Neasden Primary School

Attendance policy

Approved by:	Local Governing Body
Created:	
Amended:	September 2026
New review date:	September 2027

This policy will be reviewed at least annually on or before September 2027 or sooner as the governing body considers necessary in response to the ongoing review of attendance data

1 Aim of this policy

1.1 To support excellent levels of attendance for all pupils to enable fulfilment of their potential at Neasden Primary School ("the School).

1.2 This policy has been prepared with regard to the school's statutory duties relating to attendance, including those set out in the Department for Education's statutory guidance entitled Working together to improve school attendance (2026), which is referred to in this policy as the "DfE Attendance Guidance".

2 Key principles

- High levels of attendance and punctuality levels are promoted and rewarded.
- It is the responsibility of everybody in the School to improve attendance and punctuality.
- Regular attendance means attending all sessions, for the full duration of those sessions, unless there is a statutory reason for non-attendance.
- Where attendance or punctuality fall short of expected standards, steps will be taken to address this and sanctions may be applied in accordance with the behaviour policy.
- Some pupils find it harder than others to attend school. The School will work with pupils, parents and other local partners to remove any barriers to attendance.
- Subject to the terms of this policy, any day-to-day attendance issues that parents or pupils have should be discussed with class teachers. Where more detailed support around attendance is required, parents and pupils should contact Jade Anderson.

3 Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The School

3.1.1 The School will:

- develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefit of regular attendance including weekly class challenges, termly attendance rewards, individual incentives, seasonal challenges.
- work with pupils and their families, building strong relationships, to support high levels of attendance and punctuality and understand any barriers to attendance
- investigate unexplained or unjustified absence, applying sanctions where appropriate

- take into account individual needs when implementing this policy, including having regard to the School's obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

- share information, including returns information required to be shared in accordance with regulations[1] and the DfE Attendance Guidance, and work collaboratively with the local authority, other schools in the area and other partners including, where required, making appropriate referrals in accordance with local procedures, legislation and guidance

- regularly monitor, review and analyse attendance and absence data including to identify pupils or cohorts that require attendance support and to set targets for the future

- ensure that all pupils can access full-time education, putting strategies in place where this is evidence to suggest that this is not the case

- ensure that the trust board and School's leadership team work together to monitor attendance levels and the effectiveness of this policy

- ensure that all legislation and guidance are complied with and reflected in our policies and procedures, including the DfE Attendance Guidance

- have in place appropriate safeguarding responses for children who are at risk of missing education, having regard to the statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (please refer to our Child Protection policy

- provide information requested by the Secretary of State, including termly absence data collected by the Department for Education

- regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels

- support pupils who are returning to education following long term absence

- ensure that effective systems to record and report attendance data are in place, including accurate completion of admission and attendance registers using an electronic management information system

- assign overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance at the School to a designated senior leader, known as the Senior Attendance Champion

- observe and fulfil the responsibilities set out in guidance issued by the Department for Education Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024) (publishing.service.gov.uk)) to the extent not covered above or elsewhere in this policy.

3.2 Parents and carers

We expect parents and carers to:

[1] School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024

- ensure that their child arrives at the School on time, in the correct uniform and with the necessary equipment
- promote the importance of regular attendance at home
- follow the correct procedure for reporting the absence of their child from the School (see section 6.3 below)
- avoid unnecessary absences
- keep the School informed of any circumstances which may affect their child's attendance
- not take their child out of education for holidays during term time (see section 6.3 below)
- inform the School in advance of any proposed change of address for their child(ren), along with the name of the parent with whom the child shall live
- observe and fulfil their responsibilities set out in the guidance issued by the Department for Education: Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024) (publishing.service.gov.uk).

3.3 Pupils

We expect pupils to:

- attend the School regularly and on time
- be punctual to all lessons
- follow the correct procedure if they arrive to the School late (see sections 4 and 5 below).

3.4 Senior Attendance Champion

The Senior Attendance Champion ("SAC") at the School is Annabel Jackson, Deputy Headteacher.

