Holy Trinity Church of England Primary

Attendance Policy

'Loved by God and one another, Holy Trinity is a welcoming community of faith, where we learn and flourish together.

Each day opens up horizons of hope, aspiration and joy!'

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Attendance Policy

Rationale

Holy Trinity Church of England Primary School is committed to creating a welcoming community of faith, where pupils can learn and flourish together. Each day opens up new opportunities, a fresh start bringing horizons of hope, aspiration and joy! Our Attendance Policy is inclusive and is designed to support the way in which all members of the school can learn and flourish together; this is core to our positive approach to managing attendance. We are a caring community, whose values are built on mutual trust and respect. Our Attendance Policy is therefore designed to support the way in which all members of the school can work together to support pupil attendance. Holy Trinity Church of England Primary believes that it is essential for all pupils to attend school regularly and avoid any absence. Any loss of time at school can adversely affect a pupil's wellbeing and attainment. Valuable learning time is lost when children are absent or late. We believe that good attendance is of paramount importance in ensuring that all children have full access to the curriculum, enabling them to achieve their full potential as part of a learning community.

Aims of Attendance Policy

Our Attendance Policy aims to promote a high level of shared commitment to ensure regular and prompt attendance in school. Our attendance strategy aims to create a culture in which the impact of good attendance on well-being and academic attainment of our pupils is celebrated.

We are committed to meeting our obligation about school attendance through our whole school approach that values good school attendance, including:
- Promoting good attendance
- Ensuring every child has access to full-time education
- Building and maintaining a strong relationship with families to enable targeted support to better school attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Promoting the importance of arriving to school and lessons on time to support punctuality

Legislation & Statutory Requirements

This policy meets the requirements of working together to improve school attendance from the Department for Education (DfE) and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures. These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:
- Part 6 of The Education Act 1996
- Part 3 of The Education Act 2002
- Part 7 of The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments)
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold
- Summary of responsibilities where a mental health issue is affecting attendance
- Support for pupils where mental health issues are affecting attendance (Effective practice examples)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education

Attendance Target

The school's attendance target is at least 96%. School attendance records and figures are monitored by the Local Academy Council. The school's persistent absence target is no higher than 10%.

This policy has been developed for use by school staff and governors to ensure best possible attendance outcomes for pupils at the school. It is also intended to provide clear structures for attendance practice and to provide guidance for parents and pupils.

Role and Responsibilities

The Local Academy Council

The Local Academy Council 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

- The link governor who is responsible for attendance is the Chair of Governors who can be contacted via email address cofg@htceschools.co.uk.

The Executive Headteacher

The Executive Headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school

- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors

- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils

- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies

- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

- The Executive Headteacher can be contacted via email address headteacher@htceschools.co.uk

The Designated Senior Leader

The Designated Senior Leader is responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the school

- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement

- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes

- Having an oversight of data analysis

- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data

- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues

- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is the Executive Headteacher and can be contacted via email address headteacher@htceschools.co.uk

The Attendance Champion

The school Attendance Champion is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data

- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement

- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher

- Working with relevant school staff to tackle persistent absence.

- Advising the Executive Headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The Attendance Champion is the Office Manager and can be contacted via telephone number 01765 602858.

Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office. The registers must be completed by 9am and 1.15pm each day and any absences or planned absences are chased by the school office.

School Admin staff

School Admin staff will:

- Take calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system

- Transfer calls from parents to the Attendance Champion / Executive Headteacher to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

Parents

Parents are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time

- Call the school to report their child's absence before 8.30am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return

- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child

- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day

- To discuss promptly with the SENDCo or Executive Headteacher any problems that might deter their child from attending school
- To collect their child promptly at the end of their school day.

Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day on time
- To arrive at school appropriately prepared for the day.
- To attend all lessons and to actively engage with learning.

