



L E A R N

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INFANT SCHOOL  
.....  
A family of friends



# Hove Learning Federation

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

Amended: Summer 2024

Adopted by the Governing body: Autumn 2024

To be reviewed: Summer 2025

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 regular school attendance is essential in enabling pupils to achieve their full potential.

Our objective is to:

- Ensure parents/carers follow the framework set out in section 7 of the Education Act 1996, which states that the parent/carer of every child of compulsory school age, shall cause them to receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude, and to any SEND they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.
- Promote and model good attendance behaviour.
- Implement our policies to reflect inclusivity and fairness in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.
- Offer early intervention support and work with other agencies to ensure the health and safety of our pupils.

## **The Law on School Attendance**

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to receive a full-time education, it is the legal responsibility of every parent/carer to ensure this. Where parents/carers decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly and punctually, meaning that their child must attend every day that the school is open. There are a few exceptions, 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:

[Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance) (applies from 19<sup>th</sup> August 2024)

[The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2024 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2024/1000/2024-08-19) (applies from 19<sup>th</sup> August 2024)

## **Definitions**

**Authorised Absence** (this list is not limited to):

- An absence for sickness
- Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time
- Religious or cultural observances for days set aside by a religious body, for which the school has granted leave
- An absence due to a family emergency, taken with the school's permission

**Unauthorised absence** (this list is not limited to):

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason
- Truancy during the school day
- Absences which have not been properly explained
- Arrival at school after the close of registration
- Absence due to unofficial responsibilities at home
- Absence due to birthdays
- Absence due to term-time trips and holidays that have not been authorised by the school
- Leaving school without reason/the school's permission during the day

**Persistent absenteeism:**

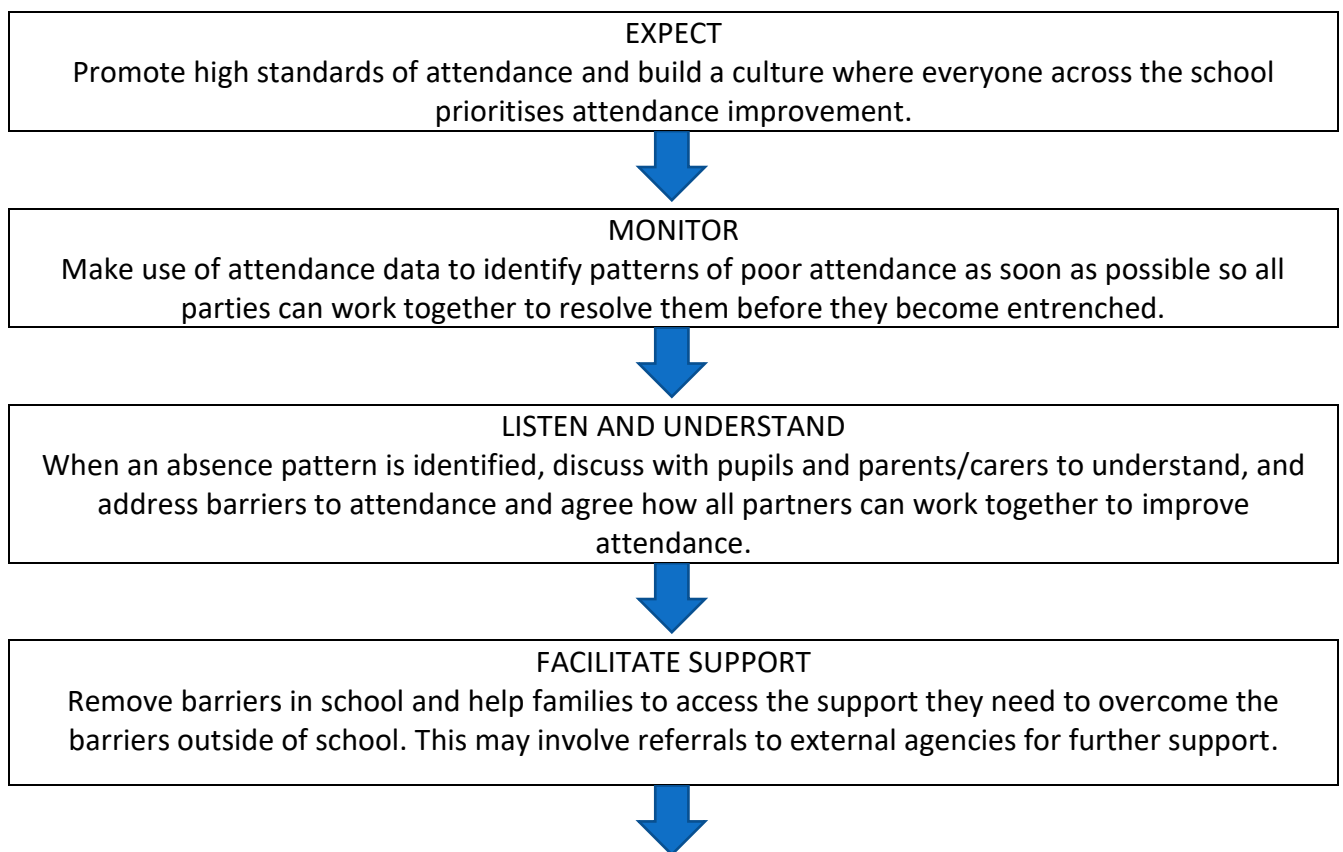
- Missing 10 percent or more of schooling during the academic year, for any reason

