

Student Attendance Policy

MONITORING AND REVIEW

Person Responsible	Assistant Head, Pastoral
Reviewed by	Head of Senior and Head of Prep
Approved by	Head
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Student Attendance Policy

1. Aims

The 'School' refers to all staff and students in Abbot's Hill School, which includes the Nursery, Pre-Prep, Prep and Senior School.

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

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

1.1. Student's attendance is expected to be 95% and above unless there are exceptional circumstances.

1.2. 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.

(DfE: Working together to improve school attendance, 2023)

1.3 This policy is reviewed and updated biennially and is available on the school website.

2. Legislation and Guidance

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

- Part 6 of The Education Act 1996
- Part 3 of The Education Act 2002
- Equality Act 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended)
- DfE (2023) 'Working together to improve school attendance'
- DfE (2016) 'Children Missing in Education'
- DfE (2023) 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'
- DfE (2023) Support for students where a mental health issue is affecting attendance

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1. The governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

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

3.2. The Head

The Head is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school.
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies.

3.3. The designated senior leaders

The designated senior leaders responsible for attendance are

- Assistant Head, Prep (Pastoral).
- The acting Assistant Head, Pastoral (Senior School).

The designated senior leaders are responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the school.
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement.
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual students.
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes.
- Having an oversight of data analysis.
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data.
- Building relationships with parents/carers to discuss and tackle attendance issues.
- Creating intervention reintegration plans in partnership with students and their parents/carers.
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to students and families.
- See Appendix 2 for the attendance flow chart.

3.4. The School Secretary:

- Ensure that all absences are noted and MSP requests absence notes are received from parents.
- Contact the parents or carers on the initial day if a message, telephone call, email or MSP request explaining the student's absence fails to be made.
- Liaise with Head of Prep or Head of Senior School if unclear
- Contact the parents or carers each day a message, telephone call, email or MSP request explaining the student's absence fails to be made.

3.5. Form Tutors (Senior) will:

- Ensure that registers are completed accurately and punctually.

- Attend meetings with parents over absences where appropriate.
- Follow the relevant aspects within the attendance flow chart (See Appendix 2).

3.6. Class Teachers (Prep) will:

- Complete a register first thing in the morning and after lunch on Schoolbase. All Prep teachers are expected to check they have all students at the start of each lesson.
- Provide a range of suitable and appropriate work for absent students when required.

3.7. Parents will:

- All parents of students in Reception to Year 11, will inform the school by 8.15am of their child's absence each day of non-attendance using My School Portal and advise when they are expected to return.
- Nursery parents are expected to contact the Nursery team by email or phone call first thing to explain why the child is not coming in on that day.
- Provide the school with more than one emergency contact number for their child.
- Any planned absences for Reception to Year 11 must be submitted well in advance on My School Portal (MSP).
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day.

3.8. Students of School age will:

- Attend school every day, on time, unless they are ill or have an authorised absence.
- Arrive in school by 8.15am on each school day.
- Arrive at lessons punctually.
- See Appendix 4.

4. Recording Attendance

4.1. Attendance register

We will keep an attendance register and place all students onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of each school day in the morning at 8.15am and in the first session after lunch.

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity if a student is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances where a student is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

4.2. The attendance register will be kept for three years after the date on which the entry was made.

4.3. Nursery Registers

In the Nursery, children are signed in and out by a staff member in the relevant room using a paper register and Kindersoft. Times of drop off and pick up are recorded. Their whereabouts during the school day is monitored and documented by Nursery staff.

Where children are expected and do not arrive, phone calls are made by 9.30am to verify absence.

4.4. Lateness for Reception - Year 11

For health and Safety reasons, any student arriving late should enter school via the main entrance reporting to Main Reception. If accompanied, a parent or carer should give a reason for the lateness, which will be added to the register and a note made on SchoolBase.

A student will be marked:

- Late, using the **code L** if the student arrives at 8.20am or later.
- Absent, using the **code U** after 8.20am and before 8.45.am.
- Unauthorised using the **code O**.
- Authorised using the **code C**, if applicable.

Students who are consistently late are disrupting not only their own education but also that of others. Where persistent lateness gives cause for concern, further action may be taken. For example, in the Senior School detentions can be set and for Prep there could be a loss of privileges like a break time reflection.

