

Hutton Church of England Grammar School

Attendance Policy

Agreed by Curriculum and General Purpose Committee on 4th November 2024

Policy will be reviewed by the Summer Term 2025



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1 Introduction

At Hutton Church of England Grammar School, our mission is to see all our pupils and students thrive and flourish. Our school Christian value of Koinonia emphasises the importance of us living well together as a community. The development of resilience is crucial in young people. Life is not easy but making the most of education in its widest sense is vital:

"...endurance produces character, and character produces hope,"

Romans 5:4

For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and every child should be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless they have an unavoidable reason to be absent. Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning.

Absence or late arrival also disrupts daily routines and teaching and so may affect the learning of others in the same class.

Government research shows a direct link between attendance and attainment and good attendees also make better progress socially, learn to work with others, and are better prepared for the transition to secondary school and, eventually, higher education, training and employment.

It is very important therefore that you make sure your child attends regularly and our attendance policy sets out how together we will achieve this. The policy will be applied fairly and consistently and we will always consider the individual needs of pupils, and their families, who have specific barriers to attendance. We will also be mindful of our obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and give consideration to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Our attendance target this year is 96%, but all pupils should strive to achieve 100% attendance if they can.

2 Responsibilities and expectations

2.1 Families

Parents and carers have a legal duty to ensure that their children attend school regularly, if they are of compulsory school age and registered at a school (see the appendix for details of how the law applies to school attendance and how "parent" is defined in law).

Parents and pupils should know the times the school day starts and finishes and when the register closes (see section 4, below), the processes for requesting leave (see section 3.4), and the process for informing school of the reason for unexpected absence (as follows).

If your child is going to be absent, parents must inform school as soon as possible and at the latest by 8.50 am on the first day of absence by calling school on (01772 613112) or by sending a message via Synergy.

Parents must also ensure that school has up-to-date contact information for themselves and emergency contacts.

Pupils' responsibilities depend upon their age, maturity and capability but they too must do their best to attend school regularly and punctually.

School contact information for attendance-related matters is given below at the end of section 2.2.

2.2 School

Headteacher

- Ensure there are designated staff with day-to-day responsibility for attendance matters and protected time allocated to discharge those responsibilities.
- Take overall responsibility for ensuring the school conforms to statutory requirements regarding attendance.
- Consider each request for leave against the school's criteria, decide whether some, all, or none of the leave will be authorised and notify parents of this decision.
- Where there is uncertainty regarding an absence, make the decision whether or not to authorise an absence, or to request further evidence to support the decision-making process.
- Provide regular reports to the governing body on school attendance, including persistent absence and vulnerable groups.

Senior Attendance Champion

- Take overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance in school, liaising with pupils, parents and external agencies where needed.
- Set a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance.
- Establish and maintain effective systems for tackling absence and make sure they are followed by all staff
- Have a comprehensive understanding of attendance data.
- Use attendance data to target attendance improvement efforts and support to the pupils or pupil cohorts who need it most.
- Regularly monitor and evaluate progress, including the efficacy of the school's strategies and processes.
- Regularly communicate pupil attendance and punctuality levels to parents.

Other staff with designated responsibilities for attendance

- First day response: contact parents if a reason for absence has not been provided and record this information accordingly. Contact emergency contacts if parents cannot be reached.
- Update attendance registers.
- Regularly monitor and analyse data to identify pupil, class and whole school attendance concerns and to target attendance improvement support for those who need it most, particularly vulnerable groups.

Hutton Church of England Grammar School, Attendance Policy

- Discuss attendance concerns at an early stage with pupils and parents.
- Work with pupils and parents to remove barriers to regular and punctual attendance, using attendance contracts where appropriate.
- Involve external agencies to support pupils and parents as appropriate to better understand and address the issues causing attendance concerns.
- Promote regular attendance through the school newsletter, website and displays and ensure the school's attendance policy is readily accessible.
- Use projects and strategies to improve attendance and punctuality for groups, classes or the whole school (e.g. incentive and reward schemes, certificates, traffic light letters).

