



Sebright and Daubeney Federation Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Our Schools are successful and your children play their part in making it so. We aim for an environment which enables and encourages all members of the community to reach out for excellence. For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and your child should be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

It is very important therefore that you make sure that your child attends regularly and this policy sets out how together we will achieve this.

Why Regular Attendance is so important:

Learning: Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil's absence disrupts teaching routines and may affect the learning of others in the same class. Ensuring your child regularly attends school is your legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

Safeguarding: Your child may be at risk of harm if they do not attend school regularly. Safeguarding the interests of each child is everyone's responsibility and within the context of a school, promoting the welfare and life opportunities for your child encompasses:

Attendance
Behaviour Management
Health and Safety
Access to the Curriculum
Anti-bullying

Failing to attend school on a regular basis will be considered a safeguarding matter.

Promoting Regular Attendance:

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility - parents, pupils and all members of school staff.

Our Aims:

- To ensure that every child is safeguarded and their right to education is protected.
- To ensure the school attendance target is achieved, through rewards and incentives for good attendance and punctuality.
- To raise standards and ensure every child develops and achieves, through a high level of school attendance and punctuality.
- To ensure all the stakeholders, governors, parents, pupils and staff receive regular communication, about the importance of good attendance and punctuality.
- To keep accurate, up-to-date records and have a robust and rigorous system for analysing attendance.
- To identify causes of low attendance/punctuality with individuals, classes and groups of pupils and address them.
- To work with external agencies, in order to address barriers to attendance and overcome them.

Rights and responsibilities for attendance/punctuality:

Legal obligations:

- The parent(s) to secure education for their children, whether at school or otherwise, to send them to school regularly once they are on the register.
- The School to register attendance and notify the Local Authority of absence from school.
- The Local Authority to provide education and to enforce attendance.

Understanding types of absence:

Every half-day absence from school has to be recorded and classified (not by the parents), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required, preferably in writing.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This type of absence can lead to Hackney Learning Trust using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. This includes:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- truancy before or during the school day
- absences which have never been properly explained
- children who arrive at school too late to get a mark
- shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed.

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If your child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and usually make things worse.

Persistent Absenteeism (PA):

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parents' full support and co-operation to tackle this.

We monitor all absence thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and you will be informed of this immediately.

PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully through our pastoral system and we also combine this with academic mentoring where absence affects attainment.

All our PA pupils and their parents are subject to an Action Plan and the plan may include: allocation of additional support through a mentor, use of circle time, individual incentive programmes and participation in group activities around raising attendance. All PA cases are also automatically made known to the Hackney Learning Trust School Attendance Officer.

Absence Procedures:

If your child is absent you must:

- Contact us as soon as possible on the first day of absence;
- Send a note in to school on the first day the child returns, with an explanation of the absence. You must do this, even if you have already telephoned us;
- Or, you can call into school and report to reception, who will arrange for a member of staff to speak with you.

If your child is absent we will:

- Telephone or text you on the first day of absence, if we have not heard from you;

- Invite you in to discuss the situation with our Attendance Officer and/or Pastoral care manager, Head of School if absences persist;
- Refer the matter to the Hackney Learning Trust Education Attendance Officer if attendance moves below 85%.

Telephone numbers:

There are times when we need to contact parents about lots of things, including absence, so we need to have your contact numbers at all times. So help us to help you and your child by making sure we always have an up to date number - if we don't then something important may be missed. There will be regular checks on telephone numbers throughout the year.

The School Attendance Officer:

Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school may refer the child to the School Attendance Officer from Hackney Learning Trust. He/she will also try to resolve the situation by agreement but, if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed and unauthorized absences persist, these Officers can use sanctions such as Penalty Notices or prosecutions in the Magistrates Court. Full details of the options open to enforce attendance at school are available from the school or Hackney Learning Trust.

Alternatively, parents or children may wish to contact the SAO themselves to ask for help or information. They are independent of the school and will give impartial advice. Their telephone number is available from the school office or by contacting Hackney Learning Trust on 02088207000

Lateness:

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If your child misses the start of the day they can miss work and do not spend time with their class teacher getting vital information and news for the day. Late arriving pupils also disrupt lessons, can be embarrassing for the child and can also encourage absence.

How we manage lateness:

Study Start

We encourage children to arrive from 8.45am to take advantage of Study Start. They are expected to walk sensibly to their classrooms once the bell has been rung. A member of our support staff will be ready for children in every classroom from 8.45 until the class teachers arrives at 8.50am.

