



Policy Name	Attendance
Date Created	October 2021
Date Reviewed	January 2024
Review Date Due	January 2025
Policy Creator	Peter Kirby-Bowstead

Imagine... Believe... Achieve

Rationale

Regular and punctual school attendance is important. Pupils need to attend school regularly if they are to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. Children who are persistently late or absent may develop large gaps in their learning which will impact on their progress and their ability to meet age-related expectations.

Heathfield Primary School fully recognises its responsibilities in ensuring that pupils attend school and are punctual, therefore allowing pupils to access learning for the maximum number of days and hours. This policy applies to all children registered at this school and it is accessible to parents/carers on the school website. This policy has been written to adhere to the relevant Education Acts, Regulations and Guidance from the Department for Education in addition to guidance from the Local Authority:

- The Education Act 1996
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2011
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016
- Securing Good Attendance and Tackling Persistent Absence (DfE 2022)
- Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance (DfE 2022)

Although parents/carers have the legal responsibility for ensuring their child's good attendance, the Headteacher, Senior Leadership Team and Governors at this school work together with other professionals and agencies to ensure that all pupils are encouraged and supported to develop good attendance habits. Procedures in this policy are followed to ensure this happens

Procedure Aims and Objectives

This attendance policy ensures that all staff and governors in this school are fully aware of and clear about the actions necessary to promote good attendance. Key aims and objectives are:

- Improve pupils' achievement by ensuring high levels of attendance and punctuality.
- Achieve a minimum of 97% attendance for all pupils, excluding children who have, for example, significant health issues, are from a traveller family or who have left school within the academic year.
- Create an ethos in which good attendance and punctuality are recognised as the norm and seen to be valued by the school.
- Raise the awareness of parents, carers and pupils of the importance of uninterrupted attendance and punctuality, at every stage of a child's education.
- Ensure that our policy applies to Early Years children in order to promote good habits at an early age.
- Work in partnership with pupils, parents/carers, staff and the Education Welfare Service so that all pupils realise their potential, unhindered by unnecessary absence.
- Promote a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which pupils feel safe, secure, and valued, and encourage in pupils a sense of their own responsibility.
- Establish a pattern of monitoring attendance and ensure consistency in recognising achievement and dealing with difficulties.
- Recognise the key role of all staff – but especially class teachers – in promoting good attendance.

The school maintains and promotes good attendance and punctuality by:

- Raising awareness of attendance and punctuality issues among all staff, parents and pupils.
- Ensuring that parents/carers have an understanding of the responsibility placed on them for making sure their child attends regularly and punctually.
- Equipping children with the life skills needed to take responsibility for good school attendance and punctuality, appropriate to the child's age and development.
- Maintaining effective means of communication with parents/carers, pupils, staff and governors on school attendance matters.
- Developing and implementing procedures for identifying, reporting and reviewing cases of poor attendance and persistent lateness (Heathfield Attendance Strategy).
- Supporting pupils who have been experiencing any difficulties at home or at school which are preventing good attendance.
- Developing and implementing procedures to follow up non-attendance at school.

Heathfield Attendance Strategy

The attendance strategy below outlines the actions in supporting pupils' attendance at Heathfield Primary School.

At the beginning of the school day...

The school doors are opened at 8.45am for children to make their way into their classrooms. Doors are closed at 8.55am, at which point children must enter school through the main entrance. Registers close at 9.00am; any child arriving after this time is marked as late (L) – the number of minutes late, alongside the reason, is recorded on SIMS.

If a child arrives after 9.30am, this is marked on the register as an unauthorised absence (U) – the number of minutes late, alongside the reason, is recorded on SIMS.

For the afternoon Nursery session, the doors open at 12.15pm and close as soon as children are through. The register is completed by 12.30pm.

Daily attendance checks...

Between 9.30am and 10.00am, the admin team will conduct attendance checks across the school to ensure registers are accurate and all children accounted for. The attendance spreadsheet will be completed and sent to SLT/Home School Mentor/Attendance Officer.

For the afternoon Nursery session, between 12.30pm and 12.45pm the admin team will conduct an attendance check to ensure the afternoon register is accurate and all children accounted for.

If a child is absent from school...

By no later than 10.30am, the admin team will make a first day call (FDC) if parents/carers have not contacted school regarding their child's absence; if no-one answers, a message will be left on the primary contact number and calls will be made to the other numbers held on the system. If contact is still not made, a member of SLT will decide whether a welfare check (home visit) is required, which will be completed by SLT/Home School Mentor/Attendance Officer. If the parents/carers are not at home for the welfare check, a compliments slip is left alerting them to the fact that someone from school has made a visit. This occurs for every day of absence. If a family is open to services, the attached worker will be made aware of the absence. In some circumstances, the police may be requested to make a welfare check as well.