All school staff

- Provide a welcoming atmosphere for pupils and a safe learning environment, particularly for those returning to school following a period of absence.
- Be aware of factors that can contribute to poor attendance and punctuality.
- Recognise that absence is a symptom of other issues impacting a pupil's welfare and can be a warning sign of safeguarding concerns.
- Adhere to the procedures in place within school to promote good attendance.
- Promote the link between attendance and educational attainment to pupils and parents.
- Complete attendance registers in accordance with the legislation and under the direction of the head teacher.
- Raise any concerns about attendance with the Senior Attendance Champion and/or head teacher.

Governors

- Ensure compliance with The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.
- Agree an attendance policy and review it annually or more frequently if required.
- Agree targets for attendance at Hutton Grammar School.
- Where the school is not meeting its attendance targets, or when the governors believe there is cause for concern, instigate a review of school's attendance procedures.
- Authorise the head teacher (or other designated person) to make decisions regarding leave of absence requests.
- Work with the head teacher in establishing equitable and consistent criteria against which leave requests will be considered.

Schools are bound by a range of attendance legislation, regulations and guidance; please see the appendix for further details.

School attendance contacts

Mrs H Lang, **Attendance Manager** : responsible for the operational approach to attendance in school.

Mr J Christie **Deputy Headteacher: senior leader responsible for the strategic approach to attendance in school and Attendance Champion**

Contacts below for day-to-day enquiries about attendance.

Mrs H Lang, **Attendance Manager**

Mr R Davies **Head of Year 7**

Mr B Hunter **Head of Year 8**

Mr L Waddell **Head of Year 9**

Mr G Massey **Head of Year 10**

Miss K Macdiarmid **Head of Year 11**

Support for specific / serious attendance concerns.

Mr M Livingstone **Assistant Headteacher /DSL**

Mrs G Frost **SENCO**

Mrs L Margerison – **Pastoral Support**

Mrs Sayle-Kermode –**Deputy SENCO**

Mrs H Lang, **Attendance Manager**

The staff named above can be contacted on the school phone number 01772 613112.

2.3 Lancashire County Council (the local authority)

School Attendance Support Team

Each school has a named contact in the School Attendance Support Team who can advise schools on attendance related matters, and with whom Targeting Support Meetings will be held. For mainstream nursery, primary and secondary schools this will be a School Attendance Support Worker (SASW); for special schools, short stay schools and pupil referral units (PRUs) this will be a School Attendance Consultant (SAC).

School Attendance Legal Team (SALT)

Following requests from schools for legal interventions when parents fail to ensure their children attend regularly, the School Attendance Legal Team undertakes enforcement processes, including penalty notices, prosecutions, parenting orders, education supervision orders and school attendance orders.

Children Missing Education (CME) Team

The Children Missing Education Team ensures the local authority fulfils its statutory duty to identify children in their area who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving

suitable education otherwise than at a school. For further information see section 7, below, regarding notifications schools must submit.

3 Types of absence

Every half-day absence from school is classified by the school as either authorised or unauthorised. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required from parents/carers. As a school, we will always work with parents (and other agencies, as appropriate) to understand the reasons underlying absence.

3.1 Authorised absences

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 causes or exceptional circumstances.

3.2 Unauthorised absences

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable or justifiable. If school has followed its attendance procedures and a pupil continues to have unauthorised absences, the school may seek advice from the local authority School Attendance Support Team or request legal interventions from the School Attendance Legal Team. Examples of unauthorised absences are:

- Parents/carers keeping their child off school unnecessarily.
- Absences which are not explained satisfactorily.
- Pupils who arrive at school after the register has closed and without a legitimate reason (see section 4.2).
- Days off for shopping, birthdays or looking after other children.
- Day trips and other leave in term time which have not been agreed by the head teacher.
- Days that exceed an amount of leave agreed by the head teacher.

It is the head teacher's responsibility to decide if an absence is authorised or unauthorised and, if there is any uncertainty relating to an absence, school may request further confirmation from parents before an absence is authorised. For absence due to illness, this may be in the form of:

- Sight of an appointment for your GP or for the hospital, clinic, etc.
- Sight of prescribed medication or prescription for medication.
- Sight of medical notes/records.
- A letter from a medical professional such as a specialist or consultant.

