



Huntley C of E Primary School

Attendance Policy

September 2024

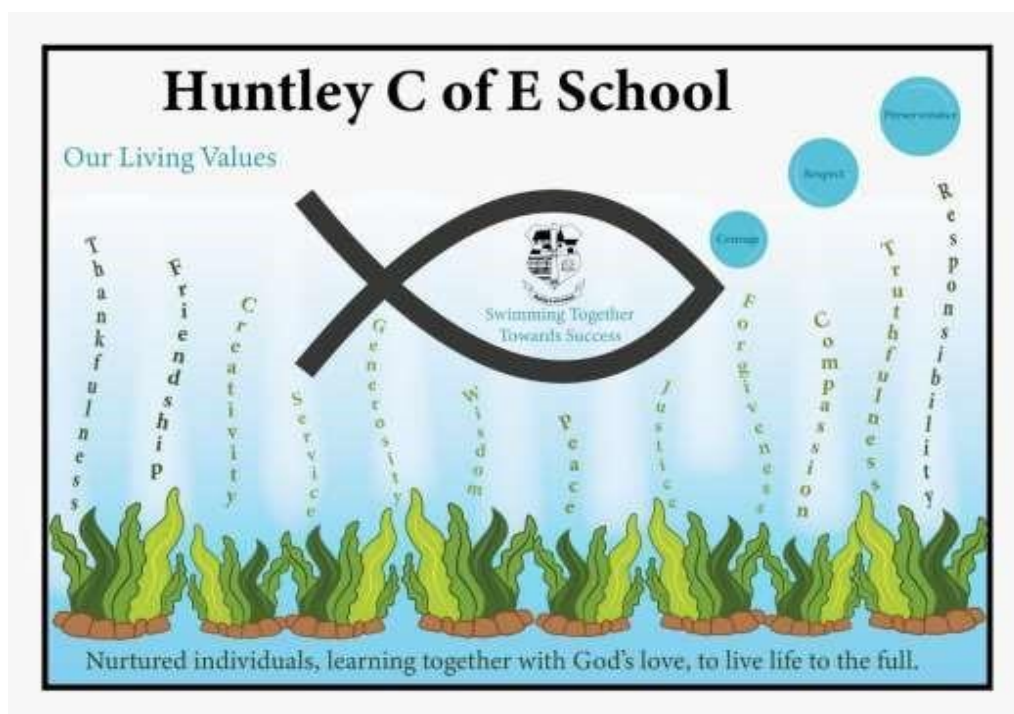
To be read in conjunction with:

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Children Missing for Education Guidance

Gloucestershire County Council Guidance

<https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/schoolsnet/yourpupils/attendance/>



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Document Reviews and Amendments

Amendment Date	Change to Document	Date of Approval
April 2022	Updated following attendance meeting re penalty notices	05/05/22 FGB
January 2023	Scheduled annual review	FGB meeting Jan 2023
November 2023	Scheduled annual review a brought forward following updates	
January 2024	Amendments made following attendance meeting – sent policy to LA to ensure compliance. Recommendations actioned	FGB 01/02/24
September 2024	Updates FPN guidance	

ATTENDANCE POLICY

At Huntley C of E Primary School, we believe that pupils need to attend school regularly to benefit from their education and achieve their potential. We expect children to attend every session of every day when the school is open to them. This attendance policy sets out what is expected so that this may be achieved.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Parents/carers should:

- Make sure their child attends school regularly and on time, appropriately dressed and equipped and in a fit state to learn.
- Let the school know if they are having difficulty with attendance so that any available help or support can be offered.
- Let the school know, on the first day of absence, why their child is absent and when they are expected to return, by either logging the absence on Parentmail, by emailing admin@huntley.gloucs.sch.uk or by telephoning the school **before 9:00 a.m.** This needs to be done each day your child is not in school.
- Seek permission from school prior to any absence that is not medical.
- Not take their child on holiday during term-time. A penalty notice will be issued to parents if children are absent for ten sessions (5 full days) within a 10 week period through unauthorised absence.
- Notify school if they intend to remove their child permanently from the school for any reason.
- Provide hospital letters/ appointment confirmations for any medical appointments scheduled within school time. (This does not apply to standard doctors or dentist appointments, however where possible these should be booked outside the school day)

School will:

- Make suitable arrangements for the safe, daily reception of children.
- Be consistent in their attendance practices.
- Keep and mark registers accurately.
- Follow up any unexplained absences.
- Notify parents/carers, at parent evenings and through reports, of their child's attendance level.
- Notify the Local Authority (LA) of pupils who have poor attendance, leave school to be educated at home, go missing or are excluded.
- Notify the LA and/or the Department for Education of absence figures for the school and, where necessary, individual pupils.
- The School Attendance Champion is Mrs Ella Curtis

The Head teacher and School Attendance Champion will:

- Ensure that everybody at school treats attendance as a priority

- Promote the importance of good attendance to pupils and their parents/carers.
- Be available to discuss attendance concerns with pupils, parents, staff and governors.
- Remind parents at least annually of attendance procedures.
- Analyse attendance data on a termly basis.
- Oversee attendance procedures.

