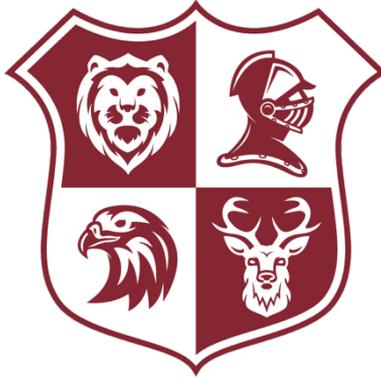


## Attendance Policy



STATUTORY / NON-STATUTORY	STATUTORY
MEMBER OF STAFF RESPONSIBLE	AHT (HLo)
DATE APPROVED BY Head/SLT	November 2021
GOVERNING BODY OR COMMITTEE RESPONSIBLE	SIC
DATE OF FULL GOVERNING BODY APPROVAL	November 2021
REVISION DUE DATE	November 2022

## School Attendance – Advice for Parents and Carers

### **Rationale/Statement of Intent**

**For a child to reach their full educational achievement, a high level of school attendance is essential.**

We are committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all our students and endeavour to provide an environment where all students feel valued, safe and welcome. Every student has a right to access the education to which they are entitled. Parents/Carers and teachers share the responsibility for supporting and promoting excellent school attendance and punctuality for all.

It is our duty to consistently strive to achieve a goal of **100%** attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to students and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

Under Section 7 of the Education Act 1996, parents/carers are responsible for making sure that children of compulsory school age receive full-time education. Parents/carers have a legal responsibility to ensure their child's regular attendance at the school where they are registered.

If a child of compulsory school age who is registered at a school fails to attend regularly at the school, the parent/carer is guilty of an offence under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996.

While the parent/carer is primarily responsible for ensuring their school-registered child attends regularly, where school attendance problems occur, the key to successfully resolving these problems is engaging the child through effective case management and collaborative working between the pupil, parent/carer, school and local authority.

It is important that everyone works together to help children obtain the best possible start in life with a good education. Therefore, we encourage our parents and carers to work in partnership with the school, notifying the school of the reason for any of their child's absences and highlighting any areas of concern they may have so they can be addressed promptly.

For your child to take full advantage of the educational opportunities offered it is vital your child is at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. The routines children develop around attendance and punctuality at school are the same as the expectations of any future employer in the world of work. High attainment, confidence with peers and staff, and future aspirations depend on good attendance.

There are two attendance sessions every day AM and PM; missing school for a whole day, therefore counts as two absences.

Expectations of attendance levels

We ask that all children strive for 100% attendance. Our coloured banding system shows the different stages of attendance that are monitored by our designated attendance officer.

- Green Band – 96%-100%
- Amber Band – 93% – 95.9%
- Red Band – 91% – 92.9%
- Persistent Absentee 90.9% and below.

The overall school attendance target for a whole school year is 95% and above.

**Attendance and Covid-19:**

The monitoring and recording of attendance changed in September 2021:

If a student is off awaiting confirmation of a PCR test, they are marked with the X code which does not impact their overall attendance percentage. When the case is confirmed as Covid, the code is changed to the I code (illness) which does impact the student’s attendance percentage. Please be assured that we would not pursue non-attendance due to Covid.

**Good attendance is important because:**

- Statistics show a direct link between under-achievement and absence below 95%/
- Regular attenders make better progress, both socially and academically.
- Regular attenders find school routines, school work and friendships easier to cope with.
- Regular attenders find learning more satisfying.
- Regular attenders are more successful in transferring between primary school, secondary school, and higher education, employment or training.

We, therefore, expect that all pupils will:

- Attend school regularly
- Attend school punctually
- Attend school appropriately prepared for the day
- Discuss promptly with their tutor or Year Leader any problems that prevent them from attending school.

Please contact your child’s tutor, Year Leader or our Attendance Officer (Jael Robinson) with any concerns you may have regarding your child’s attendance.

**The impact that absence has on attendance:**

Attendance % Rate	Approximate number of days off in a school year	School time missed by the end of Year 11
100%	0	0
95%	10	¼ of a year

90%	20	½ of a year
85%	30	¾ of a year
80%	40	One whole school year

### **Responsibilities of Parents/Carers:**

We expect that all parents/carers, who have day to day responsibility for the child, will help prevent their child have excellent attendance by:

- Informing the school on every day of absence. This can be done via phone call, epraise or email to [attendance@noadswood.hants.sch.uk](mailto:attendance@noadswood.hants.sch.uk)
- Supporting the school with their child in aiming for 100% attendance each year
- Ensuring they understand the importance of good attendance and punctuality
- Taking an interest in their child's education- ask about school work and encourage them to get involved in school activities. This will encourage children to share any possible issues which may in turn affect their attendance.
- Discussing any problems they may have at school and informing their tutor/Year Leader so that they are able to be supported.
- Avoiding taking their child out of school for non-urgent medical or dental appointments
- Endeavouring to arrange appointments and outings in after school hours, at weekends or during school holidays to help prevent disruption to your child's education and to the school
- Encouraging your child into school even for part of the day if they have been ill during the night, had broken sleep etc.
- Only request leave of absence if it is for an exceptional circumstance.