Study start sessions consist of short engaging activities which consolidate prior learning or develop thinking skills. These help children to settle and prepare for their day's learning.

Registers are marked by **9.05am** and your child will receive a late mark if they are not in by that time.

At **9.30am** the registers will be closed. In accordance with the Regulations, if your child arrives after that time they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site, but this will **not** count as a present mark and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence. This may mean that you could face the possibility of a Penalty Notice if the problem persists.

If your child has a persistent late record you will be asked to meet with the Pastoral Care manager and/or Attendance Officer to resolve the problem, but you can approach us at any time if you are having problems getting your child to school on time.

Flexi Schooling:

Flexi Schooling is not available at our school.

People responsible for attendance matters in school are:

Head of School

- To be responsible for the overall management and implementation of the policy.
- To deal with parental requests for extended leave in line with Hackney Local Authority policies and procedures.
- To consider the use of Penalty Notices, in line with Hackney Authority policies and procedures.

Pastoral Care Manager:

- To lead on/take responsibility for attendance/punctuality, on a day-to-day basis, including liaising with/responding to parental enquires.
- To oversee the analysis of weekly/termly/yearly data and respond to findings.
- To meet with the School Attendance mentor to monitor the systems and structures, ensuring they are having an impact on pupil attendance and punctuality.
- To liaise with external agencies such as the Education Welfare Officer and make referrals where necessary.
- To ensure that rewards and incentives for attendance and punctuality are being used.
- Work with the teachers, to plan for the reintegration of pupils after long-term absence.
- To revise and amend the policy, as required.

Learning Mentor – ATTENDANCE

- To carry out and record the outcome of first day calls, when a child doesn't arrive at school when no reason has been received.
- To monitor weekly attendance data for year groups.
- To check the school answer phone and take messages from parents/carers about pupil absence.
- To promptly inform the DHT, if there are any concerns relating to attendance/punctuality.
- To produce weekly/termly/yearly data for HT/SMT/SLT to analyse.
- To record reasons for absence and update class registers.
- To implement the daily checking of e-Portal registers after the morning and afternoon registration sessions.
- To contact parents/carers by letter, following 3 instances of lateness or absence.
- To maintain School attendance records in line with this policy.
- To liaise with and report to outside agencies such as the Education Welfare Service.
- To report to the Local Authority, as requested.
- To maintain clear communication with the SLT regarding attendance and punctuality for each year group.
- To oversee the admission and induction of new pupils.
- To support the Pastoral Care manager with the promotion of good attendance and punctuality, through finding/organising incentives.
- To ensure staff are following the registration systems and structures in this policy.
- Inform parents of school procedures, when parents have failed to inform the school.

Staff:

- To ensure quality first teaching every day; with lessons that are well planned and resourced so that they challenge, inspire and meet their learners' needs.
- To complete the daily class attendance and punctuality chart, with the pupils'.
- To keep accurate and up-to-date daily records of pupil attendance through the SIMS register system.
- Take a formal register of all pupils twice a day. This is done on the school's SIMS system at 9.00 am and 2.00 pm.
- To regularly remind children and parents about the importance of good attendance.
- To follow up on pupil absence by ensuring reasons for absence are sought.

- Provide a welcoming and safe environment, which encourages attendance and promotes the best performance from children.
- Establish good and effective communication links with parents/carers and work collaboratively in meeting the child's needs.
- If required, to work collaboratively with other agencies to assist them in fulfilling their statutory duties, regarding for example, child protection
- Work with pupils and their families where attendance is a concern, identifying barriers to good attendance and working to overcome these.
- To promptly inform the Pastoral care manager, of pupils who persist with poor attendance
- To feed back to parents about pupil attendance and punctuality regularly and at Parents Evenings.

Parents:

Children should only be kept at home, if they have a serious illness or injury. If this is the case, parents should contact the school first thing. If a child has a minor illness e.g. mild headache, stomach-aches etc. parents should inform the school and bring them in. If they don't get any better, school will contact parents straight away, to collect them. If pupils' have a dental, clinic or hospital appointment, parents should let the school know. Pupils' should be brought back to school after appointments. Pupils should miss as little time as possible.

