



Attendance Policy

Date approved:	Autumn 2023
Approved by:	New Generation Schools Trust Board
Next Review date:	Summer 2024

Attendance Policy

Our Aim for Attendance:

- Maintain an attendance rate of a minimum of 97%
- Maintain parents and pupil's awareness of the importance of regular attendance

At Hope Community School, we believe that good attendance is essential to effective learning. Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will affect their attainment and social integration with their peers. Pupils who attend regularly achieve more highly. Punctuality is equally as important. If children are late for school, they miss out on the regular morning routines and disrupt the class teaching and the learning of other children. Pupils with regular attendance and good punctuality have an easier transfer into secondary school. It will also aid pupils when they reach the work place.

Our Mission:

We want every child to enjoy and achieve to their full potential at school. Whatever ability, ethnicity or background, each child will thrive and prosper throughout their time with us at Hope.

Absence

We monitor attendance regularly and therefore expect excellent attendance from every child. If you have concerns with attendance, the school can provide support to help you to improve the attendance of your child.

Reporting absence:

- All matters relating to absence must be reported to the school office before 9.15am on the first day of absence giving the reason why he or she is not in school. Tel: 0203 223 2000 or on Enquiries@hopecommunityschool.org
- It is the responsibility of the school to check absences by telephone if we do not hear from the parents or carers.
- If a child is absent or taken out of school during the day due to a medical appointment, parents should notify the school by providing a note/appointment letter/E-consult booking or contacting the school office in advance with the above evidence.

Authorised Absence

Some absences are allowed by law and are known as "authorised absences." For example: if a child is ill, death of a close relative, religious observance.

We realise that there are rare occasions when there might be a particular problem that causes your child to be absent. Please let us know and we shall try to deal with it sympathetically.

Unauthorised Absence

There are times when children are absent for reasons, which are not permitted by law. These are known as "unauthorised absences." Examples of unauthorised absences are:

- Holidays during term time
- Waiting for a delivery
- Going out for a hair cut
- Going for a family day out
- Because it is your child's birthday
- Sleeping in late after a night out
- Unapproved holidays
- Parental sickness or sibling's sickness
- Caring for a sick relative
- Where there is no explanation for the absence or when the explanation or reason for the absence is considered unsatisfactory

Parental Responsibilities

- To ensure their child attends school and arrives on time before 8.50am
- To contact the school on the first day of absence and give a reason and on each morning of absence thereafter
- To keep medical and dental appointments outside school hours where possible
- To ensure that holidays are taken outside of term time
- To keep contact details, correct and up to date
- Provide a note or copy of the medical appointment card for absences during school hours.
- To support the school's aim of 97% (+) attendance

School Responsibilities

- To improve the overall attendance target to 97%
- To make attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with the school including pupils, parents, teachers and governors.
- To provide support, advice and guidance to parents and pupils.
- To celebrate pupils who achieved at least 97% over the year and to highlight those who have achieved 100% over a term and over the year.
- To recognise the needs of the individual pupil when planning reintegration following significant periods of absence.
- When attendance is less than 95% (after the first half-term) a letter is sent to the parents together with a copy of their child's registration certificate.
- When attendance fails to improve the Principal / Family Liaison Officer will contact the parents to attend a meeting to discuss the issue and offer support to improve attendance.
- Where no improvements in attendance have been made, a formal referral is made to EWO. This could lead to the EWO issuing a penalty charge notice or taking further action.

Leavers

If your child is leaving other than at the end of Year 6 to go to Secondary School, parents are asked to:

- Give the school full information about their plans including date of move, new address or at least the town you will be moving to, new school and start date if known and reasons for moving
- Confirm the school has your current mobile number
- Give the new school Hope's contact details so that files can be transferred
- Let us know when you moved

Children Missing In Education

When pupils leave and you have not given us the above information and we cannot contact you, then your child is considered to be a Child Missing In Education. This means that the Local Authority has a legal duty to carry out investigations, which will include liaising with Bexley Borough Social Care, the Police and other agencies to try and track and locate your child.