### **Responsibilities of Noadswood Staff:**

- Ensure that all students are registered accurately.
- Promote and reward good attendance with student's at all appropriate opportunities.
- Liaise with the Year Leader on matters of attendance and punctuality.
- Communicate any concerns or underlying problems that may account for a child's absence.
  
- Follow the appropriate staged interventions and communications with students and their parents/carers for non-attendance. This includes conversations with the student held by their tutor, discussion with their Year Leader and, where attendance continues to fail, with the attendance officer.

- Support pupils with absence to engage with their learning once they are back in school.

### **Responsibilities of pupils:**

- Attend every day unless they are ill or have an authorised absence.
- Arrive in school on time.
- Go to all their registrations and lessons on time.
- Take responsibility for registering at the pupil reception area if they are late or are leaving the school site during school hours.

### **Responsibilities of the school's attendance officer and Senior Leader:**

A designated attendance officer, supported by a member of the Senior Leadership Team, will oversee, direct and co-ordinate the school's work in promoting regular and improved attendance and will ensure the attendance policy is consistently applied throughout the school. This person will also ensure that attendance is both recorded accurately and analysed. Our attendance officer is Miss J Robinson and is supported by our Assistant Headteacher, Mrs H Loveday. The attendance officer will ensure that attendance issues are identified at an early stage and that support is put in place to deal with any difficulties.

If absence is frequent or continuous, except where a child is clearly unwell, the attendance officer will discuss with parents/carers the need and reasons for their child's absence and will encourage them to keep absences to a minimum. They will be invited in to school to discuss the concerns around attendance. Continued periods of absence will be recorded as unauthorised. A note or explanation from a pupil's home does not mean an absence becomes authorised. The decision whether or not to authorise an absence **will always rest with the school**.

### **Responsibilities of the School:**

As a school, we will promote the importance of excellent attendance and to help us all, whether parents/carers, pupils or staff, to focus on this we will:

- Contact home if we have any concerns regarding your child's attendance or anything that could result in your child not wishing to attend school.
- Report to you on how your child is performing in school, what their attendance and punctuality rate is and how this relates to their attainment.
- Celebrate good attendance by displaying individual and class achievements
- Reward good or improving attendance through tutor group/House competitions, certificates and outings/events
- Set targets for the school and for classes for attendance and display these in the school

### **Recording Attendance:**

Pupils are expected to attend school every day for the entire duration of the academic year unless there is an exceptional reason for absence.

Schools must legally take an attendance register twice a day. At Noadswood the school day begins at 8.40 am and all **pupils are expected to be in their tutor base or the school hall for assembly by 8.45 for morning registration at this time**. Afternoon registration is at **12.50** and is taken, at this time, **in period 4** by the classroom teacher.

It is important to be on time at the start of the morning and afternoon school sessions and to lessons. The start of school/lessons is used to give out instructions or organise work. If your child is late they can miss work time with their tutor or class teacher getting vital information, cause disruption to the lesson for others, and it can be embarrassing leading to possible further absence.

All lateness is recorded daily. This information will be required by the courts, should a prosecution for non-attendance or lateness be necessary. Any absence will be recorded with a specific code depending on the type of absence.

If a child arrives after the close of registration s/he/they will be considered as having an unauthorised absence and this will be coded *U* in line with Hampshire County Council and Department of Education guidance. This mark shows them to be on site, but is legally recorded as an absence.

The two main categories of absence are:

Authorised absence – when the school has accepted the explanation offered as satisfactory justification for the absence or given approval in advance for such an absence. If no explanation is received, absences cannot be authorised.

Un-authorised absence – when the school has not received a reason for absence or has not approved a pupil's leave of absence after a parental/carer request.

We can, if needed, change an authorised to unauthorised and visa versa, if new information is presented. An example of this would be where a parent states a child is unwell but on return to school there is evidence they have been on holiday.

### **Punctuality and Persistent Lateness to Registration**

Registration starts promptly at **8.45am** every day.