Parents and pupils can expect the following from school:

- To keep regular and accurate records of attendance for all pupils, at least twice daily.
- To monitor every pupil's attendance.
- To contact parents as soon as possible (by 9.30am) on the first day of absence where no message has been received to explain the absence.
- To follow up all unexplained absences to obtain notification of the reason for the absence and the likely date of return.
- To emphasise the importance of good attendance and to celebrate this with pupils and parents.
- To reward all pupils/cohorts who achieve good attendance.
- To provide a welcoming atmosphere and safe learning environment for all pupils.
- To provide a sympathetic response to any pupil's concerns.
- To make initial enquiries of parents of pupils who are not attending regularly, express their concern and clarify the school and the Local Authority's expectations regarding regular school attendance.
- School will always have staff available to discuss any concerns and barriers that are preventing their child attending school.
- To refer irregular or concerning patterns of attendance to the Local Authority Attendance Officer.

Supporting Good Attendance

The school will reward attendance by:

- ✓ Acknowledging individual pupil's 100% attendance. For example, Class 100% Attendance Award in Friday Achievement Assembly; weekly attendance % displays in classrooms; publishing data on the school website.
- ✓ Celebrating weekly cohort attendance when a class achieve the agreed annual attendance target.
- ✓ School will run 3 monthly competitions in November/February/May for those pupils who receive 100% attendance in school.

Ways for parents to encourage attendance:

- ✓ Ensure that your child has the correct uniform and equipment.
- ✓ Ensure that school uniform, including PE kit, swimming kit are ready the night before. Encourage your child to help you to do this.
- ✓ Regularly find out your child's absence and keep your own record.
- ✓ Talk regularly with your child about school and how they feel about it. Children are more likely to attend if they feel supported and parents speak positively about the school and their class teacher. If you have any concerns speak to the school about them rather than share them with your child.
- ✓ Telephone the school as soon as possible to tell them of any absence and when you expect your child to return.
- ✓ Only allow days at home for genuine illness.
- ✓ Avoid any absence from school for reasons other than your child's illness.
- ✓ Have good routines at home to ensure homework is completed and know the school day routines.
- ✓ Praise and reward good attendance: even small successes e.g. arriving at school promptly.

Other tips to help secure good attendance:

- ✓ If there is a problem with your child's attendance, talk calmly to your child and listen to the explanation.
- ✓ Talk to the school Attendance Champion to resolve issues. They may be able to help and support you and your child.
- ✓ Be particularly watchful and supportive in the run up to tests and aware of homework deadlines.

To support good attendance our Attendance Champion will:
- ✓ Be available to talk through any concerns regarding attendance.
- ✓ Monitor and talk to parents where there are concerns regarding attendance.
- ✓ Inform parents, by writing, of attendance below 95%.

Equates to:

Attendance	Level	Days off	Actions
100%	PERFECTION		Celebration of 100% attendance certificate
98%	IMPRESSIVE	4 SCHOOL DAYS off each year	Celebration email home each term for those who have impressive attendance
96%	GOOD	7 SCHOOL DAYS off each year	Email home to congratulate and encourage to achieve good attendance
95%	NEARLY THERE	9 SCHOOL DAYS off each year	School monitoring to improve Communication home with concerns Recgonition when attendance improves
94%	NEEDS TO IMPROVE	11 SCHOOL DAYS off each year	Attendance Team to monitor Communication home of concerns At risk of persistant absence plan actioned
90%	CONCERNS (referred to Educational Welfare / Persistent absentee)	20 SCHOOL DAYS off each year	Attendance Team to monitor every day & inform DSL by 9:30am Medical evidence requested to authorise absence Parental contact to support improvements
85%	SERIOUS CONCERNS	30 SCHOOL DAYS off each year	Senior leadership monitoring Parental contact and home visits to help improve External agency referrals to help and remove barriers Attendance panel meeting to review targets

Recording attendance

Attendance register

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

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present

- Attending an approved off-site educational activity

- Absent

- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry

- The amended entry

- The reason for the amendment

- The date on which the amendment was made

The name and position of the person who made the amendment

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 pupil is attending an approved educational activity

- The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive at school by:

- Reception to Year 2 8.50am
- Year 2 to Year 6 8.55am

Registers will be closed 30 minutes after the session begins. Pupils who arrive after this will be marked as Late.

Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8.30am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school office staff.

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or another appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied with the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

However, we encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments outside of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence.

Lateness and Punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code
- The school will use the [U] code for arrivals after 30 minutes from the start of the session

Following up unexplained absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may ask the DSL, Attendance champion to follow up. In some cases a home visit will take place by a member of the Senior Leadership Team.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer from the Local Authority.

Reporting to parents

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels by:

- Encouraging parents to monitor their child's attendance via the Arbor app
- School will send out termly attendance letters to parents whose pupil's attendance is below 95% or has been persistently late.
- School will send out termly attendance letters to recognise improved attendance
- Attendance will be included in parent consultation meetings and school reports

Authorised and unauthorised absence

Approval for term-time absence

The Executive Headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as bereavement and/or redeployment of a service parent.

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

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 10 days before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the school website or from the school office. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for a leave of absence.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments.

- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart

- Exceptional family circumstances (e.g. bereavement)
- Approved sporting or musical activity/competition/examination
- Fixed term exclusion

The school acknowledges that most children will have some unavoidable absence because of illness. It is important that children are not sent to school when they are unwell. It is especially important in the event of a stomach upset that the child has at least 48 hours clear at home after the last episode of vomiting or diarrhoea.

Long-term standing medical conditions need to be reviewed and monitored with evidence (either a letter from a consultant doctor or photocopy of medical prescriptions) where appropriate.

Extended Leave

When a child is absent from school for an extended period (i.e 15 school days or more) parent/carer should advise the school of the temporary address

Legal sanctions

The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £80 within 21 days or £160 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by a Headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

· The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year

· One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission

· Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

The first penalty notice issued to a parent 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 in respect of the same pupil is charged at a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days.

• A third penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of issue of the first. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time (or subsequent times) within those 3 years, alternative action should be taken instead. This will often include considering prosecution, but may include other tools such as one of the other attendance legal interventions.

A penalty notice may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification during the first 5 days of a fixed period or permanent exclusion. These penalty notices are charged at £120, reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days

Persistent Absence

From September 2015, the DFE have increased the percentage of attendance for a child to be classed as a 'Persistent Absentee' from 85% to 90%. Schools have a legal obligation to notify the local authority of pupils whose attendance is below 90%. They are then classed as a 'Persistent Absentee'. If a pupil is missing school without good reason, schools and local authorities have several legal powers that they can use.

The DFE category for Persistent Absentees is as follows:

Classification of a Persistent Absentee at the end of each half term.	
Half Term 1 (Sept - October 1/2 term)	7 sessions missed from Sept –End HT1
Half Term 2 (November - Christmas Holiday)	14 sessions missed from Sept –End HT2
Half Term 3 (January - February 1/2 term)	20 sessions missed from Sept –End HT3
Half Term 4 (February - Easter Holiday)	25 sessions missed from Sept –End HT4
Half Term 5 (Easter - May 1/2 term)	31 sessions missed from Sept –End HT5
Half Term 6 (May - Summer Holidays)	38 sessions missed from Sept –End HT6 This is the figure reported for the year

Safeguarding

If a pupil is absent with no explanation or satisfactory contact from parents further enquires will be made promptly. In the event of the school being unable to locate a pupil, they will refer immediately to relevant external agencies. The school will proactively follow Children Missing in Education procedures to safeguard the wellbeing of all pupils.

Pupils who are missing in education (Children Missing in Education CME)

Where it is believed that a pupil has left the area and enquiries have failed to establish the whereabouts of the pupil, the Common Transfer File should be completed and uploaded to the DfE National Missing Pupils Database.

Changing Schools

It is important that if families decide to send their child/children in their care to a different school they should inform the Executive Headteacher in writing as soon as possible. A pupil will not be removed from the school roll until this information has been received in writing and investigated and the North Yorkshire in-year transfer form or equivalent has been completed by the parent and signed by the Executive Headteacher.