School Governing Body

It is a legal responsibility to monitor and evaluate attendance in their schools. This function has been delegated to the school's Local Council. Attendance figures are presented to the School Local Council on a termly basis.

Penalty Notices:

As a school we have a legal authority to request Penalty Notices to parents who do not ensure their child is attending school. This may be necessary if children are taken out of school for unauthorized holidays or if children have concerning persistent absences.

Attendance Timeline Processes:

Recommended Time Scale	Attendance Concern	Actions to be taken
Day 1 Stage 1	Any absence without reason and no telephone/email contact made to school by latest 9.10am on first day of absence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First day of absence without reasonable reason, telephone call to be made by Office Administrator • If no contact made by telephone with Parent/Carer or any contact listed on pupil record Office Administrator to email request for reason for absence
Day 2 Stage 2	No response from Stage 1 after attempts to contact Parent/Carer or any listed contact	<p>Stage 1 actions to be followed again if there is still no response or reason provided for absence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Second day of absence without reasonable reason, telephone call to be made by Office Administrator • If no contact made by telephone with Parent/Carer or any contact listed on pupil record Office Administrator to email request for reason for absence
Day 3 Stage 3	Continued no response from Parent/Carer or any listed contact or reason for absence raises safeguarding concerns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Escalated to Family Liaison Officer (FLO) • Home visit to be carried out • If no response then Police welfare check to be requested by telephoning 0800 7311888. • Contact with LA MASH team. • All information to be recorded on 'Safeguard' • Education welfare officer (EWO) to be notified

When attendance falls below 93% the following actions will be taken:

1

- Child added to Attendance Watchlist
- Family Liaison Officer (FLO) to send letter to Parent/Carer with attendance certificate

2

- Monitored by school & Educational Welfare Officer (EWO)
- EWO to send 'Cause for Concern' letter if no improvement to attendance

3

- Parent invited to Attendance Surgery with Principal, FLO & EWO
- Official Referral to Education Welfare Service if still no improvement to attendance

4

- EWO may escalate to court proceedings
- Penalty Notice maybe issued

Attendance Matters

HCS Sidcup

The school gate opens at 8:40am, registers are taken at 9am. Children who arrive after this time must report to the school office. This will then be recorded and added to the register on SIMS.

HCS Southampton

The school gate opens at 8:30am for soft start, registers are taken at 9am. Children who arrive after this time must report to the school office. This will then be recorded and added to the register on SIMS.

You must notify the office before 9:10am about your child's absence.

