



**WEST HOVE  
INFANT SCHOOL**  
.....  
**A family of friends**



# Hove Learning Federation ATTENDANCE POLICY

**Amended: Summer 2023**  
**Adopted by the Governing body: Summer 2023**  
**To be reviewed:**

*“attendance is the essential foundation to positive outcomes for all pupils”*

*Working together to improve school attendance: DfE 2022*

We are committed to safeguarding and ensuring the health, safety and well-being of all pupils in accordance with safeguarding procedures and guidance for staff outlined in the school’s Health and Safety, Child Protection, Security and Safeguarding policies.

## **Statement of Intent**

Hove Learning Federation believes that in order to facilitate teaching and learning, good attendance is essential. Pupils cannot achieve their full potential if they do not regularly attend school.

We are committed to:

- Promoting and modelling good attendance behaviour from an early age.
- Ensuring equality and fairness of treatment for all.
- Implementing our policies in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.
- Early intervention and working with other agencies to ensure the health and safety of our pupils.
- Working in partnership with our families to enable them to follow the law on school attendance as set out below.

## **The Law on School Attendance**

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school.

Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school.

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (As amended)
- The Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014
- Children and Young Persons Act 1963
- DfE (2020) 'School attendance'
- DfE (2015) 'Child performance and activities licensing legislation in England'
- DfE (2021) 'Keeping children safe in education 2021'
- DfE (2016) 'Children missing education'
- DfE (2022) 'Working together to improve school attendance'

## **Linked Policies and Guidance**

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Children Missing Education Policy
- Attendance Officer Home Visit Policy
- Pupils with Additional Health Needs Attendance Policy

This policy works in conjunction with the following school/LA policies/guidance:

- Flexi-schooling
- School Avoidance
- Children Missing in Education Policy
- Reduced Timetables
- Traveller Education Policy
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school

### **Definitions**

The following definitions apply for the purposes of this policy:

#### **Absence:**

- Arrival at school after the register has closed
- Not attending school for any reason
- Authorised absence:
  - An absence for sickness for which the school has granted leave
  - Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time, for which the school has granted leave
  - Religious or cultural observances for which the school has granted leave
  - An absence due to a family emergency

#### **Unauthorised absence:**

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Arrival at school after the register has closed
- Absence due to shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Absence due to day trips and holidays in term-time which have not been agreed
- Leaving school for no reason during the day