4.5. Following up Absences/Lateness in Reception to Year 11

- If a pupil is absent at morning registration and no notification has been received from the parent by 8.30am, the School Secretary will initially speak to the class teacher (Reception – Year 6) or the form teacher (Senior) to check if they may be at any morning activity and if not, then try to make contact with the parent.
- If the School Secretary is unsuccessful in contacting the parent/s, they will call the emergency contact numbers and, if necessary, other relevant services. This would be once a discussion happens with a member of Exec.
- If a pupil is absent because of illness for five consecutive days, the School may request supporting evidence.
- Students who are consistently late are disrupting not only their own education but also that of others. If a pupil is persistently late or absent, the initial stages of the flow chart in Appendix 2 will be actioned.
- When a pupil is persistently late or absent without good reason and the School's efforts to effect improvement have been unsuccessful, it may be necessary to refer the matter to an external service as set out in Appendix 2 and 3.

5. Absences for Reception to Year 11

All absences should be requested by parents/guardians using MSP. With the exception of illness and emergencies, all absences should be requested at least three days in advance.

Parents should contact the school on the morning of each day of absence, no later than 8.15am.

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

The Head may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

5.1. Authorised Absences

Absence from school may be authorised if it is for one of the following reasons:

- Sickness.
- unavoidable medical/dental appointments (Parents should make every effort to make medical/dental appointments out of school hours).
- days of religious observance.
- exceptional family circumstances e.g. bereavement.
- visits to or interviews at future schools.
- traveller students travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the students attending educational provision.
- Study leave.

5.2. Other absences

- Where a student becomes pregnant, leave will be given of no more than 18 weeks after which the absence would be unauthorised. The school will do all it can to support the student in school as long as possible.
- The School may, exceptionally, sanction limited absence for young carers until other arrangements can be made. The Head will set a time limit for such absences in consultation with the Head of Senior School/Head of Prep School.
- The Head of Senior School and Head of Prep (in liaison with the Senior Leadership Team) may make temporary arrangements for a reduced timetable for a short, fixed term period to support students with medical and mental health needs.

5.2.1. Students leaving the site during the school day

- Students leaving early for an authorised appointment should also be signed out by parents/carers at the School Reception in the Main House. Office staff will make a note on SchoolBase of the time the student has been collected.
- Prior permission **MUST** have already been sought before the start of the school day via My School Portal. Where this has not been the case permission to leave the site will need to be granted by a member of the School Leadership Team or School Nurse (illness only).

5.2.2. Holidays

Holidays taken in term time adversely affect a child's education as much as any other absence. The effect on the child of missing the beginning or end of a term is far-reaching and any expectation on staff to accommodate such absences is unjust.

The School takes a very strong line on students missing school for family holidays; authorised absence will not be granted for holidays taken during term time except in exceptional circumstances.

Written formal requests must be made to the Head of Senior School or Head of Prep as applicable. These requests are made via My School Portal. **Code H** is used for this purpose.

If the student still goes on a holiday which has not been approved by the school it counts as unauthorised absence.

5.2.3. Long Term Absence through Illness

In the case of long term absence due to illness the School will make every effort to support the child through providing appropriate work and guidance during the absence and will plan for successful reintegration on the child's return to school.

5.2.4. Children Missing from Education

- All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to a full time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have.
- Local authorities have a duty to establish, as far as it is possible to do so, the identity of children of compulsory school age who are missing education in their area.
- Appropriate safeguarding policies, procedures and responses are implemented for children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions.
- The School's Designated Safeguarding Lead will report to the local authority any pupil who fails to attend school regularly or has been absent, without the school's permission, for a continuous period of 10 school days or more.
- In addition the school will inform their local authority of any pupil who is going to be deleted from the admission register where they:
 - have been taken out of school by their parents and are being educated outside the school system e.g. home education.
 - have ceased to attend school and no longer live within reasonable distance of the school at which they are registered.
 - have been certified by the school medical officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and neither he/she nor his/her parent has indicated the intention to continue to attend the school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age.
 - are in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order and the proprietor does not reasonably believe they will be returning to the school at the end of that period.
 - have been permanently excluded.