- If your child arrives after 8.45am but before 9.00am they will receive a 'late before registration closes' mark.
- If your child arrives after the close of the register at 9.00am they will be marked with an unauthorised absence code 'U' which shows them to be on site but legally recorded as absent for the whole session. This will remain unless the school is satisfied that there is a legitimate reason for your child being late.
- Any child arriving late after the close of the register, must sign in at pupil reception as we have a safeguarding and health and safety obligation to know who is on school site at any one time.
- Persistent lateness will result in school sanctions
- Persistent lateness after the close of registration and therefore, an absence, may become subject to legal action.

If you do have to take your child off site legitimately and/or return him/her to school later in the day, it is important for health and safety reasons that your child signs in/out at reception.

Students will receive sanctions (parents/carers are notified) for lateness which increase in severity if lateness becomes more persistent.

Parents/carers of students who have patterns of lateness will be contacted to discuss the importance of good time keeping and how this might be achieved. If lateness persists parents/carers will be invited to attend the school and discuss the problem and support may be offered

If support is not appropriate or is declined and a child has 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence due to lateness recorded in any 10 week period, the school or Hampshire County Council will be required to issue parents with a Penalty Notice in accordance with Hampshire County Council's *Code of conduct: issuing Penalty Notices for unauthorised absence from schools*.

## What to do if my child is absent?

A child not attending school is a safeguarding concern. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required. If your child is absent you must:

- Contact us as soon as possible on the first day of absence, explaining the reasoning for the absence.
- Send a note in on the first day they return with an explanation of the absence if you have not already provided this information.

If your child is absent we will:

- telephone or text you on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you – this is because we have a duty to ensure your child's safety as well as their regular school attendance
- Send relevant letters expressing our concerns about continued absence.
- Invite you in to discuss the situation with our attendance officer and/or Year Leader and/or Assistant Headteacher if absences persist
- Refer the matter to the Hampshire County Council's Attendance Legal Panels if absence is unauthorised and falls below 90%.

## Ten days' absence

We have a legal duty to report the absence of any pupil who is absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive days. If the child is not seen and contact has not been established with the named parent/carer then the local authority is notified that the child is '*at risk of missing*'. Children's Services staff will visit the last known address and alert key services to locate the child. So please help us to help you and your child by making sure we always have an up-to-date contact number. There will be regular checks on telephone numbers throughout the year.

## Continued or ongoing absence

If your child misses 10% (three weeks/sessions) or more schooling across the school year, for whatever reason, they are defined as *persistent absentees*. This is attendance 90.9% and below.

Absence for whatever reason disadvantages a child by creating gaps in his/her/their learning. Research shows these gaps affect attainment when attendance falls below 95%. As such, we monitor all absence thoroughly and all attendance data is shared with the local authority and the Department for Education. If your child has had absence and their attendance level is falling towards 90% we will contact you and, depending on the reasons for the absence, could result in a Penalty Warning notification and a fine.

Our persistent absentee students, and their parents, are usually subject to an Attendance Plan or home school contract and these may include:

- regular meetings to discuss current attendance
- targets for improving attendance
- advice on how to support the parent/child in attending school more regularly
- referral to 'Early Help Hub' which is a multi-agency support mechanism for families

## **My child has a dentist/doctor appointment, music exam etc What should I do?**

Please try to make appointments out of school hours but if this is not possible, your child should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment.

Taking a whole day off for a medical appointment should only be done in exceptional circumstances.

Please advise your child's tutor in advance of any appointments made.

## **Students who are unable to attend school due to health needs (including both physical and mental health)**

Sometimes children or young people become too unwell and are unable to attend school for a significant period of time. At these times Noadswood will work in partnership with the Local Authority to make suitable arrangements for that child's continuing education that takes into account their age, aptitude, ability and SEN needs and their health condition.

Noadswood will make reasonable adjustments to meet the need of the child if they are able to attend school with adjustments such as a flexible approach to the timetable. We have a duty to ensure that all students are having their educational needs met, including those who attend school part-time and intermittently. Noadswood will always notify the Local Authority of any student who is on a reduced hours of flexible learning provision.

There is an expectation that most children will make a full or partial recovery from their illness. At this point it is important that the child's needs for education continue to be appropriately met with the aim that most children will transition back to full time mainstream education.

Whilst Noadswood will retain the responsibility to provide a suitable education for all its pupils and must be able to make reasonable adjustments according to identified needs, occasionally a joint package of support may be arranged for the child between the school and Hampshire Local Authority through the Inclusion Support Service (ISS). The pupil will remain on the school. Education Support for Medical Absence is part of the Inclusion Support Service (ISS) and aims to provide support for Hampshire residents of statutory school age who are temporarily unable to attend their school or programme of support due to the impact of their medical condition.