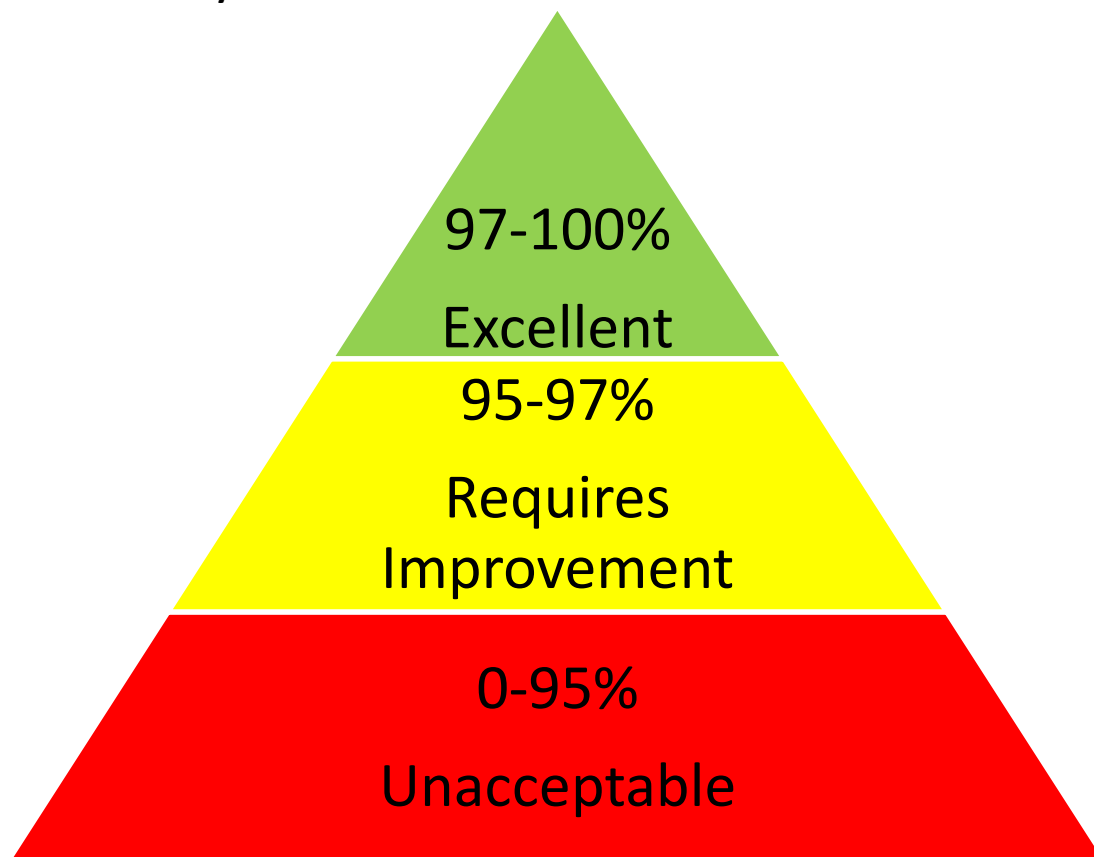
If your child arrives after the registers have closed at 9:15am their mark will show as an unauthorised absence for the entire morning session.

Parents/Carers will be contacted via telephone or email at 9:30am if no contact with the school has made regarding their child's absence.

The attendance of each child is monitored and reviewed weekly by the Principal and Family Liaison Officer. The Principal is the strategic lead for attendance.

A letter with your child's attendance certificate attached will be sent home every half term.

Attendance Pyramid:



Appendix 1: Children with health needs who cannot attend school

1. Aims

This appendix outlines the schools arrangements as it aims to ensure that:

- Suitable education is arranged for pupils on roll who cannot attend school due to health needs
- Pupils, staff and parents understand what the school is responsible for when this education is being provided by the local authority

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy reflects the requirements of the Education Act 1996. It is also based on guidance provided by our local authority.

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

3. Responsibilities of the school

3.1 If the school makes arrangements

Initially, the school will attempt to make arrangements to deliver suitable education for children with health needs who cannot attend school. The school SENCO is responsible for making and monitoring these arrangements.

This could involve; sending work home, liaising with hospital schools, agreeing a part time, time table as recommended by medical professionals. Parents and pupils will be involved in setting out these arrangements and included in an appropriate, time scaled, reintegration plan.

3.2 If the local authority makes arrangements

If the school can't make suitable arrangements, the local authority will become responsible for arranging suitable education for these pupils.

In cases where the local authority makes arrangements, the school will:

- Work constructively with the local authority, providers, relevant agencies and parents to ensure the best outcomes for the pupil
- Share information with the local authority and relevant health services as required
- Help make sure that the provision offered to the pupil is as effective as possible and that the child can be reintegrated back into school successfully
- When reintegration is anticipated, work with the local authority to:
 - Plan for consistent provision during and after the period of education outside the school, allowing the pupil to access the same curriculum and materials that they would have used in school as far as possible
 - Enable the pupil to stay in touch with school life (e.g. through newsletters, emails, invitations to school events or internet links to lessons from their school)
 - Create individually tailored reintegration plans for each child returning to school
 - Consider whether any reasonable adjustments need to be made

4. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by the school SENCO and the Principal.