#### **Persistent absenteeism:**

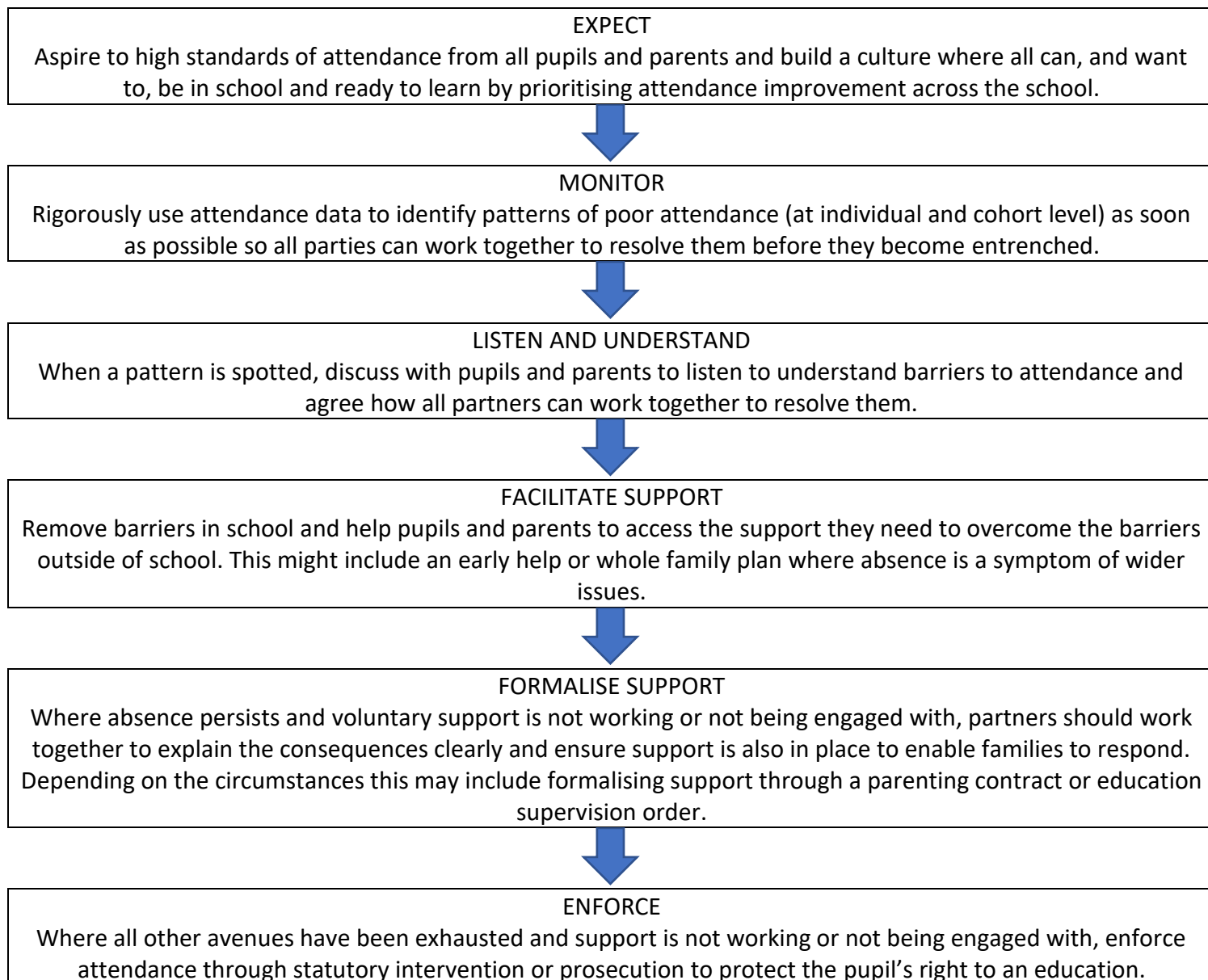
- Missing 10 percent or more of schooling across the year for any reason

#### **Severe absenteeism:**

- Missing 50 percent or more of schooling across the year regardless of reason

## Working in partnership to improve attendance

Successfully treating the root causes of absence and removing barriers to attendance, at home, in school or more broadly requires schools and local partners to work collaboratively with, not against families. All partners should work together to:



## Parental involvement

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.

Hove Learning Federation will build respectful relationships with parents and families to ensure their trust and engagement. Open and honest communication will be maintained with pupils and their families about the expectations of school life, attendance and performance so that they understand what to expect and what is expected of them.

**What can you do to help your child? .....**

- Ensure 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 10.00am – 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
- Contact the school, in confidence, whenever problems occur which may keep children away from school

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

#### **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 liaise with other agencies working with pupils and their families to support attendance, e.g. social services.
- 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.

#### **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](mailto:admin@westhove-inf.brighton-hove.sch.uk)

Portland Road: 01273 916609 Option 1 [portlandroadenquiries@hovejun.brighton-hove.sch.uk](mailto:portlandroadenquiries@hovejun.brighton-hove.sch.uk)

Holland Road: 01273 916707 [hollandroadenquiries@hovejun.brighton-hove.sch.uk](mailto:hollandroadenquiries@hovejun.brighton-hove.sch.uk)

### **Attendance expectations at Hove Learning Federation**

Pupils are expected to attend school every day. We aim for every child's attendance to be at, or above, **96 percent** throughout the year.

#### **What do the numbers actually mean?**

In a perfect world, everyone would be in school for the full 190 days every year.

Without missing any days, the children would achieve 100 percent attendance.

Being realistic, we understand that children sometimes get ill, therefore we aim that all children are in school for a minimum of 96 percent of the year.

In an exam, most people would be happy to get 80 or 90 percent. However, when talking about attendance these figures actually mean children have missed a significant amount of days learning. And the number of days missed gets bigger for each percentage as the year progresses.

