



High Bank JIN School

# Attendance Policy

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## 1. Aims

At High Bank JIN School we are committed to enabling and encouraging all members of the school to reach out for excellence. For children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend school regularly and children should be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

Pupils will be supported to understand that attendance at school is vital if they are to make the best progress and we will provide an environment that is welcoming and in which they feel valued. We recognise the vital role of parents and have established strong home school links.

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Promoting good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

## 2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and 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:

- Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [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.

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## 3. Roles and responsibilities

### 3.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

- › Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- › Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- › Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- › Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- › Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- › Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

### 3.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- › Implementation of this policy at the school
- › Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- › Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- › Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies › Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

### 3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- › Leading attendance across the school
- › Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- › Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- › Having an oversight of data analysis
- › Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- › Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- › Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families
- › Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- › Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- › Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher
- › Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence › Advising the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The designated leader responsible for attendance is J Stebbings and can be contacted via the school office email.

### 3.5 Class teachers

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

### 3.6 School admin/office staff

School office staff will:

- › Take calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
  - › Transfer calls from parents to the headteacher or lead in this area in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance
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- Liaise with lead in this area and support by attending parent meetings, contacting Kirklees safeguarding.

### 3.7 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 8.45 on the day of the absence (and each subsequent day of absence), and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day

### 3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day on time

## 4. Recording attendance

### 4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register. The register used in school is integris G2.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the school day and once at the beginning of the afternoon. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances
- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

- Punctuality to school is crucial. Lateness into school causes disruption to that individual's learning and to that of the other pupils in the class. It is paramount therefore that all pupils arrive at school on time. For school pupils the classroom doors are open from 8.50.
- Registration takes place at 8.50am and pupils who arrive after this time will be recorded as late to school. Any child arriving after 9.00 will be given an unauthorised late mark. If a child arrives later than 9.00am they should enter via the main entrance, reporting to the school office. The parent, carer or child should give a reason for the lateness, which will be added to the register. The child will then be sent to their classroom. Parents will not be allowed to accompany their child to class.

Pupil's attendance and punctuality is recorded on their report and will be passed on to future schools as necessary.

- Pupils who are consistently late are disrupting not only their own education but also that of others. Where persistent lateness gives cause for concern further action may be taken.

#### *Pupil Leaving During the School Day*

- During school hours the school staff are legally responsible for the pupils and therefore must know where the pupils are during the school day.
- pupils are not allowed to leave the premises without prior permission from the school.
- whenever possible, parents should try to arrange medical and other appointments outside of school time.
- parents are requested to explain to the office the reason for any planned absence, the time of leaving, the expected return time and show evidence of appointments.

- pupils must be signed out on leaving the school and be signed back in on their return. Parents will not be allowed to accompany their child to class.
- where a pupil is being collected from the school, parents are to report to the school office before the pupil is allowed to leave the site.
- if a pupil leaves the school site without permission their parents will be contacted (and the policy for pupils absconding from school will be followed). Should the school be unable to make contact with the family it may be appropriate, in certain circumstances, to contact the Police and register the pupils as a missing person.

## Communication

### When a family starts school

- Information on lateness, illness and absence is given to parents and made clear on the school website. This highlights the importance of being at school on time and notifying school if their child is absent for any reason.
- At the pre-school induction meetings held each year for children about to enter the nursery/reception class the importance of regular attendance is discussed and explained. This talk also includes parents and children arriving at school on time so that each child can be given the best possible start to each school day. Being picked up on time is also stressed, especially for young children who can be very upset if they are the only ones left.
- Parents are asked to share any worries their child might have in school. Sometimes little things upset children which means they become unhappy, and may not want to come to school. Parents need to be aware of this.
- Again at this initial meeting school explains to parents that their family holidays must be taken within the school holidays, rather than in term time so that their child's education is not disrupted.
- Children are also admitted to school at various times of the year, and into various year groups. All parents requesting a place are asked to make an appointment with the Head teacher. At this meeting the importance of regular attendance is always highlighted along with other school routines.
- Authorised and unauthorised absences are explained to parents. All parents are asked to contact school if their child is absent. All information is used to inform teachers when filling in their registers. If no notification is received about a child's absence the teacher informs the office staff who contact parents as appropriate.