For further guidance on this matter please see the link below:

[Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

## **I need to take my child out of school for another reason. What should I do?**

This might include circumstances such as family bereavement or religious observance.

Please write a brief letter of explanation to your child's Year Leader. Please make every effort to let us know well in advance of the requested time though we appreciate that this is not always possible.

## **Request for leave of absence**

Amendments to school attendance regulations were updated and enforced from September 2013:

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations state that headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. It is important to note that headteachers can determine the length of the authorised absence, as well as whether absence is authorised at all. The fundamental principles for defining *exceptional* are rare, significant, or unavoidable, which means the event could not reasonably be scheduled at another time. There are no rules on this as circumstances vary from school to school and family to family. There is, however, no legal entitlement for time off in school term time to go on holiday and in the majority of cases, holiday will not be authorised.

Parents/carers wishing to apply for leave of absence need to write to the Headteacher in advance and before making any travel arrangements.

If term-time leave is taken without prior permission from the school, the absence will be unauthorised and if the number of sessions absent hits the thresholds set down in Hampshire County Council's *Code of conduct*, parents/carers will be issued with a fixed-penalty fine or other legal action in accordance with the code.

Taking holidays in term time will affect your child's schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents to help us by not taking children out during school time.

## **Penalty Notices for non-attendance and other legal measures**

In education law, parents/carers are committing an offence if they fail to ensure the regular attendance of their child of compulsory school age at the school at which the child is registered, unless the absence has been authorised by the school.

## **Legal measures for tackling persistent absence or lateness**

Hampshire schools and Hampshire County Council will use the full range of legal measures to secure good attendance. Legal measures will only be considered when there is unauthorised absence and :

1. the child or family do not require the support from any agency to improve the attendance
2. the child has 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence and parents are complicit in the child's absence

The following legal measures will be used for pupils of compulsory school age who are registered at a school:

- Parenting contracts set at Education Planning meetings.
- Parenting orders

- • Penalty Notices
- • Education Supervision Orders
- • prosecution.

Where a child has **unauthorised absence** the school must enforce Hampshire County Council's *Code of conduct: issuing Penalty Notices for unauthorised absence from schools* or follow its guidance on other legal measures for non-attendance. The *Code of conduct* is a statutory document that ensures that powers for legal sanctions are applied consistently and fairly across all schools and their families within the authority. A copy is available from:

[www.hants.gov.uk/education/hias/learning-behaviour-attendance/attendance-guidance-forparents/possible-penalties](http://www.hants.gov.uk/education/hias/learning-behaviour-attendance/attendance-guidance-forparents/possible-penalties).

### **Penalty Notices for non-attendance – Hampshire's Code of Conduct**

The *Code of Conduct* states that schools or Hampshire County Council will issue a Penalty Notice for any unauthorised absence where the pupil has been:

- • absent for 10 or more half-day sessions (five school days) of unauthorised
- • absence during any 100 possible school sessions – these do not need to be consecutive persistently late (coded *U*) for up to 10 sessions (five days) after the register has closed
- • persistently late before the close of the register (coded *L*), but the school has met with parents and has clearly communicated that they will categorise as unauthorised any further lateness (code *O*), and where the threshold of 10 sessions (five days) has been met
- • absent for any public examinations of which dates are published in advance
- • absent for any formal school assessments, tests or examinations where the dates have been published in advance

These circumstances would apply unless the issuing of a Penalty Notice would conflict with other intervention strategies in place or other sanctions already being processed.

If a child's unauthorised absence meets any of the above criteria and the family or child do not require any agency support to improve the attendance then a Penalty Notice is issued for either:

1. 10 sessions of unauthorised absence or lateness in any 10 week school period
2. one or more sessions of unauthorised absence during a public exam, formal school assessment or testing where dates are published in advance.

This includes where a pupil has unauthorised absence due to either non-approval of a parent/carer's request for leave of absence, or a holiday that has been taken without permission.

Parents and carers will be warned of the likelihood of a Penalty Notice being issued for unauthorised absence via a letter, through the leave of absence request form, or through the school's attendance policy and website. **The Penalty Notice is a fine that is issued to each parent/ carer who condoned (or was responsible**

**for the child) during the period of unauthorised absence for which the fine has been issued.** For each case of unauthorised absence the school or Hampshire County Council will decide whether a Penalty Notice is issued to **one or more parents/carers** for each child.