Therefore, parents are expected to:

- Ensure their child attends school and arrives on time every day.
- Promote a good attitude to learning by ensuring their children attend school in the correct uniform and with the basic equipment required for lessons.
- Not arrange medical and dental appointments in school time wherever possible.
- Telephone to inform the school to on the first day of absence for their child.
- Provide a written explanation of absence, including dates of absence as soon as their child returns to school.
- Work in partnership with the school and other agencies in the best interests of their child; this includes informing the school about significant influences and changes in the child's life, which may impact on learning.

The Local Authority, through the Educational Welfare Service, is expected to:

- Support the school in improving attendance, through whole school initiatives and individual pupil interventions.
- Work with families and other agencies to remove barriers to good attendance.
- Ensure that parents are informed of their responsibilities in relation to attendance.
- Uphold and enforce the law in respect of attendance, child employment, and involvement in entertainment and child protection.

Strategies for promoting/rewarding excellent attendance:

Aims:

- To ensure good attendance and punctuality (above 97%) is regularly promoted and supported and remains high profile across school.
- To achieve high levels of attendance and punctuality (above 97%) through rewarding good attendance and punctuality.

Weekly Celebration Assemblies

Celebration Assemblies are held every week. Classes with the highest attendance/punctuality receive Attendance Certificate/Punctuality Certificate.

Monthly School Newsletter

Each month, the school newsletter is used to highlight the importance of good attendance and punctuality. It regularly includes sections reminding parents of our school attendance target and what that means in terms of number of days absent. It also includes information about any initiatives, which the school is using, to promote attendance and punctuality.

School Attendance Board

The boards include attendance information and information about the classes with the highest attendance and punctuality. Details of how parents can support the school by improving their child's attendance and punctuality, is also included.

Breakfast Club

Daily Breakfast Club is available. This supports parents by allowing them to drop their children off from 8.00 am, ensuring they are on time for school. The club is supervised by three members of staff.

The School Learning Environment

A welcoming, organised learning environment that supports and celebrates its learners is a key factor in ensuring children enjoy school and attend regularly. All staff ensure that their learning environments are of a high quality. Regular, rigorous environmental audits are carried out by the SLT, to ensure this.

Staff Promoting Good Attendance

It is important that teachers are regularly promoting good attendance with their classes. Good class attendance is attributed to good teaching and this is celebrated.

End of Term Attendance Rewards

At the end of each term there is a special reward for children who have achieved attendance at 100%. The Pastoral Care manager (PMC) and the School Attendance Mentor organise and lead on the end of term attendance incentives. Attendance Certificate Children with 97%+ attendance, receive a special attendance certificate, signed by the Head Teacher to take home and keep. Certificates are presented each half term, to reward those who achieve excellent attendance. Only pupils achieving 100% attendance and 6 lates or less for the whole school year, are eligible for the end of year reward. Attendance letters are sent to Parent with 97%+ attendance.

Sharing attendance data

Pupils are informed on a weekly basis of attendance/punctuality achievements. The class achieving the highest attendance/punctuality and the number of pupils achieving 97% - 100% attendance are shared in termly assemblies. This develops healthy competition between year groups to improve attendance. It also engages the form teacher in conversation with their classes about attendance.

Parent/teacher consultation evenings

This provides an opportunity for form teachers to praise and recognise excellent attendance or share attendance concerns and discuss barriers to good attendance. Where necessary a target for improving attendance is set. The class teacher then monitors this. If there is no improvement in attendance/punctuality, the pupil is referred to the Pastoral Care manager.

Monitoring and Recording Attendance & Punctuality

Class Registers

Class registers are recorded using SIMS. The system ensures that no children are missed and that pupil information can be shared quickly and securely. Registers are the only way of recording pupil attendance and must be completed accurately. This is the responsibility of whichever member of staff has been directed to take the register for that session. Registers can be re-submitted in the case of a mistake or a pupil arriving after submission, but registers must be accurate and submitted at key times (see below).

Morning Register

Class registers remain open until 9:05am. At that point, the teacher may submit their final register and close down SIMS. The teacher may submit the register as many times as they wish before 9.00 am (e.g. if a mistake has been made or a child has arrived slightly late) but at 9.05 am the register must be correct and submitted. From 9.00 am the school playground gates are closed. A Learning Mentor is outside the main office reception to meet children arriving late. The children's names and classes are recorded in the 'Children Arriving Late' folder.

