



Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Date of Review: 30/09/25

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Introduction

1. Hazel Grove Primary School believes that all children have a right to an education as enshrined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and in UK Law. The opportunities provided by education are fundamental to enabling all children and young people reach their potential and lead happy and rewarding lives.

2. Every day at school counts.

The evidence is clear – even a few days of missed school can have a significant impact on a child's education and future prospects. Recent research from the Department for Education shows just how closely attainment and attendance are linked.

- At primary school, the pupils with the highest attainment at the end of key stage 2 have higher rates of attendance over the key stage compared to those with the lowest attainment
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66bf300da44f1c4c23e5bd1b/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance_-_August_2024.pdf
- At primary school, children who attend school nearly every day in Year 6 (95-100% attendance) are 30% more likely to reach the expected standard in reading, writing and maths compared to similar pupils who attend 90-95% of the time. <https://educationhub.blog.gov.uk/2025/03/why-school-attendance-matters-and-what-were-doing-to-improve-it/>
- At secondary school, Year 11 pupils with near-perfect attendance are almost twice as likely to achieve grade 5 in English and Maths GCSE, compared to similar pupils attending 90-95% of the time. In other words, missing just 10 extra days a year reduces the likelihood of achieving these grades by around 50%. <https://educationhub.blog.gov.uk/2025/03/why-school-attendance-matters-and-what-were-doing-to-improve-it/>
- Missing school can impact future earnings too. Persistently absent pupils in secondary school could earn £10,000 less at age 28 compared to pupils with near-perfect attendance. <https://educationhub.blog.gov.uk/2025/03/why-school-attendance-matters-and-what-were-doing-to-improve-it/>

Additionally, pupils who attend school regularly are more likely to develop a strong sense of belonging, feel settled in school, maintain friendships, make progress and gain the greatest benefit from their education. For those with vulnerabilities or SEND, regular attendance is an important protective factor and being in school gives pupils the best opportunities for needs to be identified and for support to be provided.

3. This policy outlines our approach to attendance and summarises the legal duties and expectations of the whole school community. It reflects the key principles of the Department for Education's attendance guidance: [Working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#) and locally agreed processes
4. Throughout this document, 'parents' should be taken to include all those with parental responsibility, as defined in law, and may include guardians and legal carers.

School Attendance and the Law

5. The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational needs they may have. The table below defines the responsibilities of parents and schools.

Table of responsibilities	
Parents	Schools
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have a legal responsibility to make sure their child receives an education either by education at school or by education otherwise than at a school• Have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends their school regularly. Regular attendance means the child must attend every day that they are expected to attend, except in a small number of allowable circumstances• May be guilty of an offence and can be prosecuted by the local authority if a child of compulsory school age fails to attend regularly at the school at which they have been registered	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Carry out all their functions with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all pupils at the school• Maintain and preserve accurate attendance registers as required under regulations within The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 and make them available for inspection by the local authority• Complete Attendance and Sickness returns to the local authority• Comply with legal requirements regarding adding or removing pupils' names to or from the admissions register, ensuring that:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- pupils' names are added to the school roll on the expected date of attendance- pupils' names are removed from roll only when one of the legal grounds in The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 is satisfied- all removals are reported to the local authority- information is shared and enquiries made jointly with the local authority to locate missing pupils

Legal Sanctions

6. Regular school attendance is a legal duty on parents and carers. If a parent fails to ensure their child attends school regularly, they are guilty of an offence under section 444(1) or (1A) of the Education Act
7. A parent who commits this offence may be liable to prosecution in the Magistrates' Court and, depending on which offence they are convicted of, may be liable to a fine of up to £2500 or a term of imprisonment of up to three months
8. Although school will offer support in addressing attendance issues, it will also refer pupils whose attendance fails to improve due to non-engagement of the parent, or who take leave of absence from school without agreement, to the Education Welfare Service within Stockport Council. This can take several routes:

a) Education Penalty Notice (EPN)

Education Penalty Notices are fixed penalty notices issued by Stockport Council. The amount of the fine depends on whether any previous Education Penalty Notices have been issued to the parent for the same child for unauthorised absences which took place after 19.08.24 but within a period of three years from the current fine.