If attendance is at ...	by the end of Autumn Term (out of a total of 70 days) your child has missed ....	by the end of Spring Term (out of a total of 60 days) your child has missed ....	by the end of Summer Term (out of a total of 60 days) your child has missed ....
100%	0 days of learning	0 days of learning	0 days of learning
96%	3 days of learning	5 days of learning	7.5 days of learning
95%	3.5 days of learning	6.5 days of learning	9.5 days of learning
90%	7 days of learning	13 days of learning	19 days of learning
86%	10 days of learning	18 days of learning	27 days of learning
80%	14 days of learning	26 days of learning	38 days of learning
50%	35 days of learning	65 days of learning	95 days of learning

*Please note figures are rounded to nearest day/half day*

If a child has attendance around 90% by the end of the year they have missed almost 4 weeks (a month) in school.

It stands to reason that by missing more days in school children make less academic progress than their classmates who attend regularly. Not coming to school has a negative impact on the progress children are making in their learning. By missing out on regular schooling, some children are having to constantly try to play catch up. Having chunks of knowledge missing really disadvantages children compared to their classmates (for instance if they miss out the lesson that explain what a fraction is they will really struggle when they start doing calculations involving fractions with different denominators).

By not attending school regularly children also miss out on spending time with their friends. Infrequent attendance can have a negative impact on children's friendships.

Being absent from school can increase anxieties and have a detrimental effect on children's mental health due to the fact that friendship groups move on while they are away from school.

These issues can be overcome by simply ensuring children attend school every day.

#### **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):

<b>Green</b>	96% or more attendance
<b>Amber</b>	91-95.99% attendance
<b>Red</b>	90.99% or less attendance

**Absences are mainly covered by the following categories:**

<b>Authorised Absences</b>
<b>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.</b> Medical/dental treatment which cannot be arranged outside school hours – parents need to inform the school <b>and to provide evidence of such appointments i.e. appointment card</b>
Exclusion from school
<b>Authorised Absences at the discretion of the Headteacher</b>
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.
<b>Unauthorised Absences</b>
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.

### **Punctuality**

Children are expected to be at school every day on time. Register is taken 5 minutes after the doors open. Punctuality is 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

Any late children must enter the school via the front office with their parent/carer. Office staff will ask if there is a reason for late arrival.

If children are not picked up on time at the end of the school day, the teacher will take them to the front office and office staff will phone parents/guardians.

If you know you are going to be late for pick-up it would be helpful if you contact your child's site before the end of the school day so we can let your them know and alleviate any worries they may have.

### **Sickness**

Children do get ill which does mean they may need to have a few days off school. We are aware, however, that sometimes children are missing school when they could be in the building. The traffic light guidance below may help you decide if your child is well enough to come into school.

If your child is having a regular, reoccurring medical issue please let us know. Our school nurse can support with this and hopefully address your child's medical needs and improve their attendance.

RED – STAY AT HOME	AMBER – SEEK ADVICE	GREEN – COME TO SCHOOL
<b>Sickness &amp; Diarrhoea</b>	<b>Headache, Feeling Sick, Tummy Ache</b>	<b>Mild cough, Cold, Sore Throat, Feeling Tired</b>
48 hours must have elapsed before a child can return to school from the last episode.	Children often feel unwell if they are anxious, if in doubt contact the school for advice.	We will always contact you if your child is ill during the school day

### **Appointments**

We request that, where possible, routine medical and dentist appointments are arranged outside school hours as these appointments will affect your child's percentage attendance.

We do understand that some appointments, such as hospital consultations are not always possible to arrange outside of school hours. However, if your appointment time allows your child to come to school for registration and then leave later this will have a positive impact on their attendance. Likewise, if they are able to be back in school after their appointment this will also have a positive impact.

### **Holidays or other absences in Term Time**

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.

Examples of possible exceptional circumstances:

- Where it is company/organisational policy for an employee to take leave at a specified time in the year and there is no opportunity for a family holiday in school holidays. This must be supported by documentation from the organisation.



- Service personnel returning from/scheduled to embark upon a tour of duty abroad.
- A major family event such as the wedding of an immediate family member
- Serious or terminal illness of a close relative
- Significant family trauma has occurred and it is believed that a break is in the child's best interests.

Requests for leave will not be granted in the following circumstances:

- Immediately before and during assessment periods
- When a pupil's attendance record shows any unauthorised absence
- Where a pupil's authorised absence record is already above **10 percent** for any reason

We fully understand that it is cheaper to go on holiday during term time but as a school, we can only authorise an absence during term time in exceptional circumstances. A cheap deal is not deemed an exceptional circumstance.