For the afternoon Nursery session, FDC takes place by 1.00pm.

If a child's attendance is between 92% and 96%...

Parents/carers will receive a phone call from the Attendance Officer and/or attendance letter from the Headteacher informing them that their child's attendance is below the satisfactory level, providing information in the form of 'days of learning lost' and how close they are to becoming a persistent absentee (PA) in number of days. If there is no improvement to attendance over a 3-week period, parents/carers will then be invited into school for an Attendance Planning Meeting with the Education Welfare Officer/Headteacher/Home School Mentor to discuss next steps moving forwards. If parents/carers do not attend this meeting, it will be conducted in their absence and minutes sent home to parents.

The admin team will run a report weekly to show which children fall within this bracket; the Attendance Officer will maintain a spreadsheet to track and monitor improvements in attendance or to determine if subsequent action is required.

If a child's attendance falls below 90%

Parents/carers will be invited to an Attendance Planning Meeting with the Attendance Officer/Headteacher and potentially the Chair of Governors or representative from the Lingfield Education Trust. Legal procedures and multi-agency professional involvement will be discussed.

Termly attendance

The Attendance Team will provide a list of children to the Class Teacher for each parent/carer consultation to share attendance, including in terms of 'days of learning lost'. The Class Teacher is required to have an initial conversation with parents regarding their child's attendance, with key details recorded on CPOMS underneath the 'Attendance' tab.

Termly punctuality

The Attendance Team will analyse punctuality at the end of each half term, and for children who are regularly late a punctuality letter will be sent to parents/carers outlining the number of minutes of lost learning and the expectation of improved punctuality for the next half term.

Parent/Carer Communications

Parents/carers are expected to inform school of any absence/potential late arrivals as soon as possible and by no later than 8.45am to ensure registers are accurate. In addition to the school telephone system there is an option to leave a voice message to report absences. The school Facebook Messenger app should not be used to report absences/late arrivals in case messages are not picked up prior to registration.

Holidays in Term-Time

Holidays during term-time will not be authorised by the Headteacher. If families have a holiday booked during term time, parents/carers are required to complete a Leave of Absence form, **prior** to the absence. If a Leave of Absence form is not completed, school reserve the right to complete it on behalf of the parents/carers and without their signature. All holidays requested will be referred to the Local Authority for a Fixed Penalty Notice to be issued. Parents/Carers will receive a letter from school informing them that the holiday has not been authorised.

Leave of Absence

If a child is required be absent from school for an exceptional circumstance, then parents/carers must complete a Leave of Absence Form **prior** to the event. Leave of Absence submissions will be reviewed by the Headteacher. Please note that these absences may not be authorised.

Lateness and Punctuality

Heathfield Primary School employs a flexible arrangement at the start of the school day. School doors are open from 8.45am and all children need to be in class no later than 8.55am. If a child arrives at school after 8:55am, they must enter via the main reception doors and a note is added onto their morning mark. A late mark (L) will be noted on the child's record alongside the reason for being late and the number of minutes lost for any arrivals after 9.00am. Any child arriving after 9:30am will be signed in and an unauthorised absence mark (U) will be recorded (alongside reasons and minutes lost), which could result in a referral to the Local Authority and legal action taken.

Definitions:

Authorised Absence

An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent/carers; for example, if a child has been unwell and the parent telephones the school to explain the absence. Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents do not have this authority. Consequently, not all absences supported by parents will be classified as authorised.

Unauthorised Absence

An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of the school. Therefore, the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent.

date

Dear _____,

You are receiving this letter as we are concerned about _____'s attendance.

They have now missed _____ days of school this academic year, therefore their attendance is below the level expected at Heathfield Primary School.

Good attendance is directly linked to success – both now and in your child's future. Children with poor attendance are almost always the lowest achievers in their class.