The pupil's school records will then be sent securely on to the new school as soon as possible. If a parent appears to have removed their child from school or the child has completely stopped attending without providing the above information, the family will be referred to the Local Authority, Children missing in Education, immediately.

The same will apply to families transferring into the school. The Executive Headteacher will contact the headteacher of the child/ren's current school as a matter of professional courtesy, before offers are made to any families.

Removal from the school roll

There are strict guidelines on the circumstances under which a pupil may be removed from the school roll. These are detailed in Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995 (as amended 1997) and the Schools Administration Handbook (section A2).

Removal from the school roll under circumstances other than those detailed below is illegal.

- Where a school has been notified that the pupil has been registered as a pupil at another school.
- Where a pupil has ceased to attend the school and the parent(s) have satisfied the Local Authority that the pupil is receiving education otherwise than by attendance at school.
- Where the school has been notified by the School Medical Officer that the pupil is unlikely to be in a fit state to attend school before becoming legally exempt from the obligation to attend school.
- Where the pupil has been absent without reasonable cause for four academic weeks and the headteacher of the school has failed, after reasonable enquiry and consultation with the Local Authority to obtain information on the cause of the absence.
- Where the headteacher has been notified that the pupil has died.
- Where a pupil in the nursery class has not transferred to a reception class at the school.
- If a pupil has not returned to school within ten school days of the agreed return date after a family holiday in term time.
- Where a pupil will cease to be of compulsory school age before the school next opens and has been notified an intention to discontinue attendance.
- Where the pupil has been permanently excluded.

Monitoring attendance

It is the responsibility of the Local Academy Council to monitor overall attendance, and they will request an annual report from the Executive Headteacher. The Local Academy Council also has responsibility for this policy, and for seeing that it is carried out. The governors will therefore examine closely the information provided to them and seek to ensure that our attendance figures are as high as they should be.

The schools will:
- Keep accurate attendance records on file for a minimum period of three years.
- Monitor attendance and absence data half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority levels through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing board.

Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families

- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers, and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families

- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

Support

The school will:

- Build relationships with students and families to encourage regular school attendance.

- Analyse and use data and relationship knowledge to prevent regular absence.

- Using resources (School-based and external services) to intervene early with support.

- Use targeted support for persistent/severe absences.

Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy

- Behaviour policy

Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following registration is effective from the 19th of August 2024 - 'Working Together To Improve School Attendance 2024'

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	The pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	The pupil is present at the afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	The pupil arrives late before the register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	The pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school

Code	Definition	Scenario
K	Off-site educational activity	The pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the local authority
D	Dual registered	The pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
P	Sporting activity	The pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	The pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	The pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	The pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
C1	Leave of absence	The pupil should be participating in a regulated performance or regulated employment abroad
C2	Leave of absence – Part-time timetable	For compulsory school-age pupils who are on an agreed part-time timetable
E	Suspended or permanently excluded	The pupil has been suspended or permanently excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	The school has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
J1	Leave of absence	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/ admission to another educational institution

M	Medical/dental appointment	The pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Parents travelling for occupational purposes	The pupil is a mobile child due to the parent travelling from place to place for business/trade
Q	Unable to attend due to lack of access arrangements	The pupil is unable to attend due to a lack of travel arrangements made by the local authority
Y1	Unable to attend due to lack of transport	Where the school or local authority normally provides transport which is not available; and the school is beyond reasonable walking distance
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel	The pupil is unable to attend school because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed	Part of the school premises is unavoidably out of use
Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school being unexpectedly closed	Where the whole school was planned to be open but remained closed unexpectedly
Y5	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention	If the pupil is in police detention or on remand to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law	Pupil travel to or attendance at the school would be contrary to restrictions set by the secretary of state for health
Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause	The unavoidable cause must be something that affects the pupil, not the parent
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	The pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school

Code	Definition	Scenario
N	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)
O	Unauthorised absence	The school is not satisfied with the reason for the pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	The pupil arrived late and after 30 minutes from the start of the session

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day