If children need to be taken out of school during term time parents/carers need to complete a Leave of Absence Form – available from the school office (see Appendix 1)

### **Fixed Penalty Notice**

Unauthorised absence could result in a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) being issued from the Local Authority. If children are taken on an unauthorised holiday of 3 or more days during term time parents/carers will be issued with a fixed term penalty by 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 six occasions in any six week period.

Penalty Notice Issued	£60 per parent per child
Not paid by 22 <sup>nd</sup> day of receipt	£120 per parent per child
Not paid by 28 <sup>th</sup> day of receipt	Parents generally prosecuted in court

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.

### **Leave during lunch time**

Children should remain in school for lunchtime.

### **Religious observances**

The school will take advice from local religious leaders of all faiths to establish the appropriate number of days of absence required for religious festivals. Parents will be required to inform the school in advance if absences are required for days of religious observance.

### **Modelling, sport and acting performances/activities**

Pupils engaging in performances/activities (whether they, or another person, receives payment or not), which require them to be absent from school, are required to obtain a licence from the Local Authority which authorises the school's absence(s).

Additional arrangements will be made by the school for pupils engaging in performances or activities that require them to be absent from school to ensure they do not fall behind in their education – this may involve private teaching. These arrangements will be approved by the LA who will ensure that the arrangements are suitable for the pupil.

The pupil will receive education that, when taken together over the term of the licence, amounts to a minimum of three hours per day that the pupil would be required to attend a school maintained by the LA issuing the licence. This requirement will be met by ensuring a pupil receives an education:

- For not less than six hours a week; and
- During each complete period of four weeks (or if there is a period of less than four weeks, then during that period), for periods of time not less than three hours a day; and
- On days where the pupil would be required to attend school if they were attending a school maintained by the LA; and
- For not more than five hours on any such day.

Where a licence has been granted by the LA and it specifies dates of absence, no further authorisation will be needed from the school. Where an application does not specify dates, and it has been approved by the LA, it is at the discretion of the headteacher to authorise the leave of absence for each day. The headteacher will not authorise any absences which would mean that a pupil's attendance would fall below **96 percent**. Where a licence has not been obtained, the headteacher will not authorise any absence for a performance or activity.

### **Young carers**

Hove Learning Federation understands the difficulties that face young carers, and will endeavour to identify young carers at the earliest opportunity, as well as through their time at the school. A caring and flexible approach will be taken to the needs of young carers and each pupil will be examined on a case-by-case basis, involving other agencies if appropriate.

The schools, in conjunction with relevant authorities, will implement support for pupils who are young carers, to encourage their sustained and regular attendance at school in line with the school's expectations.

### **First day absence protocols**

The school will always follow up any absences in order to:

- Ascertain the reason for the absence.
- Ensure the proper safeguarding action is being taken.
- Identify whether the absence is authorised or not.

- Identify the correct code to use to enter the data onto the school census system.

### **Expectations in the Early Years**

Children reach statutory school age the term after children turn 5. On admission to the school the expectation is that children attend school punctually and regularly. This is to

- support their learning and development
- ensure that they are kept safe
- ensure do not miss out on their entitlements and opportunities
- form good habits around school attendance.

Good attendance promotes good outcomes for children.

Hove Learning Federation will monitor attendance for all children in Reception, regardless of the term they were born.