The SAC has overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance at the School and will:

- set a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- establish and maintain effective systems for tackling absence and ensure that these are followed by all staff
- evaluate and monitor attendance expectations and processes
- have a strong grasp of absence data to focus the collective efforts of the School
- ensure that key attendance messages are communicated to parents and pupils
- provide data and reports to support the work of the board of trustees (see below).

3.5 The board of trustees/local governing body

The board of trustees/local governing will:

- take an active role in attendance improvement, recognise the importance of school attendance and promote it across the trust and School's ethos and policies
- ensure the School's leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- regularly review attendance data, discuss and challenge trends and help School leaders focus improvement efforts on the individual pupils or cohorts who need it most
- ensure School staff receive adequate training on attendance, including dedicated training for staff with specific attendance responsibilities and any additional training that would help support pupils or cohorts overcome common barriers to attendance
- share effective practice on attendance management and improvement across its academies.
- work with other trusts, academies, and local authorities to promote effective attendance management practice and help to develop a consistent, sector-wide understanding of best practice.
- have a dedicated attendance lead who will drive improvement across the trust, assess and evaluate variation of practice, act as a central point for academies with attendance queries and provide more intensive support to individual academies when required.

4 Registration

4.1 The School maintains an attendance register and uses this to record each pupil's attendance at the start of the school day and again in the afternoon.

Registration session	Start time	End time
Morning	8:45	EYFS – 11:45 KS1 – 12:30 KS2 – 12:00
Afternoon	EYFS – 12:15 KS1 – 1:15 KS2 – 12:45	3:15

4.2 Pupils who arrive after the start of a registration session but before the end of the registration session will be marked as late. Where pupils arrive after the end of a registration session, the process set out at section 5 applies.

4.3 The register is marked using the national statutory attendance and absence codes which can be found in the Department for Education's guidance on attendance - DfE Attendance Guidance.

4.4 Where a pupil attends a registration session but does not attend subsequent lessons, we will treat this as a truancy and non-attendance matter in accordance with the behaviour policy and engage parents where necessary.

5 Late arrival

5.1 If a pupil arrives at the School after the relevant registration period has ended, but within the relevant session, they must immediately go to the School office to sign in and provide a reason for the lateness to enable the School to establish the appropriate attendance or absence code. In the absence of a satisfactory explanation, the register will be marked as unauthorised absence.

5.2 Persistent lateness will be treated as a disciplinary matter and will be dealt with in line with the behaviour policy.

6 Reasons for absence and how to report or request authorisation

6.1 ***Authorised absence*** - absence will only be authorised where the School has given approval in advance for a pupil to not be in attendance or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for the absence. Only the School can authorise absence.

6.2 ***Unauthorised absence –*** absence will be marked as unauthorised where the School is not satisfied with the reasons given for the absence.

6.3 Reporting absence from the School

6.3.1 Where a pupil is to be absent from the School without prior permission, the parent/carer should inform the School by telephone or email on the morning of the day of the first absence and let the School know when they expect the pupils to return. If the return date is not confirmed on the first day of absence, parents/carers must contact the School on each day of absence.

6.3.2 On the day of return to the School, parents must also provide written confirmation of the reason(s) for the full period of absence.

6.3.3 Any unexplained absence will be followed up by the School promptly.

6.3.4 In cases where the School needs clarification to accurately record the absence in the attendance register, the parents/cares may be asked to provide the School with medical evidence, such as a note from the child's doctor to support an absence for illness. If satisfactory evidence is not provided, the absence may be marked as unauthorised. Where there are prolonged or repeated patterns of illness, medical evidence may also be requested to support the Academy's understanding of a pupil's health needs and to ensure that appropriate support and/or adjustments are put in place (please refer to our policy on supporting pupils with medical conditions).

6.4 Appointments

6.4.1 Medical, dental and other essential appointments for a pupils should take place outside of school hours where this is reasonably possible.

6.4.2 Where an appointment must take place during school time, the pupils should attend the School for as much of the day as possible and as much prior notice as possible should be given to class teacher or office staff.

6.5 Leave of absence (including holidays during term time)

The School will grant permission for a pupil to be absent from school in the circumstances described in paragraph 36 of the DfE Attendance Guidance which can be summarised as follows:

- taking part in a regulated performance or employment abroad
- attendance at an interview for entry into another educational setting or future employment
- study leave for public examinations
- temporary, time-limited part-time timetable
- other exceptional circumstances, which will be decided upon based on the individual merits of each case.