5.3. Unauthorised absence

Where the school has not agreed absence, the register will be marked as unauthorised. The following are examples of unauthorised absences:

- Parents keeping children away from school unnecessarily or without reason.
- Truancy from timetabled School activities.
- Absences which have not been properly explained.
- 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.

5.4. Persistent or severe absence

Where absence or a pattern of absence appears to be at risk of becoming problematic, the school will meet with the parents to discuss how to support the student and remove barriers

to attendance where possible. This may include referrals to external services and other organisations.

These actions will be regularly reviewed and stepped up if there is no improvement to the situation. Where a whole family response is appropriate, this is likely to include a voluntary early help assessment. Ultimately if voluntary support is not effective the school will work with the local authority to put more formal measures in place. Persistent or severe absence is always treated as a safeguarding risk. See Appendix 2.

5.5. Students with individual needs

Whilst good attendance is an expectation for all students at the school, we recognise that this may be more of a challenge for some students including those with special educational needs or disabilities, or those suffering from long term medical conditions or mental health issues. The school will allow for these circumstances when working with such students and parents, and will develop individualised support approaches that meet their specific needs where appropriate.

5.6. Returning to school

Sometimes a student who has been absent for some time finds it difficult to return. In such circumstances the school will work with the students and parents to support reintegration.

6. Reporting to parents/carers

Parents and guardians can see current attendance levels daily via My School Portal. The school will inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels on each written report. The school report details the number of sessions absent (Morning and afternoons each count as a session.)

7. Strategies

Promoting Attendance/Punctuality

- The School will regularly promote to students and parents the value and importance of good attendance and punctuality.
- Staff will set a good example by being punctual to registration and lessons.
- Staff will use the School's rewards and sanctions procedures to encourage punctuality.
- Parents will be kept regularly and fully informed of any concerns regarding attendance and punctuality.
- Individual cases where students experience attendance difficulties will be investigated by the Pastoral Team

8. Monitoring

- Attendance statistics will be collected and analysed weekly and reviewed as a whole each term to identify individuals or cohorts whose attendance causes concern.
- Persistent Absenteeism concerns those children who fall under the 95% attendance threshold during an academic year and this is carefully monitored and followed up.
- Student attendance records form part of the information on senior school reference forms

9. Inspection

The Head will ensure that the School Admission and Attendance Registers are available for inspection by the Reporting Inspector.

10. Taking a Student off the Attendance Register

The Head will authorise the taking of a student's name off the register in accordance with the current regulations and the Admissions Policy.

Signed

Issue Date: October 2023

Review Date: June 2025 or earlier if major change

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "K. Gorman". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small flourish at the end.

