



HOVE LEARNING FEDERATION

Good Attendance Policy



Amended: Autumn 2022
Adopted by the Governing body: Autumn 2022
To be reviewed: Autumn 2025

Policy for Good Attendance

Hove Learning Federation recognises that regular attendance is important for success at school and is the entitlement for all children. There is a proven link between higher attendance levels and academic achievement. Patterns of good attendance will be encouraged from an early age and early identification of poor attendance will be followed up with parents / carers by both the school and our Independent School Attendance Adviser.

Every Day at School Counts (see appendix 1). Good attendance means that children usually make good, consistent progress in their school work. Children who miss school during term time may never catch up with important work they have missed. All children have an entitlement to regular school attendance.

We expect good attendance from our pupils in order for them to make the most of the opportunities the school has to offer. We rely on our partnership with parents and carers to ensure that this is achieved. It is also, of course, a legal requirement for children to attend school regularly and arrive on time. It is the responsibility of parents and an essential element of pastoral care.

We ask parents/carers to help us by notifying us of all absences on the first day – we will contact you if we have not been notified of a reason for absence. The school should be notified in writing before any absence is taken which is known in advance.

All absences mean that a child misses schoolwork. Parents/carers are therefore requested to keep absence to a minimum.

Authorised and unauthorised absence

The law requires that all schools must show the difference between authorised and unauthorised absence. We operate a RAG system (Red, Amber, and Green):

Green	95% or more attendance
Amber	91-94.99% attendance
Red	90.99% or less attendance

Absences are mainly covered by the following categories:

Authorised Absences
Genuine reasons of illness of the child. The school may, in some circumstances, request medical evidence to support the child's absence. This can be a GP appointment card or copy of a prescription. Medical/dental treatment which cannot be arranged outside school hours – parents need to inform the school and to provide evidence of such appointments i.e. appointment card
Exclusion from school
Authorised Absences at the discretion of the Headteacher
Exceptional circumstances have to be stated for any absence requested.
Days of religious observance.
An organised sports competition or approved public performance or the taking of

exams.
Unauthorised Absences
Holidays during term time Any absence the school has not been informed about either by letter or telephone Any absences not authorised by the Headteacher in advance Holidays

Authorised absence will not be given, whatever the reason, if a child's attendance is in the "red" (89.99% or less). Any unexplained absences will always be recorded as unauthorised.

Holidays

At Hove Learning Federation we follow government and local guidance regarding requests for holiday leave. **In line with National Legislation we are unable to authorise any family holiday during term-time** unless there are exceptional circumstances. **Very rarely will a holiday be considered exceptional.** Any such application must be made at least 10 school days in advance and the school must be satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances which warrant the leave. If a holiday request is not authorised the absence will be classed as an unauthorised absence. Our general practice is not to authorise holidays. We have to inform the Local Authority of pupils/families taking unauthorised absences.

Fixed Penalty Notice

Unauthorised absence could result in a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) being issued from the Local Authority. A fine of £60 for each child is issued to each parent or guardian. If the fine is not paid within 21 days, another £60 fine per person will be issued; both must be paid within 28 days of the date when the original fine was issued. For example, if a family of four (two parents and two children) goes on an unauthorised holiday during term-time, each parent must pay £120 if paid within 21 days, rising to £240 if paid later.

Parents and carers will receive a formal written warning before the council issues a Penalty Notice unless parents or guardians request their child's absence from school for the purpose of a family holiday, without giving the School sufficient time to inform the Council.

An FPN can also be issued to parents who do not get their child to school on time for registration on ten occasions in any ten week period.

All monies are paid to the Local Authority and do not come to the school. There is no right to appeal. Fines will only be withdrawn if they are found to have been issued in error. The Brighton and Hove City Council website has information on Fixed Penalty Notices.

When taking decisions about issuing Fixed Penalty Notices to parents/carers for a student's unauthorised absence, the school adheres to the Brighton and Hove City Council Code of Conduct.