Governors will:

- With the Head teacher, monitor, evaluate and review the attendance procedures regularly
- Report on attendance statistics when required.

SCHOOL TIMES

Children need to be in their classrooms by 8:45 a.m. in time for the start of morning registration. School finishes at 3:15 p.m.

Children should be collected promptly unless they are attending an after-school activity. Please inform the school office as soon as possible if you are going to be late collecting your child for any reason or if there is a change in your child's usual routine. If a child has not been collected by 3.25 pm school will make a phone call to ascertain who is collecting and where they are. If a child has not been collected by 3.30 pm they will be placed in afterschool club which will incur charges to the parent/ guardian.

If it is outside of normal school's office hours and you going to be late picking up from an after- school club, please phone the office. If there is no response please leave a message and email admin@huntley.gloucs.sch.uk. A member of staff will always be onsite while clubs are running and message / emails will be monitored.

REGISTRATION

School must keep attendance registers for all pupils on the school roll. The class teacher will call the register twice a day and every pupil will be marked as present, absent or engaged in an approved educational activity away from the school site. It must be shown, by the use of approved codes, whether an absence is authorised or not.

For years 2, 3, 4, 5 & 6: Registration will take place between 8:40 a.m. and 8:45 a.m. for the morning session. Pupils arriving after 8.45 a.m. will be marked late, a parent/ guardian will need to bring pupils arriving after 8.45 a.m. to the main door at Reception and sign in the late book. Classroom doors will be open at 8.40 a.m. and will be closed at 8.45 a.m. when the register will be taken.

Reception & Year 1: Can be dropped off in the playground from 8.40 a.m., a member of staff in the playground will bring the children into school at 8.45 a.m. for registration. As with all other year groups, if arriving after 8.45 a.m. and if there is no one in the playground, children will need to be brought into school via the main reception where a parent/ guardian will need to sign the late book.

For all pupils:

Pupils arriving after 8.45 a.m. will be marked late, a parent/ guardian will need to bring pupils to the main door at Reception and sign in the late book.

Registers will be marked again during afternoon sessions.

The marking of registers will be in accordance with instruction set out at the front of the register.

Absence, legally, has to be recorded either as authorised or unauthorised and reported on to the DfE and in some circumstances to the LA. Only the school can decide whether an absence is authorised or not and does not have to accept the reasons given by a parent or carer.

AUTHORISED ABSENCE

Is when a pupil:

- Is, in exceptional circumstances, absent with the prior permission of the school;
- Is too unwell to attend school
- Is attending a medical or dental appointment that could not be arranged outside school time and where pre-arranged an official written confirmation of the appointment date/time has been provided to school;
- Is away for a day set aside by their parent's religion for religious observance;
- Has suffered a family bereavement;
- Has been excluded.

UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

Is when:

- A pupil is absent and no explanation or an unacceptable explanation is offered;
- A pupil is away from school on a family holiday for a period not previously authorised by the Head teacher.

An approved educational activity is not recorded as an absence and will be marked when a pupil is on a school/educational visit, is attending an approved off-site activity or is receiving special off-site tuition arranged by school.

HOLIDAYS IN TERM TIME

At Huntley C of E Primary School, we believe that annual family holidays **should not** be taken in term time. If this is not possible and parents/carers still wish to apply for permission from the Head teacher a holiday form should be completed by the parent/carers, well in advance of the proposed dates. Holiday forms are available from the school office and can be found in Appendix One of this policy. The Head teacher will consider the request carefully and consider letters from employers stating whether parents/carers are restricted in terms of leave from their employment before notifying parents/carers whether they are able to authorise the absence or not. However, permission can only be given in exceptional circumstances.

FIXED PENALTY NOTICE

From September 2024 parent fines for unauthorised absences were brought under a national framework to help tackle inconsistencies in their use. A fixed penalty notice will be issued from the Local Authority to **both** parents if a child is absent for a period of ten sessions (5 days) within a ten week period due to holidays taken in term time. These sessions do not have to be on consecutive days and can be within any 10 week period.

If issued with a fine or penalty notice **each parent must pay £80 (per child)** if paid within 21 days, rising to £160 thereafter. If not paid within 28 days the Local Authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice - note there is no right of appeal in court by parents against a fixed penalty notice.

In Education Law (Section 576 of the Education Act 1996) 'parent' means:

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not
- Any person who has parental responsibility
- Any person who has care of a child or pupil i.e. lives with and looks after the child

Fixed penalty notices are issued in accordance with the Local Authority Penalty Notice Code of Conduct [Attendance - Schoolsnet \(gloucestershire.gov.uk\)](https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/attendance-schoolsnet)

APPOINTMENTS

If appointments have to be made during school hours, school should be pre-notified and where possible an official letter confirming the date and time of the appointment should be provided to school. Parents collecting pupils from school mid-session should, for safety reasons, collect & drop off via the office on departure and re-arrival. If present at registration no amendment to the register is necessary. If absent at registration the register should be marked with an authorised absence mark.