- For the first such Education Penalty Notice, the fine is £80 if paid within 21 days or £160 if paid between 22 and 28 days
- For the second such Education Penalty Notice, the fine is at a single rate of £160 payable within 28 days
- If a third or subsequent offences occur within a rolling three-year period which would otherwise result in a fine, the local authority is not allowed to issue a further fine, and instead the parent is likely to be prosecuted in the Magistrates' Court

b) Education Penalty Notices for Irregular Attendance

Before being issued with an Education Penalty Notice, parents will receive a written warning from Stockport Council. This gives them an opportunity to avoid a fine by ensuring that no unauthorised absences – including late after the close of registration marks – are recorded against their child during the next 15 school days. The minimum criteria for sending such a warning is 10 sessions (1 session = ½ school day) of unauthorised absence in a 10-week period.

c) Education Penalty Notices for unauthorised leave of absence

Education Penalty Notices may also be issued where a pupil is taken out of school for five days or more without the school's consent – such as for a term time holiday. In these cases, the fine is sent by the Council without an initial warning being issued.

d) Attendance Contracts

A Parent Contract is an agreement which usually involves the school, parents, members of Stockport Council's Education Welfare Service and, in some cases, the pupil. The agreement sets out the actions required by all parties to overcome the barriers to improving attendance. Compliance with the contract and the progress of improving attendance are reviewed regularly at Parent Contract Review Meetings. If a parent fails to participate and/or fails to ensure attendance

improves, they may be prosecuted in the Magistrates' Court.

e) Education Supervision Order

An Education Supervision Order (ESO) is an order granted in the Family Proceedings Court requiring a parent and child to follow directions made in the Order and work alongside a Supervising Officer to improve the child's school attendance. The Supervising Officer will be put in place by Stockport Council and may be a Social Worker, Education Welfare Officer or other Family Help professional. Where parents persistently fail to comply with the directions given under an ESO, they may be prosecuted in the Magistrates' Court. ESOs usually last for year but can be extended to three years.

Our Vision for Attendance

9. Hazel Grove Primary School believes that **attendance is everyone's business**.

We strive to build strong and trusting relationships with pupils and parents to secure the highest ambitions of school attendance for all pupils and work together with families to remove any barriers by putting the right support in place.

The joint responsibilities of school, parents and the trust are summarised below:

Hazel Grove Primary School	Parents
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Has a named Senior Attendance Champion with the overall responsibility for attendance improvement and management. This is Mrs Davies.• Has a named Attendance Champion with responsibility for attendance management and support. This is Mrs Marshall.• Has named Attendance Support personnel with responsibility for attendance reporting and recording. This is Mrs Wackett/Mrs Turnbull• Has a minimum attendance ambition of 96% for the whole school• Has a minimum attendance ambition of 96% for each individual pupil• Has a punctuality ambition target of zero late marks for each pupil.• Has a school strategy for reducing persistent and severe absence• Records attendance accurately and	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure their child attends regularly as required by law• Encourage good routines at home to ensure children are prepared and on time for school each day• Ensure the school has up to date contact information including home address, telephone numbers, email addresses and emergency contacts. There should be more than one emergency contact number where reasonably possible.• In the event of a house move, the school has been informed about the new address and possible school details at the earliest opportunities and no later than the last day they attend• Raise any issues or concerns affecting attendance with school staff at the earliest opportunity• Attend raising attendance meetings with school staff to discuss concerns

<p>follows up absences with parents in a timely manner</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offers support and works closely with services and agencies where pupils and families need additional support • May conduct home visits to ensure the school has 'eyes on the child' and there are no safeguarding concerns • Works with Stockport Council on legal intervention if support is not successful or not engaged with 	<p>and plan support, if requested by school</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work in partnership with school and other agencies to address any attendance problems • Support the school's absence procedures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Telephone school on each day that their child is unable to attend due to illness stating the symptoms of the illness (e.g. sore throat/temperature and not 'poorly') - Provide medical or other evidence in relation to absence if required by school - Arrange medical or dental appointments to take place outside of school hours or in the holidays where possible - Not take family holidays in term time or any leave of absence for any reason without prior agreement - Request leave of absence only in exceptional circumstance
Laurus Trust	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure there is a named senior leader responsible for the strategic approach to attendance in school • Ensure the school's leadership team fulfil their expectations and relevant statutory duties as set out in attendance related legislation and guidance • Ensure regular ongoing support for the child or parent, guidance, and challenge in relation to attendance, recognising the importance of good attendance and promoting it across the school's ethos and policies • Shares effective practice on attendance management and improvement across schools within the trust 	

Attendance and Punctuality Procedures

Parents are expected to:

- 10.** Ensure pupils are in school by 8.45am. To support parents to arrive promptly, the external school site is opened at 8.30am. Parents and pupils may wait on the school playgrounds until 8.45am when doors are opened. Pupils must be supervised by parents until doors are opened
- 11.** Ensure pupils have arrived at school before 8.55am when school gates are closed. Registers are taken at 9am. Pupils will receive a late mark 'L' in the register if they are not in school at that time
- 12.** Ensure pupils are taken to the school office if they arrive after 8.55am. Parents are expected to sign their child in at the office. Pupils must not come to the office unaccompanied. Registers close at 9.25am. Any pupils arriving after that time will be marked as 'U – late after the registers have closed' in the register for that session. This is classified as an unauthorised absence. If a child is regularly late after registers have closed, this will significantly affect their attendance record. School will monitor and offer support to improve attendance, however, where this is not successful or parents do not engage, it could lead to the school making a referral to the local authority for legal proceedings

Absence

- 13.** Contact school via telephone on 0161 483 3699 before 8.55am on the first day their child is absent, giving the reason for the absence, and on every further day of absence (except where a doctor's report has already been provided indicating an expected return date).
- 14.** Ensure their child returns to school as soon as possible
- 15.** Provide any medical evidence, if requested, to support the absence
- 16.** Proactively contact school for support where they are concerned about their child's attendance by speaking to Mrs Marshall (Attendance Champion) on 0161 483 3699
- 17.** Attend raising attendance meetings to plan action and outcomes when attendance is a concern

Hazel Grove Primary School will:

- 18.** Contact parents by text on the first day of absence and further days of absence to request parents make contact with school (if we haven't already been notified of the absence on that day)
- 19.** If we are unable to make contact with parents, we may attempt to reach parents by any of the following means: use of all emergency contacts, email, letter and home visits where necessary
- 20.** Complete an Attendance Return to Stockport Council for any child with a continuous period of ten school days where their absence has been recorded as unauthorised with one or more of the codes G, N, O, and/or U
- 21.** Complete a Sickness Return to Stockport Council for a child who has been recorded with code I (Illness) and who we have reasonable grounds to believe will miss 15 days consecutively or cumulatively because of sickness. This is to help the school and Stockport Council to agree

any provision needed to ensure continuity of education, in line with education for pupils who cannot attend because of health needs, in line with statutory guidance

22. Make a Multi-Agency Safeguarding and Support Hub (MASSH) referral to Stockport Council where there are concerns about the welfare of a child who is not attending school
23. Contact parents in cases where pupils are regularly absent or late to discuss reasons and plan actions to raise attendance and/or punctuality

Recording of absence

24. **Authorised absence** is an absence from school agreed by the school.

Examples of authorised absence:

a) **Illness**

- If a child is too ill to attend school, their absence will be authorised. (See Appendix for NHS guidance)
- Where a child has frequent absence due to illness, parents may be asked to attend a meeting in school to agree a medical action plan which may include support from the school nurse
- Parents may also be asked for medical evidence, particularly where absences due to illness are frequent or result in the pupil having long periods of time off school
- Where pupils are likely to miss more than 15 days of school due to illness, they may be entitled to educational provision from their home local authority. In most cases, the school would make the referral where appropriate

b) **Medical/Dental appointments**

- Parents are requested to make medical/dental appointments outside of the school day or in the holidays, however, we understand that hospital appointments and specialist clinic appointments often occur during the school day.
- Pupils should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment. Pupils may come to school for their registration mark before appointments if convenient
- Parents must notify the school office in advance of the appointment and provide evidence of the appointment for the absence to be authorised

c) **Exceptional Circumstances**

- Any other leave of absence must be requested in writing to the headteacher via letter or email to admin@hgps.org.uk at least 4 weeks in advance. This gives the headteacher the opportunity to respond and to request further evidence should further information be required to make a decision about whether the request is an 'exceptional circumstance'
- Leave of absence requests must include the name of the child, the name of the parent(s), address of the parent(s), start date of proposed leave of absence, end date of proposed leave of absence and the reason for the request.
- The headteacher or senior attendance champion will respond in writing via email or MCAS. In

order to assist school in deciding whether the absence can be authorised, additional documentary evidence could be requested, for example:

- evidence of flight bookings made just before the absence in the case of an emergency
- medical evidence in relation to the absence
- a death certificate

Other types of evidence might be appropriate in other circumstances

- Where exceptional circumstances are demonstrated, but the amount of time sought is excessive, school may authorise only part of a period of absence
- If the absence is not authorised by the headteacher or senior attendance champion and the child does not attend school, or the school suspects the child has taken a term-time holiday (even if the parent has contacted school to report the child ill), a request that Stockport Council issues an Education Penalty Notice may be made (See [Legal Sanctions](#))
- Holidays are unlikely to be considered as 'exceptional circumstances' as children and families have 175 days off school to spend time together, inclusive of weekends and 13 weeks of school holidays. Holidays are therefore expected to be scheduled outside of term time

d) [Part-Time Timetables](#)