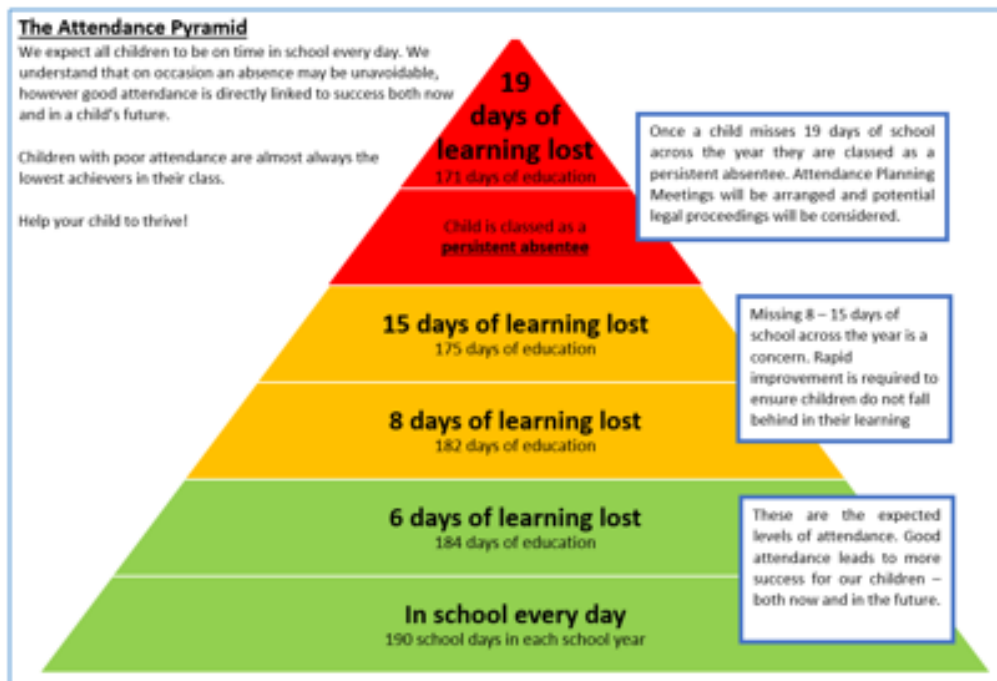
If your child misses _____ more days of school, they will be classed as a 'persistent absentee'. Therefore - if there is no improvement in their attendance over the next three school weeks - we will ask you to come into school for an Attendance Planning Meeting.

Thank you for your co-operation.

Yours sincerely,

P. Kirby-Bowstead

Mr Kirby-Bowstead
Headteacher



date

Dear _____,

You are receiving this letter as we are highly concerned about _____'s attendance.

They have now missed _____ days of school this academic year, therefore their attendance is below the level expected at Heathfield Primary School. Missing more than 19 days of school across an academic year means that a child is classed as a 'persistent absentee'.

Good attendance is directly linked to success – both now and in your child's future. Children with poor attendance are almost always the lowest achievers in their class.

It is therefore vital that there is a rapid improvement in your child's attendance, and as such we would like you to come into school for an Attendance Planning Meeting. The details of the meeting can be found below:

Date:

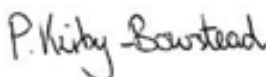
Time:

Venue:

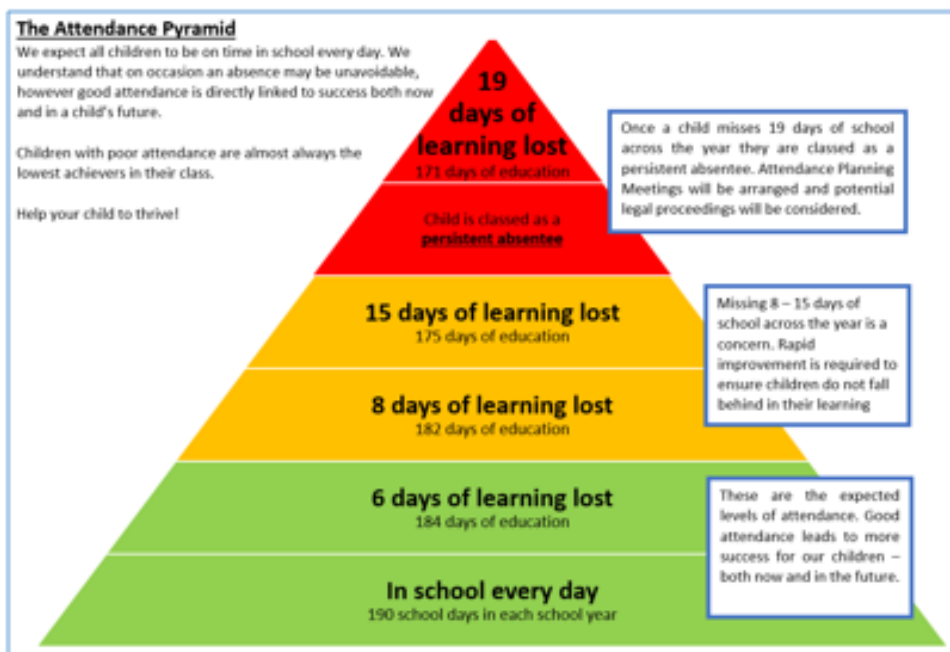
If you do not attend this meeting, it will be held in your absence.

Thank you for your co-operation.

Yours sincerely,



Mr Kirby-Bowstead
Headteacher



date

Dear _____,

You are receiving this letter as we are concerned about _____'s punctuality.

This half term they have been late to school _____ times.

They have missed _____ minutes of lessons.

Being late means that your child misses out on a settled start to the school day, in addition to interventions and additional support to help them be successful in their learning.