**NB:** This could mean four Penalty Notices for a family with two siblings, both with unauthorised absence for holiday, ie one Penalty Notice for each child to each parent.

Each Penalty Notice carries a fine of £60 if paid within 21 days of the Penalty Notice being posted. If the fine is not paid within 21 days the penalty is automatically increased to £120 if paid within 28 days. If the fine remains unpaid Hampshire County Council will consider prosecution for the non-attendance. Payment methods are detailed on the Penalty Notices themselves. Penalties are to be paid to Hampshire County Council and revenue resulting from payment of penalties is used by the County Council to help cover the costs of issuing Penalty Notices and/or the cost of prosecuting recipients who do not pay.

**Please note:** If you pay the Penalty Notice and your child has further unauthorised absences additional legal action will be taken. For example, in the event that a Penalty Notice has previously been served to you due to unauthorised holiday, should your child have any future unauthorised leave this will result in further legal action for you, such as prosecution or an Education Supervision Order. For further information parents/carers can request a leaflet from their school and should visit Hampshire County Council's website at:

[www.hants.gov.uk/education/hias/learning-behaviour-attendance/attendance-guidance-forparents/possible-penalties](http://www.hants.gov.uk/education/hias/learning-behaviour-attendance/attendance-guidance-forparents/possible-penalties).

## **Leavers**

If your child is leaving our school (other than when leaving at the end of Year 11) parents are asked to:

1. Give the Year Leader comprehensive information about their plans, including any date of a move and your new address and telephone numbers, your child's new school and the start date when known. This should be submitted to our school in writing

If pupils leave and we do not have the above information, then your child is considered to be a *child missing in education*. This requires schools and local authorities to then carry out investigations to try and locate your child, which includes liaising with Children's Services, the Police and other agencies. By giving us the above information, these investigations can be avoided.

## **Absence through child participation in public performances, including theatre, film or television work and modelling**

Parents of a child who requires absence due to public performances, can seek leave of absence from school for their child to take part in a performance. They must contact the headteacher to discuss the nature and frequency of the work, whether the child has a valid performance licence and whether education will be provided by the employer during any future leave of absence. It is, however, down to the headteacher's discretion as to whether to authorise this and they will wish to discuss with you the nature and frequency of the absence and how learning will continue if absence occurs. Any absence recorded as part of a child's participation in a public performance is recorded as C, an authorised absence.

## **Absence through competing at regional, county or national level for sport**

Parents of children who are competing in sporting competitions, can seek leave of absence from school for their child to take part in regional, county, national and international events and competitions. It is, however, down to the headteacher's discretion as to whether to authorise this and they will wish to discuss with you the nature and frequency of the absence and how learning will continue if absence occurs. Permission for your child to leave early or arrive late to attend coaching and training sessions is also at the discretion of the headteacher and is not likely to be approved if it is a regular event, unless the sports club or association is providing an education tutor as part of their coaching.

## **Gypsy, Roma, Traveller and Showman families**

Absence of a child from a Traveller family that has left the area may be authorised if the absence is for work purposes only and it is believed that the family intends to return. To ensure the continuity of learning for Traveller children, dual registration is allowed. That means that a school cannot remove a Traveller child from the school roll while they are travelling. When the Traveller is away, the home school holds the place open and records the absence as authorised through the *T* code. Distance learning packs for Traveller children are not an alternative to attendance at school.

## **Study leave**

We believe that pupils/students' needs are best met if they attend school every day in the period leading up to examinations. No study leave will be granted during this period, therefore, and pupils/students will be expected to attend school in the usual way.

Study leave will only be granted to Year 11 pupils/ students during the time of the GCSE examination period. Should any pupils/students wish to attend school (or should their parents wish them to) on the days and at times when they are not sitting examinations, arrangements will be made for them to do so. The school will work within the legal requirements, ie:

- study leave should only be granted to Year 11 pupils and never to those in other year groups
- it should never exceed 15 school days in a year and is most appropriately granted during the examination period itself, ie not before the beginning of that period
- it should always be granted sparingly, taking account of an individual pupil/student's ability to manage and benefit from unsupervised study
- any pupil has the right to attend school during study leave and a parent has the right to insist he/she does so
- any session given to pupils as study leave has a statistical meaning of authorised absence(it is not an *approved educational activity* as it is unsupervised) and should be recorded and reported on by the school as such.

**Teenage pregnancy**

Support will be directed to keeping a pupil in school and, wherever possible, her return to full-time education as soon as possible after the birth. A pupil who becomes pregnant should be allowed no more than 18 weeks' authorised absence to cover the time immediately before and after the birth of the child. After that time, any absence should be treated as unauthorised.