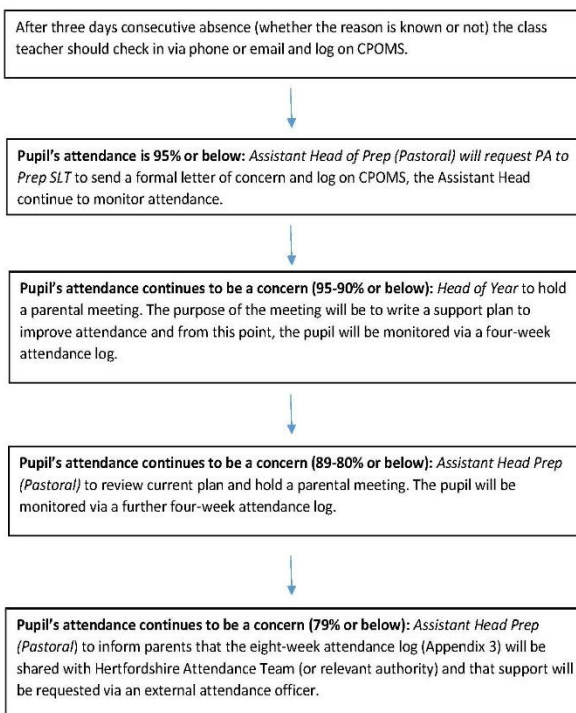
Mrs Kathryn Gorman
Head

Appendix 1: Registration Codes

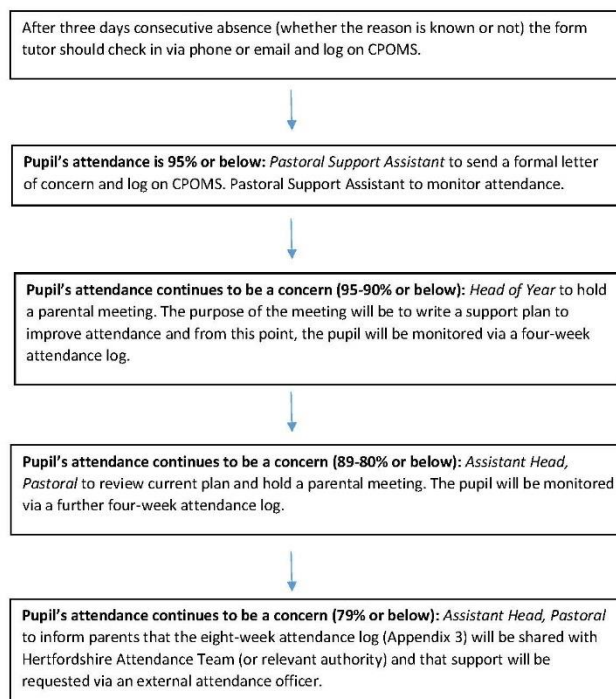
Mark	Definition	Status
∧	Present	Present
?	Unknown	Unauthorised Absence
B	Educated off site	Present
C	Other authorised circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description) i.e. Music Exam	Authorised Absence
D	Attending other establishment	Present
E	Excluded (No alternative provision made)	Authorised Absence
G	Family Holiday (not agreed)	Unauthorised Absence
H	Family Holiday (agreed)	Authorised Absence
I	Illness (not medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised Absence
J	Interview	Authorised Absence
K	Music/Lamda lesson	Present
L	Late (before registers close)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised Absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised Absence
O	Absent without Authorisation	Unauthorised Absence
P	School sporting activity	Present
Q	Student at Surgery/Pastoral Hub	Present
R	Religious observance	Authorised Absence
S	Study Leave	Authorised Absence
T	Traveller Absence	Authorised Absence
U	Late (after registration has closed)	Unauthorised Absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Present
W	Work experience	Authorised Absence
X	Non compulsory school age student not required to be in school	Authorised Absence
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstance	Authorised Absence
Z	Student not on yet on roll	Authorised Absence
#	School closed to students	Authorised Absence

Appendix 2: Pupil Attendance Flow Charts (Prep/Senior)

PREP ATTENDANCE FLOW CHART



SENIOR SCHOOL ATTENDANCE FLOW CHART



Appendix 3: 8 Week Attendance Log

Name of Pupil– 8 Week Attendance Log

Support Meeting:

Week 1			
Date	Absent/ Present	Reason	Support
Week 2			
Week 3			
Week 4 Current attendance:			
(Half term:) Week 5			
Week 6			
Week 7			
Week 8			

ATTENDANCE

At Abbot's Hill School



Being in school is really **IMPORTANT**. You need to make sure that you are in school **EVERY DAY**.

Sometimes there is a genuine reason for not being in school – you could be really ill or there may be an emergency, if it is not serious, you must be in school.

Missing School has a huge impact on your learning:

If you miss...	That equals...	Which is...	During five years at Abbot's Hill School, you would miss...
1 day a month	10 days per year	2 weeks a year	10 weeks
1 day a fortnight	20 days per year	4 weeks a year	20 weeks
1 day a week	40 days per year	8 weeks a year	40 weeks
2 days a week	80 days per year	16 weeks a year	80 weeks

Top Tips – what to do if...

You have a cold

Ask your parents to give you something to make you feel better. Bring some tissues and come to school – take it easy during break and lunch times.

You miss the bus/ have problems with transport

Ask your parents to let the school know you will be late. When you arrive, go to reception to sign in and then go to your lesson.

You have forgotten your homework

You still need to come to school and speak to your subject teacher. It is better to be honest than try to avoid the situation. If you are still worried, speak to your form tutor.

Someone is making you unhappy/you fall out with your friends

You still need to come to school so that the issue can be sorted out quickly – speak to your form tutor. It is important that we know so we can help you.