Parents should not ask their doctor (GP) to provide "sick notes" to excuse absence.

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school for other reasons. If your child is reluctant to attend it is better to speak to school as soon as possible to resolve the issue, rather than trying to cover up their absence, or give in to pressure to let them stay at home. As a school, we will always work with parents (and external agencies as appropriate) to understand and address the reasons behind absence.

3.3 Persistent Absence (PA)

Persistent absence is when a pupil misses 10% or more of their schooling across the school year for whatever reason, authorised and unauthorised (including illness, exclusion, holiday, etc). Absence at this level will damage any pupil's educational prospects and we expect parents' fullest support and cooperation to address this.

At Hutton Church of England Grammar School, we monitor all absences thoroughly, therefore any pupil whose attendance indicates they are likely to reach the PA threshold will be prioritised and parents will be informed of this promptly. Pupils who are persistent absentees are tracked and monitored carefully and the attendance procedures below (section 5) will be followed.

3.4 Leave during term time

By law, maintained schools cannot authorise any leave in term time other than in exceptional circumstances. Taking a child out of school in term time will affect their education and progress as much as any other absence. If leave is being requested that involves arranging travel or accommodation, approval must be obtained from the head teacher before making any bookings.

Leave of absence in term time **will not** be granted unless:

- a request for leave has been made in advance (a minimum of one months' notice) by a parent with whom the pupil normally resides (using the form available on the school website or from the school office), **and**
- The head teacher considers that leave of absence should be granted due to the **exceptional circumstances** relating to the request.

Due to the need to evidence exceptional circumstances, parents are advised to provide school with any relevant information regarding their request at the point of application if they believe the circumstances are exceptional.

In considering the request school will also consider other factors such as:

- The timing of the requested leave, e.g. when a pupil is just starting at school or during assessment periods, such as GCSE / A Level.
- A pupil's attendance record already includes unauthorised absence.
- Attendance is already a concern, or could become a concern, as a result of taking leave.

- Other periods of leave which the pupil may have had, either during the current or previous academic year.

Any period of leave taken without the agreement of the school, or in excess of that agreed, will be classed as unauthorised and may attract legal sanctions such as a penalty notice.

In certain circumstances, as outlined in regulation, parents risk losing their child's place on the school roll if leave is taken and the criteria governing removal from roll are met (see appendix).

3.5 Religious absence

School will authorise one day of absence per religious festival, e.g. Eid, and this will be marked as code R in the register. The day authorised will be that set aside by the religious body of which the parent is a member.

Parents must request any additional leave in advance and this can only be authorised if the head teacher agrees that exceptional circumstances apply; this would be marked in the register as code C.

3.6 Participation in sporting events

Parents can request leave of absence for their child to take part in regional, national and international sporting events. However, as always, granting leave is at the head teacher's discretion and she/he will need to discuss with you the length and frequency of the absence(s) requested and how learning will continue if absence occurs, e.g. the sports club or association providing an approved education tutor.

Leave for a sporting activity that has been approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school can be marked in the register as code P.

Permission for your child to leave early or arrive late in order to attend coaching and training sessions is also at the discretion of the head teacher and is unlikely to be approved if it would occur regularly.

3.7 Participation in performances (eg theatre, television, modelling)

Parents of a child performer can request leave from school for their child to take part in a performance. A local authority licence must be obtained before a child can take part in a performance. Before a licence is granted, school will be consulted and head teachers must be satisfied that the leave will not have a negative effect on the child's education.

Where the licence specifies the dates that the child is to be away from school, the head teacher should authorise those days. However, where the licence does not specify dates, it is at the discretion of the head teacher to authorise the leave request. Any absence authorised for the child to take part in a performance will be recorded as code C1.

Parents wishing to apply for a performance licence should go to the Lancashire County Council [Child performance licences webpage](#).

4 Registration

4.1 Attendance registration

Morning registration is between 8.50am and 9.05am.

Afternoon registration is taken at the start of the afternoon lesson at 1.05pm.

Pupils are expected to be on the premises at 8.45am. The school day starts at 8.50am and that is when the registration period starts (ie when the register is taken and remains open).