FREQUENT ABSENCES FOR MEDICAL REASONS

When a pupil frequently misses school for medical reasons, medical services may be consulted and appointment cards will need to be provided for every occasion. Where necessary a referral will be made so that an evaluation of the pupil's health and educational needs can be made. The child's GP will be contacted.

LONGER ABSENCES

Pupils who have been absent for a long period of time will be positively welcomed back and will be helped to catch up with missed work. Friendship groups will be monitored for a period to ensure that the pupil is happily settled back into school life. Individual attendance plans will be put in place to help pupils return to normal school life, there are a variety of ways this can be facilitated. (if necessary a phased return may be put in place, medicines can be administered by school staff with parent/ guardian permission, quiet space/ activities for playtimes and PE.)

SCHOOL PROCEDURES

Where the register shows an unexplained absence and there has been no message received at school by 9:00 a.m. contact will be made with the parent/carer to find out the reason for absence and the date of expected return. All telephone messages will be dated and recorded in the absence record.

If school have been unable to make contact by Parentmail/email by 9:30, a phone call will be made as well. If no contact has been made with school after 1 day a home visit will be carried out followed by a police welfare visit.

- Where the register shows 5 separate late after registration marks over a school term, school will contact parents in writing.
- Where the register shows 10 separate late after registration marks over a 10 week period the LA may issue a fixed penalty notice.
- If a child arrives late at school they must enter school via the office (classroom doors will be closed at 8.45 a.m. and children will not be given access) and the parent/carer will be requested to fill in and sign an entry in the 'late book'.

THE LAW

The law says that:

- Parents of children of compulsory school age are required to ensure that their children receive suitable full time education;
- The LA must ensure that parents fulfil their legal obligations regarding their children's education;
- Maintained schools must allow the LA to inspect their registers;
- Schools must report to the LA, pupils who fail to attend regularly. Gloucestershire's Penalty Notice protocol allows schools to notify the LA of any pupil having more than 5 days (10 sessions) of unauthorised absence in a ten week period, particularly when this absence is on account of:
 - Lateness after registration
 - Term time holidays without permission

In these instances, the LA will consider issuing a fixed penalty notice of £60 per parent after a warning has been issued by the school.

Unauthorised absence may lead to the LA taking full court action if attendance issues cannot be resolved.

Formal meetings (Attendance Improvement Meetings) will be held with parents whose children's poor attendance may lead to legal proceedings and Attendance Plans will be drawn up.

REDUCING PERSISTENT AND SEVERE ABSENCE

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school within any term. (September to December, January – April (Easter) and April-July.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance
- Formalise support or use legal sanctions, in conjunction with Gloucestershire County Council, for example through using a parenting contract, engagement with social services, Education Supervision Order or consideration of attendance prosecution in the Magistrates Court
- Letters will be sent out to parents/carers to keep them informed of any concerns with their child's attendance.

STRATEGIES

To support our attendance policy we:

- Will treat attendance as a priority;
- Promote good attendance at every opportunity – at Parents' evenings, at parent meetings, in newsletters, in collective worship, and through implementing this policy;
- Always use first day contact;
- Set attendance targets for the school (and for each year group if necessary);
- Keep parents/carers informed of their child's attendance level on a termly basis;
- Make good use of attendance data by specific analysis;
- Notify Governors at each full governing body of attendance levels;
- Provide a safe, happy, stimulating environment for children where they feel valued and welcomed and that their presence in school is important.

SUCCESS CRITERIA

- We are meeting or exceeding our attendance targets.
- Our attendance is in line with, or exceeds that, of local comparator schools.
- We have positive feedback from outside agencies such as Ofsted, LA, etc.
- Everybody is clear about what to do if a child is absent from school.

Huntley C of E Primary School TERM TIME ABSENCE REQUEST FORM

Please remember - Absence from school can seriously disrupt your child's continuity of learning. Not only do they miss the teaching provided on the days they are away; they are also less prepared for lessons upon their return. As a consequence of this, there is a risk of underachievement, which together we must seek to avoid.

I would like to take my child (ren).....

out of school from.....to.....returning to school on.....

The reason this must be in term time is because (please give as much detail as possible, including copies of work schedules etc).

.....
.....
.....

I understand that if my/our request for leave from school is granted, it will count as an authorised absence and will be included in my/our child's attendance figure. This will only be granted in **exceptional circumstances**.

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- Any person who has parental responsibility
- Any person who has care of a child or pupil i.e. lives with and looks after the child

Signed:..... Print name:.....

Relationship to child:..... Date:.....

Child(ren)'s name(s):.....

This absence from..... to will be recorded as authorised / unauthorised.

If unauthorised the reason is:.....

.....

Signed:..... (Headteacher) Dated:.....