6.5.2 Parents and carers should make every effort to avoid taking pupils out of education for holidays or other extended leave during term time.

6.5.3 To request a leave of absence, parents/carers must make the request in advance and in writing addressed to the Head Teacher and, wherever possible, at least 4 school weeks ahead of the planned leave.

6.5.4 Where a leave of absence is requested as above, the Head Teacher will consider the specific facts and circumstances relating to the request. The decision:

- will be confirmed in writing
- is solely at the Head Teacher discretion and
- is final.

6.5.5 Where permission is granted, the Head Teacher will confirm the number of days and dates of absence which are authorised.

6.5.6 If permission is not granted and the parents/carers proceed to take their child out of the School, the absence will be marked as unauthorised and parents may be issued with a penalty notice or be subject to prosecution by the local authority (see section 7 below).

6.6 Religious observance

6.6.1 We recognise that pupils of certain faiths may need to participate in days of religious observance. Where a day of religious observance:

- falls during school time and
- has been exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupils belongs,

the absence from the School will be authorised.

6.6.2 We ask that parents/carers notify the School by writing to the pupil's class teacher in advance where absence is required due to religious observance.

7 Addressing poor attendance and punctuality

7.1 The School will use data to target attendance improvement efforts to the pupils or groups of pupils who need it most. In doing so, the School, led by the SAC, will:

- monitor and analyse weekly attendance patterns, proactively using data to identify pupils at risk of poor attendance and changes in attendance at individual pupil, cohort, and year group level to support early intervention
- provide regular attendance reports to class teachers and relevant leaders
- identify pupils who need support from wider partners as soon as possible and deliver this support in a targeted manner
- conduct thorough analysis of half-termly, termly and fully year data to identify patterns and trends
- benchmark School attendance data at each level against local, regional and national level
- monitor the impact of school strategies and actions to improve attendance on particular pupils and particular groups
- work with the local authority and other local partners to identify groups
- hold regular meetings with the parents or carers of pupils who the School and/or local authority consider to be vulnerable

7.2 Our procedures for managing unexplained absences can be found at the end of this policy in Appendix 1.

7.3 Where absence or punctuality is a cause for concern, for example because there is:

- a pattern of unauthorised absence
- a question over the reasons provided for a particular absence or late arrival
- persistent truancy or lateness

we will make contact with the parents/carers with a view to working together to support improved attendance and/or punctuality.

7.4 In cases where the School has been unable to establish a clear reason for absence and/or has welfare concerns about the pupil, a home welfare check may be carried out.

7.5 Failure to attend or arrive at lessons on time may also be dealt with as a disciplinary matter in accordance with the behaviour policy.

7.6 Absence will be classed as persistent where it falls below 90% across the academic year. Absence at this level is very likely to hinder educational prospects and we expect full parental co-operation and support to urgently address these cases. Intervention steps may include implementation of an attendance action plan, referral to other agencies and/or seeking to put in place an attendance contract.

7.7 Where out of school barriers to attendance are identified, the School will signpost and support access to any additional services.

7.8 Where parents/carers have failed to ensure that their child of compulsory school age is regularly attending the School and wider support in accordance with this policy is not appropriate or effective, we may consider issuing a penalty notice. A penalty notice is a financial penalty (£80) if paid within 21 days, £160 if paid within 28 days) imposed on parents which is intended to change behaviour without the need for criminal prosecution.

7.9 When considering whether to issue a penalty notice, we will have regard to:

- the National Framework for penalty notices as set out in paragraphs 179 – 205 of the DfE Attendance Guidance; and

- the local authority's Code of Conduct for issuing penalty notices.

7.10 In the event that a penalty notice is issued but is not paid within 28 days, the local authority will decide whether to proceed to prosecution. The local authority also has separate powers to prosecute parents if their child of compulsory school age fails to attend school regularly.

Appendix 1: Unexplained Absence: communication between the home and the school

Parents are made aware of the importance of regular attendance and punctuality through regular Newsletters. They are also informed of the procedures for informing school of any unavoidable absence.