The register is completed by the Form Tutor at the start of each session using Synergy and by subject teachers at the start of each lesson. There is a legal requirement to register pupils for both morning and afternoon sessions.

When the attendance register has been taken it remains open until 9.35am in the morning and 1.35pm in the afternoon.

School finishes at 3.05pm.

4.2 Late arrival

Pupils who arrive between 8.50am and 9.00am will be greeted by our Attendance Manager, name recorded with reasons for late arrival and given an L on the register.

Pupils who arrive after 9.00am must go straight to the School Office at the main entrance to sign in and give a reason for their lateness.

A detention for late arrival to school will be issued if the pupil is late again in the same week and will take place the following week. Reasons for lateness will be taken into consideration and school will apply their discretion over the issuing of a detention.

Pupils arriving after 9.05am should sign in at the School Office at the main entrance. A pupil arriving after 9.35am will be coded as 'late after registers close' and marked by the Attendance Officer with a 'U'. This will negatively affect their attendance level.

Registration lates are followed up by the Administrative Assistant and appropriate sanctions are recorded. Parents are made aware of punctuality issues via Synergy in accordance with school policy.

4.3 Punctuality

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If your child misses the start of the day, they can miss work and not spend time with their class teacher getting important news and information for the day. Pupils arriving late also disrupt lessons, which can be embarrassing for the child and can in turn, encourage absence. Being 10 minutes late every day throughout the academic year is the same as missing two weeks of school.

If your child is often late you will be asked to initially meet with a member of the pastoral support team to discuss ways to improve punctuality, but you can approach us at any time if you are having problems getting your child to school on time.

Persistent lateness after the register has closed may result in further action, as outlined below, under section 5.

5 School attendance procedures

5.1 First day of absence

If your child is absent and we have not heard from you, we will contact you on the first day of absence to find out what the reason is and when your child is expected to return. If we are unable to contact you, we will approach your emergency contacts and, if necessary, make a home visit. Please note that such home visits may be unannounced.

5.2 Attendance concerns

Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with us in resolving any attendance problems together; this is nearly always successful. However, if concerns persist or absences are unexplained, school will use the following procedures and interventions, as required, to support parents in improving their child's attendance and/or punctuality:

- Telephone calls and/or letters to make parents aware of school's concern about their child's attendance.
- When there is uncertainty about the reason for absence, school may ask parents to provide appropriate evidence and/or undertake home visits to ascertain where a child is and to ensure they are safe.
- Invitation to meetings to discuss concerns with members of the pastoral team.
- Attendance contracts to identify barriers to regular attendance, ways to overcome these and agree targets for improvement.
- Incentive and reward schemes for individual pupils, if appropriate.
- The Early Help Assessment (EHA) process and/or referral to other agencies and services, including School Nurses and Primary Mental Health Workers, if appropriate.
- For unauthorised absences, request legal interventions by the local authority, such as penalty notices, prosecution or other attendance-related court orders.

At any stage, we may seek advice from the local authority School Attendance Support Team.

5.3 Pupils with medical needs who have difficulty attending school

Government guidance on supporting pupils at school with medical conditions (see appendix) emphasises the role of governing bodies in ensuring that pupils with medical conditions are able to fully access education in the same way as other pupils. A key element of this responsibility is reducing the amount of time missed by these pupils, whether their condition is short or long term.

School will work with parents and other relevant professionals to minimise absence for reasons of ill health. This may be in the form of reasonable adjustments, specific support or resources used within school, or by sourcing appropriate provision at another establishment. When education is to be provided at an alternative location, this should always be done via the use of a direction (please see section 6, below).

When a pupil has been absent from school for an extended period, members of the pastoral team and other support services will work with the family to ensure that a smooth reintegration is achieved.

5.4 Pupils refusing to attend school

At Hutton Church of England Grammar School we believe that every child has a right to a full-time education, and we would not accept "school refusal" as a reason for non-attendance. In such cases, we will work with parents to identify the reasons why a child may be reluctant to attend school. We may request advice from the School Attendance Support Team and, with consent, make referrals to other external partners such as the Children and Family Wellbeing Service or Primary Mental Health Workers, as appropriate, to try to ensure the correct support is secured for the child and their family.