**Severe absenteeism:**

- Missing 50 percent or more of schooling during the academic year, for any reason

**Working in partnership to improve attendance.**

Addressing the root causes of absence and removing barriers to attendance requires schools and local partners to work collaboratively with families:



### FORMALISE SUPPORT

Where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or being engaged with, partners should work together to explain the consequences clearly to families. Depending on the circumstances, this may include formalising support through an attendance contract.



### ENFORCE

Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or being engaged with, enforce attendance through statutory intervention or prosecution to protect the pupil's right to an education.

### **Parent/Carer involvement**

The school will strive to build positive and respectful relationships with parents/carers 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. The school will liaise with other agencies working with pupils and their families to support attendance, e.g. social services.

#### **Parents/carers will be expected to:**

- Build positive and respectful relationships with school staff
- Engage with school support when offered
- Call staff for help when needed
- Communicate with the school about possible circumstances which may affect their child's attendance or require support
- Inform the school of any change of address and ensure contact details are up-to-date

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

#### **Punctuality**

Children are expected to be at school every day, on time.

The register is taken 5 minutes after the doors open.

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.

Any children arriving late must enter the school via the front office with their parent/carers and the check process must be completed.

## Sickness

If children are too unwell to attend school, parents/carers must contact the school office on the number/s below, on the first day of absence by 10am and then each school day thereafter. Children with low-level illness are still expected to attend school. The traffic light guidance below may help you decide if your child is well enough to come into school. Please also see NHS guidance here: <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>

If your child has a medical condition that could impact school attendance, please let us know. There may be support that we can offer.

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

**School Road Site:** 01273 733386 or [admin@westhove-inf.brighton-hove.sch.uk](mailto:admin@westhove-inf.brighton-hove.sch.uk)

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

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

## Appointments

In accordance with DfE guidance, routine medical and dental appointments should be arranged outside of school hours wherever possible. If the appointment time allows your child to come to school for registration and then leave later, this will mean that less school is missed. Your child should return to school straight after their appointment wherever possible.

## Term time holidays

The DfE statutory guidance states that “Generally, the DfE does not consider a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation, to be an exceptional circumstance.” It also states that “a school cannot grant leave of absence retrospectively.”

The fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional' are where requests are rare, significant, unavoidable and short.

For term-time absence to be granted:

- a) Permission must be requested at least two weeks before the absence begins.
- b) Permission must be requested by the parent/carer who the pupil normally lives with.
- c) A parent/carer must explain in writing/by completing a Leave of Absence request form why they believe the circumstances to be exceptional and provide all necessary evidence to the school at the time the request is made.

It is the parent/carer's responsibility to provide evidence when making the request.

If a leave of absence is granted, it is for the school to determine the length of the time the pupil can be away from school.

A term-time absence taken without the school's written permission may trigger a Fixed Penalty Notice, which is issued by the Local Authority.

### **Fixed Penalty Notices**

The national threshold for triggering a Fixed Penalty Notice is met when a pupil has been recorded as having had unauthorised absence for 10 or more sessions (5 or more school days) in a period of 10 school weeks. One or a combination of the following codes count as unauthorised absence:

- G-codes (unauthorised term-time holiday)
- N-codes (no reason yet provided for absence)
- O-codes (poor attendance)
- U-codes (lateness after close of registration)

The first fine is £160 *per parent/carer per child*, if paid within 28 days, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.

If a second fine is issued to that parent/carer within a period of 3 school years, the fine is £160 *per parent/carer per child* to be paid within 28 days and there is no reduction if paid within 21 days.

A third penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent/carer in respect of the same child, within 3 years of the first fine being issued. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time (or subsequent times) within those 3 years, alternative action could be taken, such as prosecution.

There is no right of appeal once a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued, so disputes over how an absence is classified must be settled with the school before the absence is taken.

Full details relating to Fixed Penalty Notice amounts and thresholds can be found in the Code of Conduct on the Brighton & Hove City Council website.

### **Religious observances**

Absence can be granted on a day that is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body the parents/carers belong to. Parents/carers must have requested and secured permission from the school in advance.