This is to ensure that no children are missed on the register due to arriving in school late. The Learning Mentor remains in the main entrance dealing with late arrivals until 9:30am, at which point the receptionist takes over. Children arriving after 9:30am are recorded as 'L' (late after register closed) in the register. The School Administrator officer then checks that the children who have arrived late have been marked 'P' (present) in the registers and corrects any mistakes or inputs codes for children who are known to be absent. The administrator then begins first day absence calls.

Afternoon Register

Registers must be submitted by teaching staff straight after lunch before afternoon lessons commence.

School Attendance Letters

The school sends out letters, to communicate with parents about attendance and punctuality.

Punctuality Folder

The Attendance Mentor and the Pastoral Care Manager monitor the punctuality folder regularly. This may involve speaking to parents directly, or via a phone call. Letters regarding the school's concern over lateness may also be sent; explain how much learning pupils are missing. If it does not improve, parents are invited in to school, to discuss the concerns with the DHT and plan a way forward. If lateness does not improve following the meeting, then the family will be referred to the Attendance Officer who will contact parents warning them that further action may be taken.

IMPORTANT: Child Protection and safeguarding concerns must be acted on immediately, in line with the school Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Monitoring First Day Absence

If a child is absent from school and the school has not received a phone call or other message from the parent/carer, a first day absence call will be made. The Attendance Mentor follows this system:

- Phone parents' contact number(s).
- Repeat this during the first morning of absence if no response.
- Phone emergency contact number(s) to get an up-to-date contact number for the parent/carer and update the school system accordingly.
- Attendance Mentor or Pastoral Care manager to speak to the parents at home time, if they are at school to pick up other children.
- Speak to the parents face-to-face or by phone the next day and establish reasons for absence and update contact numbers.

The parent/carer is asked to provide a reason as to why the child is not in school. The absence reason is recorded next to the child's name on the first day absence sheet and this is filed in the absence folder. The Attendance mentor must establish a reason for every absence. No absence should be left on the system as an 'N' (no reason given) code. If the Attendance Mentor has not been able to contact parents after 2 days then the absence is recorded as 'O' (unauthorised).

Attendance Meetings

The PCM and AM monitor individuals, classes, year groups, different ethnic groups, SEN and FSM pupils. They identify patterns and trends in absence/punctuality, including persistent absence. The systems and structures are then followed, to improve attendance for these individuals or groups. Letters are sent out to parents whose children's attendance is below 95% and parents who are concerned about their child's attendance, are invited to work in partnership with the school. (See attendance record sheet)

Summary of procedures

The following table show specific procedures to maintain and encourage excellent attendance in our schools:

<u>Daily Procedure</u>	<u>By whom</u>	<u>Outcome/action</u>
Parents ensure pupils arrive at school on time	Parents/carers	Children's attendance 97% or better
Parents inform the school by 8:45am, if their child is absent that day.	Parents/carers	Office/support staff update registration
Pupils arriving late to school are registered at the reception by a Mentor	LM in charge of late registration	Absence mark on SIMS amended to a late mark by Attendance Mentor.
Teachers record attendance using SIMS. This is done at 9am and 2pm. Teachers discuss attendance or lateness concerns with parent/carer.	Teacher/Support staff	Staffs use a paper register, if required.
1 st day absence phone calls are made to inform parents of their child's unexplained absence for that day. Pastoral Care manager informed of attendance/punctuality issues – parents contacted, if required.	Attendance mentor Pastoral care manager	Attendance mentor updates attendance codes.
Parents provide written notes, including dates of and reason of absence upon the child's return to school.	Parent	Attendance mentor collects at reception/teachers collect these and files.
<u>Weekly procedure</u>	<u>By whom</u>	<u>Outcome/action</u>
Attendance/punctuality statistics produced by Year group and school.	Attendance mentor	Entered into attendance overview spreadsheet to allow for monitoring and analysis
Attendance and punctuality statistics produced and shared in celebration assembly, displayed in school attendance boards.	Attendance mentor	Parents are able to see which class(es) have been successful with their attendance and punctuality.
Absence codes for individual pupils are updated using SIMS to show reason for absence.	Attendance mentor	Information provided here is used to provide targeted intervention as appropriate.
<u>Half termly and termly procedures</u>	<u>By whom</u>	<u>Outcome/action</u>
Analyse attendance/punctuality data to monitor trends and progress during Inclusion meetings.	Attendance mentor Pastoral care manager Inclusion Team	
Assemblies to promote attendance/punctuality and share term's data and progress	Attendance mentor Teachers	
Discussion is required in response to specific attendance/punctuality concerns of a particular cohort of pupils.	Designated Safe guarding Lead, Pastoral care manager and Head of School.	
Individual attendance/punctuality discussed with pupils and families, at parents evenings.	Pastoral care manager	Mentoring and advise on attendance/punctuality issues provided to all families.
Analyse attendance/punctuality data and information to identify cases of concern and develop appropriate interventions	Pastoral care manager	Targeted intervention for individual concerns.