5.5 Promotion of good attendance

School will promote and incentivise attendance by acknowledging and rewarding good attendance by all pupils and efforts to improve attendance by individual pupils.

5.6 Use of penalty notices and other attendance legal interventions

Legal interventions may be sought if providing support to improve attendance is not appropriate (e.g. for an unauthorised holiday in term time), or has not been successful or engaged with. In accordance with the Lancashire code of conduct, we may request that the local authority issue penalty notices for unauthorised absences that include:

- Leave of absence which is taken without a prior request being made.
- Leave taken after a request has been declined.
- Days taken in excess of an agreed period of leave, without good reason.
- Other unauthorised absence that meets the required threshold, including sessions marked as late after the register has closed (code U).

On 19 August 2024 new penalty notice arrangements came into force, with changes to the cost of a penalty notice and to the thresholds at which penalty notices may be requested by

school. The DfE now requires that schools **must** consider if a penalty notice is appropriate when the thresholds are met. The changes to be aware of are:

- Penalty notices issued for offences that take place after 19 August 2024 will be charged at £160 per parent per child. This will reduce to £80 if paid within 21 days.
- Any second penalty notice issued to the same parent for the same child within a rolling 3-year period will be issued at the rate of £160 to be paid within 28 days with no option for a discounted rate.
- The threshold at which a penalty notice must be considered is set at 10 sessions (equivalent to 5 days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10-school week period. This may include absences as a result of arriving late after the register closes. The 10 school weeks may span different terms or consecutive school years.
- A maximum of two penalty notices may be issued to a parent for the same child within a rolling 3-year period, so at the 3rd (or subsequent) offence(s) another course of action will need to be considered (such as prosecution or one of the other attendance legal interventions).
- If a school requests a penalty notice for absences other than unauthorised holidays, including being late after the register has closed, the local authority School Attendance Legal Team may issue a Notice to Improve to parents. A Notice to Improve is a final opportunity for parents to engage in support and improve attendance before a penalty notice is issued. If the national threshold has been met and offers of support have not been engaged with by parents or have not worked, a Notice to Improve may be issued to give parents a final chance to engage with support and improve their child's attendance.

The code of conduct for penalty notices and information and FAQs for parents can be found on the Lancashire County Council [education penalty notice webpage](#).

6 Alternative provision and use of directions

There is a range of circumstances when pupils might be required to access educational provision at a venue other than their main school. The main reasons are:

- Pupils who have been permanently excluded or suspended for a period of more than 5 days.
- Pupils unable to access provision at their main school for medical reasons.
- Pupils required to attend another venue for the purpose of improving behaviour, either on a temporary basis or with a view to making a permanent move to the alternative provision (via a managed move).

When a pupil is required to attend alternative provision for the purposes of improving behaviour, the governors of the main school must issue a written direction or notice informing all parents of the alternative provision which their child is required to attend. Where a pupil is required to attend alternative provision for other reasons, the issuing of a written direction is considered best practice.

7 Notifications school must submit to the local authority

7.1 Admissions

All schools must notify the local authority within five days of adding a pupil's name to the admission register and must provide the local authority with all the information held within the admission register about the pupil. This duty does not apply to pupils who are added to the admission register at the start of the school's youngest year unless the local authority also requests for such information to be provided (currently Lancashire does not).

7.2 Leavers

All schools must notify the local authority when a pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register under any of the grounds prescribed in Regulation 9 of The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, as soon as the ground for removal is met and no later than the time at which the pupil's name is removed from the register. This duty does not apply where the pupil's name is removed after they have completed the school's final year, unless the local authority requests for such information to be provided (Lancashire currently does not).

Where a school notifies a local authority that a pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register, the school must provide the local authority with the required information as laid out in the regulation.

In addition to submitting a notification about removal from roll, some circumstances also require school to make referrals to other local authority teams such as the Elective Home Education team or the Children Missing Education team. Schools may also contact the School Attendance Support Team for advice on removing children from roll. For pupils with an EHCP on roll at a special school, the school must have the agreement of the Lancashire Inclusion Service (SEND) before removing from roll.