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

Parents/carers of pupils that will be taking part in entertainment/performances, (i.e. modelling, TV, films, theatre, etc) which require them to be absent from school, must obtain permission from the school before a child performance licence can be issued. The agent, organiser or parent/carer will usually be the person who requests the absence from the school. Further information regarding licensing legislation can be found here: [England Performance Legislation - NCEE - National Network for Children in Employment & Entertainment](#). For more information, please visit Brighton & Hove City Council's website: [Apply for a child performance licence \(brighton-hove.gov.uk\)](#) or contact [childperformancelicensing@brighton-hove.gov.uk](mailto:childperformancelicensing@brighton-hove.gov.uk).

### **Young carers**

Schools will provide a caring and flexible approach to support the needs of young carers, to help maintain regular attendance at school. Further support from other agencies will be sought, if appropriate.

### **First day absence protocols**

On the first day of absence, parents/carers must contact the school by 10am.

School will contact parents/carers of any child who does not arrive at school by 10am, to confirm the reason for absence. Further safeguarding action will be taken if necessary.

Schools will check messages, emails and voicemails for any notifications of pupil absence and will update registers with reasons for absence.

### **Attendance Contacts**

**SLT with responsibility for attendance are:**

School Road: Niamh O'Shea - Deputy Head and School Road Site Leader

Portland Road: Rachel Jeffers - Deputy Head and Portland Road Site Leader

Holland Road: Lorna Cummings – Head of School

### **Responsibilities of staff**

Staff Member	Role
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></ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <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> <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> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with senior leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and providing challenge and support on these areas</li> </ul>
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\*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

### **The Local Authority**

- Has an Attendance Team that work with schools in the city to help identify barriers to attendance when necessary
- Monitors local attendance data
- Offers opportunities for schools in each area to share best practice
- Can provide information/signposting for support services for pupils identified as persistently or severely absent (or at risk of becoming so)
- Works jointly with the school to provide formal support options and legal processes
- Will, where there are safeguarding concerns, facilitate joint working between the school, children’s social care and other statutory safeguarding partners where necessary
- Can, where support is not appropriate (e.g. term time holidays) or being engaged with, enforce attendance through legal intervention and Fixed Penalty Notices

### **Staff training**

All school staff are expected to promote a focus on attendance and recognise the importance of early intervention. As part of their induction and refresher training, staff will be able to identify potentially “at-risk” pupils and understand that absence can indicate wider issues requiring support. If support is unsuccessful or not engaged with, all staff will be aware of escalation processes.

### **Pupils at risk of persistent absence (PA)**

The school will ensure it offers support to pupils at risk of persistent absence (PA), in conjunction with all relevant external authorities, where necessary.

### **Monitoring and review**

Attendance and punctuality will be monitored throughout the year. The school's attendance target is **96 %**.

This policy will be reviewed **annually** by the headteacher. The next scheduled review date for this policy is **September 2025**.

**Term-time Leave of Absence Request Form**

Requests for leave of absence during term time can only be granted in exceptional circumstances.

Generally, the Department of Education does not consider a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance. Any supporting evidence must be supplied at the time this application is submitted.

Please complete this form stating the dates of absence, and detailing the reasons why this absence can only be taken during term time.

The application must be received by the school office two or more school weeks before the first day of absence. In rare cases, where this may not be possible, please contact the Head Teacher or school office directly on: [hollandroadenquiries@hovejun.brighton-hove.sch.uk](mailto:hollandroadenquiries@hovejun.brighton-hove.sch.uk) for Holland Road site, [admin@westhove-inf.brighton-hove.sch.uk](mailto:admin@westhove-inf.brighton-hove.sch.uk) for School Road site or [portlandroadenquiries@hovejun.brighton-hove.sch.uk](mailto:portlandroadenquiries@hovejun.brighton-hove.sch.uk) for Portland Road site.

Permission must be requested and secured before taking any planned absence during term time. If permission is not secured and absence is taken without permission, the Local Authority will issue each parent(s)/carer(s) with a penalty notice, for every absent pupil. The first penalty notice issued to parent/carers in respect of a particular pupil, will be charged at £160 if paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.

A second penalty notice issued to the same parent/carers in respect of the same pupil, within 3 years of the date of issue of the first penalty notice, is charged at

a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days.

A third penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent/carers, in respect of the same pupil, within 3 years of the date of issue of the first penalty notice. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time (or subsequent times) within those 3 years, alternative action can be taken, including considering prosecution under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

More information about the school's attendance policy can be found on our websites:

<https://www.hovejuniorschool.co.uk>

<https://www.westhoveinfants.co.uk>

If you are unable to access our website, please speak to the school office who can provide you with a paper copy of the policy.

## Term-time Leave of Absence Request Form

Name of Child(ren):	
Class(es):	
Name of Parent(s) / Carer(s):	
Home Address(es):	
Contact telephone number(s) and e-mail address(es):	
Sibling(s) and school(s) they attend:	
Reason for leave (attach further information as necessary):	
First & last dates of absence:	
Signed:	<i>By signing this document, I am confirming that I have read and understood the above notice.</i>
Dated:	

### FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

<u>Authorised / Unauthorised:</u>	
<u>Date of response:</u>	
<u>Method used to respond to parent:</u>	