It is therefore vital that there is a rapid improvement in your child's punctuality. If there is no improvement, you will be invited into school for an Attendance Planning Meeting.

Thank you for your co-operation.

Yours sincerely,

P. Kirby-Bowstead

Mr Kirby-Bowstead
Headteacher

On time in school – that's our motto; that's our rule!

Being late means that your child is missing out on a settled start to the day, in addition to interventions and additional support to help them be successful in their learning.

Help your child to thrive!

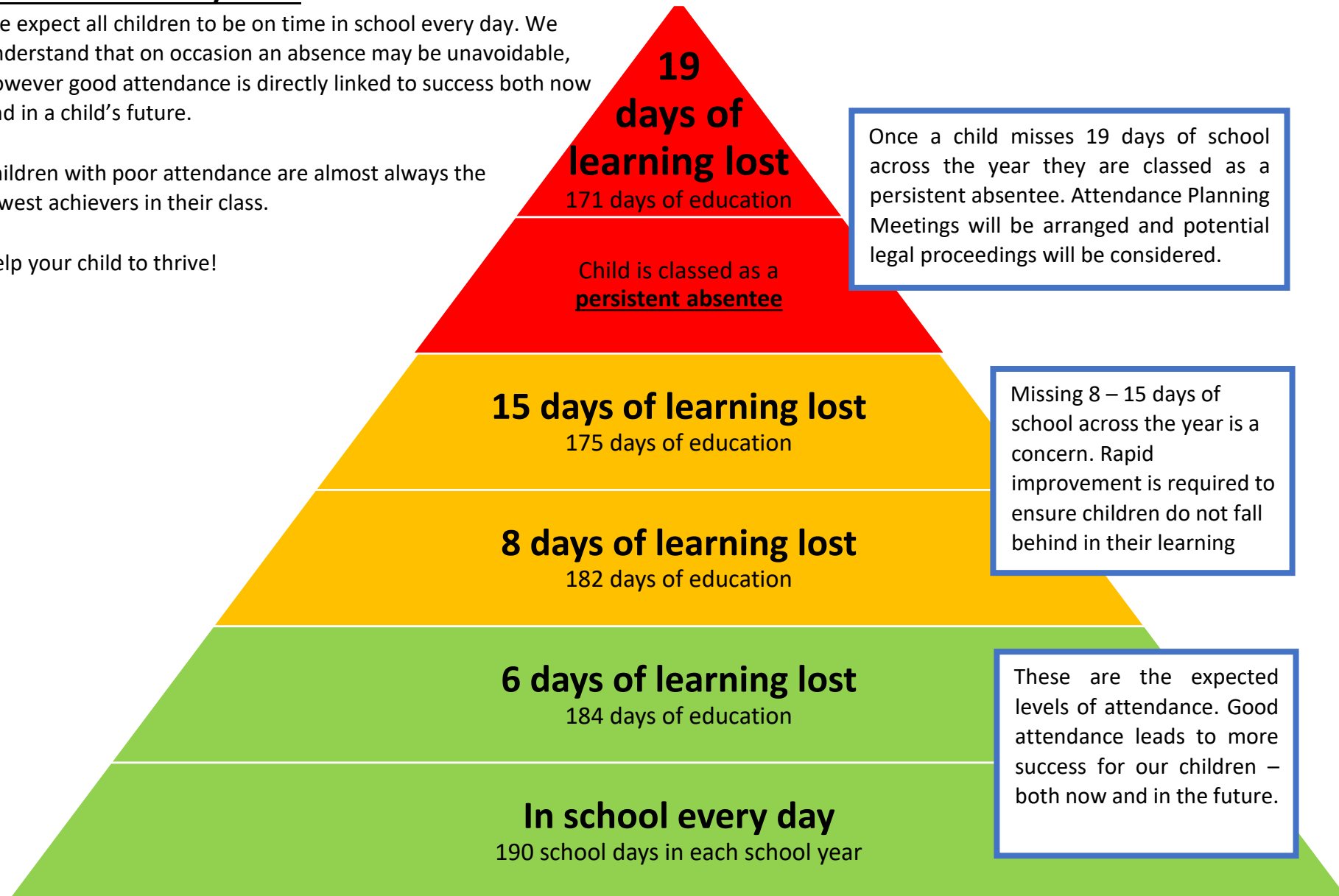


The Attendance Pyramid

We expect all children to be on time in school every day. We understand that on occasion an absence may be unavoidable, however good attendance is directly linked to success both now and in a child's future.

Children with poor attendance are almost always the lowest achievers in their class.

Help your child to thrive!



On time in school – that's our motto; that's our rule!

Being late means that your child is missing out on a settled start to the day, in addition to interventions and additional support to help them be successful in their learning.

Help your child to thrive!