7.3 Pupils who fail to attend

All schools (including academies) must inform the local authority of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 days or more. In Lancashire schools, this can be done via a variety of means and school can contact the School Attendance Support Team for further advice.

7.4 Pupils on a part-time timetable

Schools must also inform the local authority when a pupil is placed on a part-time timetable. In Lancashire, this should be done via the appropriate form available to schools.

7.5 Children missing education (CME)

Local authorities have a duty to put in place arrangements for identifying (as far as possible) those children of compulsory school age in their area who are not on roll at a school or receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school. Local authorities should trace those children and ensure they receive a full-time education.

If a pupil has stopped attending and her or his location is unknown, schools must make reasonable enquiries to establish the whereabouts of the child jointly with the local authority, before deleting the pupil's name from the register. In such cases, school should undertake a home visit, prior to a referral being made to the local authority Children Missing Education team.

8 Sixth Form Attendance

Our Mission

As outlined in the *Hutton Church of England Grammar School Behaviour Policy*, our Sixth Form's foundation scripture, Philippians 2, outlines the core of our mission and our core values:

"In your relationship with one another have the same mindset as Christ Jesus".

With our core values as: Koinonia, Compassion, Justice, Reverence, Humility and Endurance. At Sixth form we expect our students to be able to embody these values and serve as examples to our younger students in the main school. This core scripture, alongside our values, allows us to create a learning community that will enable all members to flourish in an environment of collaboration and respect.

Members of Hutton Grammar School Sixth Form are required to follow the standards outlined in this document as part of their membership of our community. Sixth Form students are at a stage in their life and education where they act as significant role models for the younger students at school. As such we expect them to be leaving the potential for immaturity and misbehaviour of their younger years behind. We do however recognise that this is a journey and mistakes will be made. This document is written to outline to students and their parent or carer what is expected of them.

Aim

The aim of this policy is to encourage students at 6th form to engage with learning in a positive and mature manner. In addition, it is the aim of the document to convey to students and parents the importance of regular attendance. The school expects students to attend all timetabled lessons and morning registration. Regular attendance at school is vital for progress and attainment. There is strong evidence that poor attendance is a leader factor in poor attainment at A-level, **more so even than at GCSE.**

A-level subjects are intensive and require a great deal of preparation, both during lesson time and during independent study periods. It is also important that morning registration and our collective worship programme is engaged with, to help develop student views on our multicultural society, school community and Christian Ethos. An exemplary record of attendance says a huge amount about the student as a person: that they are dedicated, well-motivated, organized and someone who takes their responsibilities seriously.

At Sixth form students are granted more freedom in where they learn in line with their age group and our expectations of them as learners. The student day is not fully timetabled to allow students flexibility within the school day to completed independent study and

homework tasks. The school reserves the right to require students to attend specific timetabled intervention during non-timetabled hours should attendance or work standards fall below what is outlined in this document and the *Sixth form standards policy*.

To support students with attendance Hutton Grammar School Sixth form will establish and monitor a culture of good attendance. To promote this, the school will inform parents should the attendance of a student not be in line with this policy. Procedures relating to this policy are outlined further into this document. In addition, the school will create and uphold a positive learning environment in line with our whole school policies.

Context

This document has been written with the support of the following documents.

- Hutton C of E Grammar school and Sixth Form
 - HGS School Behaviour Policy
- From the Department of Education:
 - Keeping children safe in education 2023.
 - Working together to improve school attendance 2024.
 - School suspensions and permanent exclusions 2023.
 - Behaviour in schools: advice for headteachers and school staff 2022.
 - The Education and Skills Act 2008
- From the Education and Skills Funding Agency
 - Funding guidance for young people 2023 to 2024 from the ESFA

This document should be used as additional guidance alongside the main school behaviour policy, this document outlines specific additions or replacement policies that apply to Sixth Form students only.