If a child is absent, a parent/carer should inform the school of the reason for the absence either by telephone, by letter or in person. This information is then logged as a 'note' on Arbor and/or recorded on CPOMS tagged as 'attendance'.

The attendance officer monitors unexplained absence daily and will endeavour to contact the parents/carers on the first day of absence. Initially, this will be by telephone to ascertain the reasons for absence. If successful, the reason will be recorded as a 'note' on Arbor. Should no contact be made, where possible, a home visit will be made to ascertain the reason for absence.

It is considered to be a serious safeguarding issue if contact with the parents/carers of an absent child is not made within 5 days. In such cases a visit to the home will be made by either a member of the Wellbeing Team, the Attendance Officer, the DSL or, in certain circumstances, the EWO. All such visits should be recorded on CPOMS and tagged as 'attendance'. In some cases, where we have ongoing concerns about attendance or family circumstances, this visit may be triggered earlier.

When a child has been absent for no apparent reason and all efforts to ascertain the reasons for this absence have been unsuccessful then the absence will be deemed to be unauthorised. A period of 5 working days is deemed an appropriate time for parents / carers to inform the school of the reasons for absence. If no such information is forthcoming after this time, then the absence will be deemed to be unauthorised. Should evidence for the reason for absence be received after this period of time, the reason for absence mark may be amended as appropriate.

Lateness is also a cause for concern. Lateness, both before and after the close of registers, is recorded by administrative staff as a 'note' on Arbor and monitored by the Attendance Officers. In the first instance class teachers should follow this up relentlessly, which should involve speaking to parents/carers, and then, if unsuccessful or if it continues, inform the Attendance Officer.

Regular patterns of absence, either authorised or unauthorised, and/or lateness should be picked up by the class teacher and brought to the attention of the Attendance team.

The Attendance Officers regularly monitor attendance and pick up any cause for concerns. Concern about a child's poor attendance and/or punctuality will be raised in the first instance by telephone or in person and then by letter.

When concerns over attendance exist, a home visit will be made by either: a member of the Wellbeing Team, the Attendance team, the DSL or, in certain circumstances, the EWO.

Information relating to absence is kept for a period of at least three years. Letters are kept electronically on CPOMS.

Appendix 2: Strategies to Challenge and Support Poor Attendance /Absence

Absence Procedures

On an ongoing basis school staff will identify children, or families, whose attendance and punctuality is a concern. The attendance of these children may not necessarily be low but may be causing concern because of:

- Siblings being absent at the same time
- A pattern to absence
- Erratic attendance
- Failure to complete a full week on a regular basis
- Regularly arriving late for school
- Not being collected from school on time

These children will be given a high profile in terms of both support and challenge and the balance of this will depend on the circumstances. Support and intervention steps may include implementation of an attendance action plan, referral to other agencies (e.g. Early Help / school nursing team) and/or seeking to put in place a parenting contract.

In the first instance the school's Attendance Officers will liaise with the parents / carers by telephone and by letter.

Where poor attendance and/or punctuality continue to be a concern, face to face meetings involving parents/carers and the Attendance Officers, will be held. The purpose of the meeting will be to identify any barriers to attendance and punctuality, and agree strategies to support working together to improved attendance and/or punctuality.

Where absence is deemed to be persistent absence parents may be asked to provide a doctor's certificate / medical evidence - including evidence of prescribed medication, to cover the whole period of their child's absence. Responsibility for any costs incurred lie with the parent or carer.

When absence repeatedly gives cause for concern then parents will be asked to attend school for a meeting. This may result in the implementation of a parenting contract.

In consultation with the school, the EWO Service will take action. Such action may include the issuing of a formal warning or penalty notice to parents and, if deemed necessary, invoking court action.