The following table highlights the categories that schools use to monitor attendance.

<b>100%</b>	<b>98-99%</b>	<b>97%</b>	<b>96%</b>	<b>91-95</b>	<b>90% or less</b>
<b>Perfection</b>	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Good: the minimum expected</b>	<b>Satisfactory</b>	<b>Must improve</b>	<b>Classed as 'persistent absence'</b>
		<b>(DfE minimum)</b>		<b>Danger Zones: significant impact on learning &amp; life chances</b>	

It is well recognised that good, consistent attendance at school is crucial to a child or young person's future prospects. Reducing absence from school continues to be a priority both nationally and locally, because missing school damages pupils' attainment levels, disrupts school routines, affects the learning of others and can leave young people vulnerable to anti-social behaviour, crime and ultimately damage to life chances.

## 4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8.45 or as soon as practically possible by calling the school office staff (see also section 7).

We will mark absence due to illness as 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 the pupil's parent/carer 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/carers will be notified of this in advance.

### 4.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

To apply for a leave of absence parents must fill in the appropriate form.

However, we encourage parents/carers 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.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

### 4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
  - After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code
- If there is an ongoing punctuality issue parents will be informed through a letter and when appropriate a phone call or conversation will occur.

### 4.5 Following up unexplained absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may contact police.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer

### 4.6 Reporting to parents/carers

The school will inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels if it is dropping below 95%.

## 5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

### 5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

Examples of 'exceptional circumstances' might be funerals or terminal illness.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via school office and website. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
  - 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
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purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision

## 5.2 Legal sanctions

The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The 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 or withdraw the notice.

## 6. Strategies for promoting attendance

Good attendance and punctuality will be encouraged through a system of reward and recognition, including the weekly trophy for the highest class attendance, stickers for the younger children, other rewards.

## 7. Attendance monitoring

### 7.1 Monitoring attendance

School will

- Monitor attendance and absence data half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern

Pupil-level absence data will be 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. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing board.

Parents are informed when the children are dropping below 95% and meetings are set up with parents if it drops below 90%. School will work with parents to improve each child's attendance.

### 7.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

### 7.3 Using data to improve attendance

School will provide

- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

### 7.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

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The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance
- Where necessary write a parent contract to ensure everyone is working together to improve pupils attendance.

## **8. Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated.

## **9. Links with other policies**

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Relationships 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

Code	Definition	Scenario
<b>Authorised absence</b>		
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

<b>H</b>	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
<b>I</b>	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
<b>M</b>	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
<b>R</b>	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
<b>S</b>	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
<b>T</b>	Gypsy, Roma and traveller absence	Pupil from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
<b>Unauthorised absence</b>		
<b>G</b>	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
<b>N</b>	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)
<b>O</b>	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
<b>U</b>	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Scenario</b>
<b>X</b>	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
<b>Y</b>	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

<b>Z</b>	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
<b>#</b>	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to halfterm/bank holiday/INSET day

## Appendix 2

### High Bank JIN School – First day calling procedures

1. Absence calls listened to/ emails checked.
2. Class registers completed and saved.
3. Late children checked against registers.
4. First day call to first name on contact list by 9.30am asking for response / leave message.
5. If no response, call second name on contact list by 9.45am.
6. Ring down contact list until reply is received.
7. If no reply by 10am, alert Headteacher (or member of SLT in HT's absence) that the child is absent and no contact has been made.
8. Headteacher to risk assess the current level of concern and consider if circumstances warrant a home visit.
9. If appropriate, home visit to be made following decision by Headteacher. Where possible, two members of school staff attend (or an agency involved with the child where appropriate, eg social worker).
10. Contact police to initiate a safe and well / welfare check if all other stages have been completed and there is still no contact regarding the absent child. A police welfare check can be requested on 101 or **101 live chat**.