<https://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/absent-school/code-conduct-issuing-fixed-penalties-regarding-school-attendance>

What can you do to help your child?

- Make sure your child comes to school regularly and punctually
- Ring as early as possible on the first day of absence if your child is sick. (We will phone you if we have not heard from you by 10am – we will obviously be concerned if there is no response)
- If you feel it is essential for your child to miss school, for example for a religious festival etc, please advise the school, in writing, in advance of the absence
- Proactively engaged with school attendance support when offered e.g. Attendance Support Plan
- Book any medical appointments around the school day, where possible
- Only request leave of absence in exceptional circumstances and do so in advance

What will we do?

- Work with parent/carers to help families understand barriers to attendance
- We will meet you to provide advice and discuss strategies when/where appropriate
- We will ring you on the first day of absence if we do not hear from you and follow up any unexplained absences
- We will keep the Local Authority informed of pupils taking unauthorised absence and work closely with them to ensure pupils' good attendance
- We will provide you with a full report on your child's attendance annually and a termly update.
- We will only grant permission for absences that do not meet the criteria for an authorised absence in very exceptional circumstances

It is vital that we work together to ensure good attendance and punctuality.

Punctuality- a vital life skill and good manners

Punctuality is also very important. The school day starts promptly at 8:50 am at Holland Road and Portland Road, and lessons start sharp at 9.00 am at School Road. Immediately after the register has been taken the children begin their learning. If children do arrive late, they find it very hard to catch up on the work they have missed. If children arrive after the register has been taken, they will be marked as L (late). Any child who arrives at school from 9:30am at SR, 9.20am at PR & HR site onwards will be marked as U (unauthorised late). This will count as an unauthorised absence.

5 minutes late every day = 3 days of school lost a year
10 minutes late every day = 6.5 days of school lost a year
15 minutes late every day = 10 days of school lost a year
20 minutes late every day = 13 days of school lost a year
30 minutes late every day = 19 days of school lost a year

Persistent Absence (PA):

A student becomes 'persistently absent' once they miss 10% or more of their schooling across the academic year, for whatever reason. Absence at or below this level can do considerable damage to

any student's educational prospects.

Any case that has reached PA level or is approaching this mark is given priority. We will aim to work closely with parents/carers in these circumstances to identify the barriers to the child attending school and remove them. This may include holding regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority and any outside agencies) consider to be vulnerable or are persistently or severely absent to discuss attendance and engagement at school. All PA cases will be referred to the Education Welfare Officer.

Roles and Responsibilities

SLT with responsibility for attendance are:

Ben Massey Head of School – School Road Site

Niamh'O'Shea Deputy Head of School Portland Road Site

Lorna Cummings – Head of School Holland Road site

It is the role of parents and carers to:

- Ensure regular attendance and punctuality for their child/ren
- Write to the headteacher to determine whether authorised absence will be granted in advance when exceptional circumstances exist. Where a child's attendance is in the red, authorized absence will not be given:

Green	95% or more attendance
Amber	91% - 94.99%
Red	90.99% or less
- Inform the school on the first day of absence by 10.00am;
- Contact the school, in confidence, whenever problems occur which may keep children away from school;

Please report attendance by phoning the school sites directly:

School Road Site: 01273 733386 West Hove Infant School admin@westhove-inf.brighton-hove.sch.uk

Portland Road: 01273 916609 Option 1 portlandroadenquiries@hovejun.brighton-hove.sch.uk

Holland Road: 01273 916609 Option 2 hollandroadenquiries@hovejun.brighton-hove.sch.uk for junior pupils and admin@westhove-inf.brighton-hove.sch.uk for infant pupils

It is the role of the Class Teacher to:

- Maintain accurate registers and records for the children in their care.

