Prosecution and possibly a fine.

3.5 Following up absence

The school will follow up any absences to ascertain the reason, ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary, identify whether the absence is approved or not and identify the correct attendance code to use.

3.6 Reporting to parents

The school will report to parents their child's overall attendance through the reporting cycle, however parents can access details of their child's attendance through Classcharts on a daily basis. Form Tutors and Heads of Year will discuss with your child their attendance on a regular basis and may contact parents to discuss any concerns.

4. Authorised and unauthorised absence

4.1 Granting approval for term-time absence

Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence to pupils during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. Exceptional circumstances do not include family holidays, visiting relatives or friends, attending sporting activities, looking after family members or family celebrations.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the headteacher's discretion.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

Illness and medical/dental appointments – as explained in sections 3.2 and 3.3

Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart

Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a Traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision.

4.2 Targeting unauthorised attendance

The school regularly monitors student's attendance and through this will identify students and families who have more than one day of unauthorised attendance. In the first instance the Attendance manager and Year Leader will discuss the absences with the student and their family and put in place measures to support them.

Closer monitoring will take place and if more unauthorised absences occur then warning letters will be issued. Unannounced visits may take place when the student is absent.

If interventions do not lead to an improvement, the school will refer the case to the LA Attendance and Prosecution service for support and further intervention, this may include fines and prosecution.

4.3 Legal sanctions

Schools can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a penalty notice, parents must pay the amount within 28 days, directly to the Local Authority.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice ultimately rests with the headteacher, following the local authority's code of conduct for issuing penalty notices. This may take into account:

A number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year

One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission

Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute the parent or withdraw the notice.

5. Strategies for promoting and rewarding attendance

The school actively encourages and celebrates good punctuality and attendance and students who consistently attend school on time will be rewarded through the whole school rewards system.

6. Attendance monitoring

The Attendance Manager and Head of Year monitors pupil attendance on a weekly basis.

Parents are expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health (see section 3.2). Parents are expected to call the school each day their child is absent due to illness unless they have a doctor's note stating a period of time for absence.

If a pupil's absence goes above 3 days, without medical advice, we will contact the parents to discuss the reasons for this.

If after contacting parents a pupil's absence continue to rise, we will put into place measures to support the pupil and their family and may consider involving a representative from the LA Attendance and Prosecution service.

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee.

Pupil-level absence data is collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. We compare our attendance data to the national average, and share this with governors.

The school uses the attendance data to track attendance and report to parents. We also use it to identify individuals or groups of children who may require further support or intervention with school attendance.

External services, such as the Police and Safeguarding services may request information regarding a student's attendance.

Other requests for attendance data are very often received from colleges, universities, potential employment, benefit services and home office. The school is legally obliged to provide accurate information to these services and providers.

[7. Roles and responsibilities](#)

[7.1 The governing body](#)

The governing body is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

[7.2 The headteacher](#)

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the school, and for monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.

The headteacher also supports other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils and issues fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

7.3 The attendance manager

The attendance manager:

Monitors attendance data at the school and individual pupil level

Provides regular attendance data and analysis to the headteacher, SLT and Governing Body

Reports concerns about attendance to the headteacher and Senior Leadership Team

Works with Local Authority officers to tackle persistent absence

Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues

Ensure students and parents are regularly communicated with regarding individual student's attendance

Implements a range of strategies to support students to overcome barriers regarding attendance and punctuality

Advises the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

7.4 Class teachers/form tutors

Class teachers and form tutors are responsible for recording attendance on a daily and lesson basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office.

7.5 Office/reception staff

Office/reception staff are expected to take calls from parents about absence and record it on the school system.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years by the Deputy Head (Pastoral)). At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

9. Links with other policies

This policy is linked to our child protection and safeguarding policy

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

Definition		Scenario
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
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public 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

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