### **Roles and Responsibilities of Staff**

**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

### **Responsibilities of staff**

<b>Staff Member</b>	<b>Role</b>
All class teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete an accurate daily register in the morning and afternoon</li> <li>• Discuss attendance with parents/carers and ask what support parents/carers might need to get children into school regularly</li> <li>• Advise parents/carers of any gaps in their child's learning due to missing school</li> <li>• Raise concerns around attendance with SLT lead</li> </ul>
Office Attendance Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manage the late register</li> <li>• Check emails and answer phone before school to record any pupil absence using the correct Attendance Code</li> <li>• Daily register checks to ensure absence is coded properly</li> <li>• Keep up to date, accurate attendance data using the colour coded system;</li> <li>• Arrange for letters to be sent to parents where there are attendance concerns;</li> <li>• Provide parents/carers with 'Leave of Absence Request Forms'</li> <li>• Alert SLT lead of any family that they have not been able to get in contact with on the day of absence</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare attendance information and attend fortnightly meeting with SLT Attendance Lead</li> </ul>
SLT Attendance Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Senior leader responsible for attendance on site</li> <li>• Authorise absences on behalf of the Governors</li> <li>• Fortnightly Attendance Monitoring/meeting with Office Attendance Lead</li> <li>• Carry out any follow-up meetings with parents/carers</li> <li>• Identify PA pupils and establish plans to remove barriers and provide additional support</li> <li>• Make regular contact with families to discuss progress</li> </ul>
Executive Head Teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure Attendance Policy is fully implemented</li> <li>• Ensure good attendance has a high profile in school</li> <li>• Monitor termly attendance data for each site*</li> <li>• Monitor the implementation and quality of escalation procedures and seek robust evidence of the escalation procedures that work</li> </ul>
Inclusion Manager and Learning Mentors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide social and emotional and friendship support to pupils and monitor where issues may be impacting on attendance</li> <li>• Identify any families who need a soft touch communication to try and address any low level attendance concerns</li> <li>• Complete ATTEND forms (see Appendix 4) when required to assess need</li> </ul>
Independent School Attendance Advisor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Independent adviser who co-ordinates attendance support and communication between school/families/external agencies</li> </ul>
Governors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regularly review attendance data at the safeguarding board*</li> <li>• Work with senior leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and providing challenge and support on these areas</li> </ul>

\*The school attendance system will be used to give an accurate and informative view of attendance, reasons for absence and patterns within groups, including:

- Children in need
- LAC
- Pupils who are eligible for FSM / Pupil Premium
- Pupils with EAL
- Pupils with SEND

***APPENDIX 1 : Leave of Absence Request Form***

## Absence of Learning

Pupils are only in school for 195 days each year.

- 80% attendance represents 1 day off a week
- 90% attendance represents 1 day off per fortnight



### How to use this form:

- Use for all absence other than sickness.
- Return to school before the date of requested absence.

### Guidance:

National Legislation states that, Head Teachers are only able to grant a Leave of Absence during term time in 'exceptional circumstances'. Absence requests need to be submitted in advance with all accompanying evidence to enable schools to make an informed decision. It is important to submit all the necessary information quickly as there is no right of appeal once fines have been issued.

If you feel that you qualify for an 'Absence of Learning' during term time, due to exceptional circumstances, please fill in the form below and/or make an appointment to discuss this with me.

Further information is available from the school or on the Brighton and Hove Council Website.

Mr Ben Massey  
Headteacher

### Parent/Guardian to complete this section:

Name of child:	Class:
Is this the 1 <sup>st</sup> request for absence this academic year? Yes/No	
Dates requested:	Number of <b>school</b> days requested:
Reason:	
Do you have any siblings at another school? Yes/No	If yes, which school?
Signed:	Date:
Print name:	

School Office to complete this section:		
Attendance (previous year) :	%	Green – more than 95%
Current Attendance:	%	Amber – 90% to 94.99%
Colour code:	Green/Amber/Red	Red – 89.99% or less
Headteacher to complete this section:		
The code placed in the register will be:	Authorised.	
	Unauthorised	
	Religious Observance	
	Educated Off Site	
	Other /Exceptional Authorised Circumstances	
	Approved Sporting Activity	
	Medical/Dental Appointments	
	Family Holiday not agreed	
	Sickness	
Reason:		
Signed:		Date:
Print name:		

## **APPENDIX 2 : Attendance Codes**

The school will use the national attendance codes to ensure attendance and absence are monitored and recorded in a consistent way.

The following codes will be used:

Code	Definition	Scenario
<b>Authorised Absence</b>		
<b>C</b>	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
<b>E</b>	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

Code	Definition	Scenario
<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>	Arrived after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed
<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 half-term/bank holiday/INSET day



When the school has planned in advance to be fully or partially closed, the code '#' will be used for the relevant pupils who are absent. This code will also be used to record year groups who are not due to attend because the school has set different term dates for different years, e.g. induction days.

All amendments made to the attendance register will include the original entry, the amended entry, the reason for the amendment, the date of amendment and the name and role of the person who made the amendment.

Every entry received into the attendance register will be preserved for **three years**.