Raising the Profile of Attendance and Punctuality

- A certificate is awarded termly and yearly to all children who have full attendance.
- The class with the highest attendance for the previous week are awarded the 'Attendance Cup' in assembly.
- Key information relating to attendance will be prominently displayed within the school, on the school website and reported in the half termly newsletters.
- Regular initiatives to reward 100% attendance over a period of time

Persistent Absence

The DfE require schools to monitor and reduce what is termed 'persistent absence'. A persistent absentee is defined as a pupil who has overall absence of 10% or more. The school has a data base which enables us to identify and address the attendance of the children who are either 'persistent absentees' or are at risk of becoming 'persistent absentees.'

Working with Partner Agencies

Poor attendance and punctuality arise due to a variety of issues and we work closely with a broad range partner agencies, as necessitated by each individual circumstance, to resolve issues and secure good attendance and punctuality. In our drive to promote good attendance and punctuality we work closely with the LA and buy into the LA Educational Welfare Service. The Education Welfare Service At Highlands we have a very positive and effective working relationship with the Education Welfare Service.

Children at Risk of Missing Education

'All schools (including academies) must inform their local authority of any pupil who is going to be deleted from the admission register where they:

- Have been taken out of school by their parents and are being educated outside the school system e.g. home education
- Have ceased to attend school and no longer live within reasonable distance of the school at which they are registered;
- Have a medical condition certified by the school medical officer that the pupil is unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school;
- Are in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order and the proprietor does not reasonably believe they will be returning to the school at the end of that period; or,
- Have been permanently excluded.

(DfE Advice on School Attendance: 2024)

At Neasden we follow the LA Children Missing in Education Protocol (Appendix 3).

Appendix 3

HULL CITY COUNCIL CHILDREN MISSING EDUCATION NOTIFICATION FORM

This form is to be used **PRIOR** to referring a pupil as a child missing from education and only when all reasonable enquiries have been made to establish the whereabouts of pupils who have moved out of the area or within the area with no forwarding address, or where a school has been approached for a place directly by a parent/carer, and for agencies other than schools who have knowledge of children not on a school roll. **Please provide as much information as possible.**

REQUIRED INFORMATION FOR PUPIL BEING REFERRED							
Surname				First Name(s)			
UPN		Year Group		DOB		Gender	
Sibling Details							
Current Address							
New Address/Area Moved to							
Parent/Carer name							
Email Address				Contact Number			
Current/Previous school - On roll Y/N				Date Last Attended			

OTHER DETAILS (please indicate)		**PUPIL STATUS (please indicate)**	
Does the child have a history of non-attendance?	Y/N	LAC/CP/CIN (please specify)	Y/N
Is there a pattern of unauthorised term time leave?	Y/N	Formerly/currently known to Social Care	Y/N
Is the child subject to private fostering?	Y/N	SEND	Y/N
Do you have any supporting documentation to support relocation out of Hull? Please attach	Y/N	Traveller	Y/N
		Asylum Seeker	Y/N
Name and contact details of social worker/other agency			

Other vulnerabilities (domestic violence, temporary accommodation) - Please state	

ACTIONS TAKEN PRIOR TO REFERRAL			
Phone Call 1	Tel:	Date: / /	Outcome:
Phone Call 2	Tel:	Date: / /	Outcome:
Letter Sent	Date: / /	Outcome:	

OUTCOMES OF HOME VISITS				
DATE	AM	PM	ADDRESS VISITED: (if different from above)	WHO DID YOU SPEAK TO? (State relationship to the pupil as well as forename and/or surname)

SAFEGUARDING RISK APPRAISAL	
Risk Assessment (are there any known concerns/safeguarding risks)	
Date of any concerns referred to EHASH?	
Outcome of referral to EHASH?	

YOUR CONTACT DETAILS			
Name		Job Title	
Contact Number		Date Referred	
Email Address			

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY			
Involvements			
Confirm address and parent details Y/N		Confirm sibling details Y/N	
Known to admissions team Y/N		Date referred to other agencies	
School allocated		Date on roll	

Please return this form to: Education Welfare Service, The Guildhall, Alfred Gelder Street, KUH HU1 2AA **Via EDT for Hull schools or email your locality inbox:**

EWSWest@hullcc.gov.uk
EWSEast@hullcc.gov.uk

EWSNorth@hullcc.gov.uk

IMPORTANT: If you receive any notification of a school admitting this pupil(s) please contact the Education Welfare Service via your locality inbox.