Meeting to discuss individual cases, monitor progress and refer new concerns. Support and meeting provided for pupils and families.	Head of School and Pastoral care manager	
Review success and impact of attendance/punctuality strategies for the term.	Head of school and Pastoral care manager Attendance Mentor	Amend and refine interventions as appropriate
Teachers to discuss attendance or punctuality concerns during parents/teacher progress meetings.	Teachers	

Extended Holidays

Taking holidays in term time will affect your child's schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents to help us by not taking children away in school time.

Remember that any savings you think you may make by taking a holiday in school time are offset by the cost to your child's education.

There is **no** automatic entitlement in law to time off in school time to go on holiday, leave for pupils during term time is not authorised under any circumstance. The school recognises that taking children out of school may constitute a safeguarding risk and will make necessary enquiries, in order to be satisfied that the child is not at risk. The school may contact outside agencies in order to ensure that a visit is legitimate and safe for child/children.

Only the Executive Head may grant leave in term time where the circumstances are exceptional, for example:

- death of parent/carer or sibling of the pupil
- life threatening or critical illness of parent or sibling of the pupil
- parent/carer recuperation and convalescence from critical illness or surgery (leave request to be made within 6 months of recovery and medical evidence required)

Family emergencies need careful consideration. It is not always in the best interest of the child, nor appropriate for them to miss school for family emergencies that are being dealt with by adult family members. Being at school, friendships and support from staff can provide children with stability and care during difficult times. The routine of school can provide a safe and familiar background during times of uncertainty.

If you have exceptional circumstances, which have lead you to request leave in term time for your child/children, please complete the required form, which you can obtain from the school office. The Executive Head Teacher will then make a decision, on whether or not the leave can be lawfully authorised and will do so only if there is a genuine, exceptional and urgent reason for a child to be absent during term time.

Penalty Notices

If a child is taken out of school without the Executive Head teacher's authorisation, it will be recorded as unauthorised absence. This may lead to the issuing of a penalty notice and legal action being taken.

Section 23(1) Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2007:

Penalty notices may be issued to the parent of pupils who have unauthorised absence from school. The amount of the penalty is £60.

- If this is not paid within 21 days the amount rises to £120.
- If not paid within 28 days the Local Authority will prosecute under section 444(1) unless it comes to our attention that the penalty notice had been issued in error.

Section 444(1) Education Act 1996:

"If you are the parent of a child of compulsory school age who fails to attend school regularly, you are guilty of an offence." The court can fine each parent up to £1,000 per child, order payment of the prosecution costs and/or make a Parenting Order.

Please note that:

- penalties and prosecutions are in respect of each parent for each child.

- Parent' includes any person who is not a parent of the child but who has parental responsibility for the child (and applies whether or not that person lives with the child) or who has care of him/her.

_____ Signed: (Chair of the Governing Body) _____

Date of Policy

I have read and understood the terms and conditions of the attendance policy at School A.

Signed:

Child's Name:

Form:

ABSENCE RECORD SHEET

ABSENCE RECORD SHEET

No.	Child	Class	Broken Weeks	Date Sent Letter 1 Under 95%	Date Sent Letter 2 Under 95% SAM Invite	SAM Meeting	Date of SAM Review Invite	Date of SAM Review Meeting	Outcome: Closed Monitor Ongoing	Date of PA SAO Meeting	Outcome: Monitor PNW	Date of PA SAO Review Meeting	Outcome: Closed PNW FINE CSM	Date of PA SAO Review Meeting	Outcome: Closed FINE CSM	NOTES
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SAM (School Attendance Meeting) - Attendees: Parent/Carer, Pastoral Care Manager, Teacher, Deputy Head. Parent contract to be put in place. School to outline assistance/support it can provide.
 SAM Review - Attendees: Parent/Carer, Pastoral Care Manager, Teacher, Deputy Head. If on track case closed but monitored. If off track outside agency support to be considered, referrals made before attendance hits PA level.