It is the role of the Headteacher to:

- Authorise absences on behalf of the governors;
- Carry out attendance checks;
- Maintain accurate attendance records using the RAG colour coding system so that absences can be accurately reported

- Keep governors informed;
- Keep parents/carers informed of attendance'
- Ensure that parents/carers meet with the Independent School Attendance Advisor if a child's attendance is of concern;

It is the role of the Administration Assistant to:

- Keep up to date, accurate attendance data using the colour coded system;
- Arrange for letters to be sent to parents where there are attendance concerns;
- Follow up all absences by 10.00am on the first morning of absence.

It is the role of the Governors to:

- Ensure registers are properly kept

It is the role of the Independent School Attendance Adviser:

- Support the school in the monitoring of attendance
- Accept referrals from the school in cases of concern and conduct initial investigations;
- Act as key member of a network of agencies supporting pupils with attendance difficulties;
- When necessary, to act as the legal representative of the LA in the enforcement to their statutory duty to ensure regular attendance.

Appendix 1

Every Day at School Counts					
175 Non-school days a year (i.e. weekends and school holidays)					
190 school days in each year					
190 days in a school year	10 days absence	19 days absence	28 days absence	38 days absence	47 days absence
	180 days of education	171 days of education	161 days of education	152 days of education	143 days of education
100% attendance	95% attendance	90% attendance	85% attendance	80% attendance	75% attendance
GOOD Best chance of success – gets your child off to a flying start		Concern Less chance of success, makes it harder to make progress This will result in you being contacted about your child's attendance and you may need to meet with our Independent School Attendance Adviser.		SERIOUS CONCERN Absence will affect your child's progress ACTION WILL BE TAKEN	

Appendix 2

Absence from school

If your child is absent from school we kindly ask parents to telephone the school office by 10 am on the first morning of absence. For planned absences such as hospital appointments, please inform the office in advance. Any late arrivals will need to report to the school office to ensure that the register is completed. We would like to remind parents that if the registers are closed before a child arrives late into school then this is recorded as an unauthorised absence in all start schools. **Persistent late arrival to class, on six unauthorized occasions in any six-week period will result in a fixed penalty notice being issued.**

The school will monitor attendance of pupils and will write to the parent of those whose attendance falls below 95% in any one term. Parents are encouraged to contact the school if they need support in ensuring their child attends school regularly at this early stage to prevent the attendance deteriorating further.

The attendance will be reviewed after 2 weeks and if there is no improvement and without any evidence of reasonable justification for the absences, the matter will be referred to our Independent School Attendance Adviser who will write to you.

This will be reviewed after a further 2 weeks and unless the attendance improves to a satisfactory level, you will be invited to a meeting with the Independent School Attendance Adviser and a member of the school's Senior Leadership Team to discuss the matter further.

The purpose of this meeting is to discuss any issues that may be preventing your child from attending school regularly and to determine whether there is any support you need in fulfilling your legal obligation to ensure your child attends regularly.

Unless the attendance improves to a satisfactory level and without a good reason for absences, that matter will be referred to the Local Authority to consider legal proceedings.

This could mean you will be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice which is £60 per parent per child if paid within 21 days rising to £120 per parent per child if paid between 21 and 28 days. Failure to pay this may result in legal proceedings being taken against you. Or the matter may be referred to the Magistrates Court for failing to ensure the regular attendance of your child contrary to Section 444 of the Education Act 1996. If found guilty, you could face a fine of up to £2500 and/or 3 months imprisonment.

**PLEASE REMEMBER THAT THE GOVERNMENT'S
MINIMUM ATTENDANCE RATE IS 95% AND ANYTHING
LESS IS DEEMED TO POTENTIALLY SERIOUSLY AFFECT
YOUR CHILDS EDUCATION**

In addition, the local authority are now issuing fixed penalty notices for parents failing to secure regular attendance for truancy, holidays taken during term time and exclusions (pupils stopped on truancy patrol in school hours during the first five days of exclusion).

It is important to remember that there is no legal entitlement to taking children out of school for a family holiday. The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013, which came into force on 1st September 2013, removed any reference to holidays and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. The amendments now make it clear that head teachers may not grant leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.