- Part-time timetables may be agreed only in exceptional cases e.g. where medical issues prevent a pupil from attending full time or as part of a re-integration package. Any part-time timetable agreed should only be used as a temporary arrangement, with full consent of parents and be regularly reviewed with a view to increasing attendance to full-time as quickly as possible. The local authority is informed of all pupils on a part-time timetable.

e) [Religious observance](#)

- Absence to take part in any day set aside exclusively for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong, including religious festivals. This would be a day that the pupil's parents would be expected by the religious body to which they belong to be away from employment to mark the occasion. Only one day is allowed and days in addition to this are coded C if agreed.

f) [Traveller families travelling for occupational circumstances](#)

- When traveller families are known to be travelling for occupational circumstances and have agreed this with the school in advance, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending another school. (In order to fulfil legal requirements, in such cases, pupils must attend school for at least 200 sessions in every 12 months).

25. Unauthorised absences are absences from school which the school has not given permission, including arriving late to school after the registers have closed. Absence will not be authorised unless parents have provided a satisfactory explanation that has been accepted by the school.

Raising the profile of attendance and reducing persistent and severe absence

Raising the profile

26. This attendance policy is available on the school website and will be shared with parents at least once per academic year via MCAS
27. All parents will be contacted at the start of the academic year via MCAS to communicate the school's attendance target
28. Pupils will have a termly attendance assembly with the senior attendance champion
29. Year group attendance figures will be shared with pupils in Cornerstones assemblies
30. School has a minimum attendance ambition of 96% attendance for all pupils
31. School will award a certificate to all pupils who achieve the school's minimum attendance ambition of 96% attendance or above on a termly basis

Reducing persistent absence and severe absence

32. We recognise that poor attendance can be a sign of wider difficulties in a child's life whether at home or at school. Parents should make school aware of any difficulties or changes in circumstances that may affect their child's attendance at school. This will help the school identify any additional support that may be required
33. To identify pupils whose attendance is causing concern the school regularly analyses whole school and group attendance data.
34. The school meets termly with the local authority's Education Welfare Service to discuss cases where persistent absence is a concern
35. To ensure attendance support is promptly offered, we use Stockport's Attendance Intervention Staged Process as a framework for our work with individual pupils. As part of this framework, parents can be expected to be contacted via MCAS when:

a) A pupil's attendance is at 92% or below

Parents will be invited by letter (Stage 1) to contact the school's Pastoral Lead, Mrs Marshall to arrange a meeting to discuss attendance.

At this meeting school will:

- Check if any support plans already in place (e.g. SEND support plan) are meeting the identified need or if there are any unidentified needs
- Identify any circumstances that could be impacting on attendance
- Establish whether there are any medical needs and consider the use of a medical action plan, especially where there is a pattern of illness
- For pupils displaying anxiety around attending school, school will refer to Anxiety Based School Avoidance guidance documents and may identify a key adult to support the child at appropriate

times, signpost parents to online sources of support, and refer to the School Nursing Team for screening or support

- Offer an Early Help Assessment (EHA) where support needs go beyond what the school can offer. Where parents agree, a referral to the Team Around the School (TAS) may be appropriate
- Summarise the attendance issues and the support that has been offered in an Attendance Improvement Plan. This will be sent to all adults with parental responsibility or day-to-day care via MCAS

b) A pupil's attendance is below 90% (Persistently Absent)

Parents will be invited by letter (Stage 2) to a School Attendance Meeting with Mrs Davies, Senior School Attendance Champion.

School will now request that supporting medical evidence be provided to school for further absences to be authorised

At this meeting school will:

- Summarise the existing absences, explore the reasons for absence and strategies to improve absence
- Offer a medical action plan if medical issues are the reasons for absence
- Offer an Early Help Assessment (EHA) where support goes beyond what school can offer
- Agree a clear, personalised plan with actions and targets and review every 6 weeks. Provide a copy of this plan to parents via MCAS
- If there is a significant improvement, school will continue to monitor for an agreed period on Stage 2 or end if the review period is successfully completed
- If attendance is not improving and there are continued absences, the support offer will be reviewed, and parents will be informed of the formal process which may lead to enforcement

School attendance enforcement referral

School will refer to the local authority to request a school enforcement referral (Stage 3) where it is considered that:

- The parent(s) could be doing more to improve attendance
- The school has taken clear actions at Stage 1 and Stage 2
- Parents are not engaging with the School Attendance Plan or accessing any voluntary support offer e.g. EHA
- There are more than 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks

36. Pupils with a Social Worker – we will notify the Social Worker of any unauthorised absences and concerns about attendance/punctuality, and will support them in addressing attendance issues as part of the child and family plan

37. Children in our Care – the designated teacher will ensure that attendance issues are addressed in Personal Education Plans (PEPs) and in regular looked after review meetings. The Social Worker will be notified of any unauthorised absences, and we will contact the relevant Virtual School Headteacher for more support where necessary

Register Coding

All absences must be recorded in the school's register and coded as either authorised or unauthorised

Present Codes		
/ \	present during registration	
B	educated off site and taster days and do not fit K, V, P or W codes	Mandatory explanation needs to be recorded
K	attending provision arranged by the local authority	Mandatory explanation needs to be recorded
L	arrived after the register has started but before it has closed	
P	sporting activity with prior agreement from school	
V	educational visit or trip	
W	work experience	
Absent Codes - Authorised Absences		
#	planned whole school closure (eg holidays, insets and polling station days)	
C	exceptional circumstances	
C1	in a regulated performance/undertaking regulated employment abroad	
C2	absent due to part-time timetable	
D	dual registered	
E	suspended or permanently excluded	
I	illness (not medical or dental appointments)	
J1	job/school/college interview	
M	medical or dental appointment	
Q	unable to attend because of a lack of access arrangements	
R	religious observance (only 1 day allowed, any more coded as C if agreed)	
S	study leave	
T	parent travelling for occupational purposes	
X	non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school	
Y1	unable to attend due to transport provided not being available	
Y2	unable to attend due to widespread transport disruption	
Y3	unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed	
Y4	unable to attend due to whole school closure	
Y5	unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention	
Y6	unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law	
Y7	unable to attend due to other avoidable cause (must affect the pupil NOT the parent)	Mandatory explanation needs to be recorded
Absent Codes - Unauthorised Absence		
G	holiday (not agreed)	
N	reason for absence not yet established (must be corrected within 5 days)	
O	absent in other or unknown circumstances	
U	late after register has closed	
Z	pupil not yet on register	

Appendix: Is my child too ill to attend school?

Is my child too ill to attend school? Is my child too ill for school? - NHS		
Symptom	Attend school - Yes	Attend school - No
Minor ailments without temperature <i>Cough, cold, hayfever, runny nose, congestion, period pain, eczema, aches, mouth ulcers, sunburn, constipation, earache, toothache</i>	Yes	
High temperature		No <i>Keep them off school until temperature has gone away</i>
Feeling anxious or worried	Yes <i>Avoiding school can make anxiety worse. Speak to the school for support</i>	
Chickenpox		No <i>Keep them off school until all the spots have crusted over. Usually about 5 days after the spots first appeared</i>
Cold sores	Yes	
Conjunctivitis	Yes	
COVID-19 (Positive Test)		No <i>For 3 days after they took the test</i>
COVID-19 symptoms (no test)	Yes <i>Runny nose, sore throat, slight cough and feels well</i>	No <i>If they have a high temperature or do not feel well enough for normal activities</i>
Ear infection		No <i>Until they feel better and their high temperature has gone away</i>
Hand, foot and mouth disease	Yes <i>If seems well</i>	
Head lice and nits	Yes	
Impetigo		No <i>Until all sores have crusted over, or for 48 hours after they start antibiotic treatment</i>
Measles		No <i>For at least 4 days from when the rash first appears</i>
Ringworm	Yes <i>Once treatment has started</i>	
Scarlet Fever		No <i>Until 24 hours after starting antibiotics</i>
Slapped cheek syndrome	Yes <i>Let school know</i>	
Sore throat	Yes	No <i>If they have a high temperature</i>
Threadworms	Yes	

Diarrhoea		No <i>Until they have not had diarrhoea for 48 hours</i>
Vomiting (overexcitement/overeating/overexertion)	Yes	
Vomiting (not due to above/stomach bug)		No <i>Until they have not vomited for 48 hours</i>

Equality Impact Statement

Names and title of people involved with this assessment	Rachel Robinson Assistant Trust Director of Inclusion
Impact assessment carried out with regard to identified characteristics	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Race <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Disability <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sex <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Age <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religious Belief <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sexual Orientation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gender Reassignment
Summary of any issue/proposed changes	N/A
Date	16.09.25
Date of next review	30.09.26



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