Key Attendance Expectations:

Of the Student:

- To maintain good attendance to lessons.
 - Good attendance is defined as 96% or higher.
- To attend lesson on time in a punctual manner as mature learners should.
 - Should a student attend lesson 10 minutes after the bell has sounded, the classroom teacher reserves the right to refuse entry to the lesson. The student will be marked as late, and the incident will be recorded on synergy.
- To be present for morning registration.
 - Where students do not have any timetabled lessons in the morning, they are not required to attend morning registration and will be marked in the register as taking study time. Morning sessions are defined as any lesson between 9:05am and 12:20 pm.
- To inform the school office should you not be able to attend school.
- To inform the Sixth form leadership and pastoral team should there be any reason that is preventing you from regular school attendance.
- To sign in with the biometric Inventory system located in the 6th form atrium when arriving at school outside of morning registration, and to sign out when leaving school.

- This is part of our safeguarding and fire safety policy.
- To make every effort to make medical or dental appointments outside of school hours.
- To make the Sixth form administrator aware of upcoming absence requests for any school absence in line with the main school attendance procedures.
 - The leave of absence request form can be found on the school website.
- To understand that the following are not authorised absences:
 - Driving lessons – *Driving tests are permitted with prior permission.*
 - Part time work – Young persons (16-18) may not engage in employment during the hours of the school day as outlined by statutory guidance from the DFE. The school day is 8:30am – 15:05pm.
 - Workload – We expect students to be using independent study hours to complete work.
 - To mind the house.
 - To look after siblings.
 - To go shopping or celebrate a birthday.
 - Because it is the end of the week or term.

Of Parents and Carers

- To support the school in maintaining its aim for good attendance.
- To recognise that whilst the students should be more independent, they will still need support and boundaries regarding punctuality and attendance.
- To use synergy to monitor their young person's attendance. Note that synergy is our primary mode of communication with parents and carers. It is essential that the listed primary contact on the day of enrolment has a working synergy account. Please contact the school if this is not the case.
- To let the school know when a student will not be attending school due to illness. This can be done by emailing the 6th form administrator or ringing the school office.
 - Long term absences due to illness should have the support of an accompanying Doctor's note.
- To not take holidays during term time.
- To use and engage with synergy to monitor attendance.
- To speak to a member of Sixth Form Pastoral team if they know of any problem, which may prevent their young person from attending school.
- To complete an absence request form to request an exceptional leave of absence. This should be emailed to the Sixth Form Administrator.

Of the School:

- To monitor attendance and take action when attendance dips below 95%.
- To communicate attendance data and issues regarding attendance via school synergy
- To promote good attendance by providing an active and engaging sixth form experience:
 - Through extra and super curricular activities
 - Through active and engaging lessons

- Through opportunities for leadership
 - Including worship, form time, mentoring programmes etc.
- To take action and support students to improve their attendance and appropriately support all students to improve attendance.
 - This could be through the use of internal support or external agencies.

Acceptable reasons for absence as outlined by the department for education:

- The student is too ill to leave the house.
- The student has a hospital appointment.
- The student has toothache and has an emergency appointment.
- A day of religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parent/carer belongs.
- The student is prevented from attending by an unavoidable cause.
- There is a close family bereavement.
- Interviews for courses/employment that will begin after the end of their time in Sixth Form.
 - Students should not miss lessons to attend interviews, shifts and inductions for part-time work.
- University and Employer Open Days – students may attend no more than two of these events in an academic year that take place during the school day.
- Work experience – requests for term-time leave for essential work experience (e.g. medicine, law) will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. These requests should be submitted at least a month in advance. Parents/carers may wish to note that there is a scheduled week of work experience towards the end of Year 12. Please contact the school if you require further details.

Attendance Procedures

Signing In and Out

It is a legal requirement that we know who is in the school building at all times.

Students must make sure that they register biometrically every day and sign in each time they are late to school. They must also sign out each time they leave the building throughout the day and sign in on their return.

Unauthorised Absences – The school's response

If a student is absent from school or from a lesson and we have received no communication from either the student or a parent/carer, a text message will be sent to the primary contact on our synergy system.

A reply is required stating the reason for the students' absence to enable attendance records to be updated; if no reply is received, this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence. This will negatively affect the student's attendance score and trigger the processes outlined below should unauthorised absences continue to occur.

Lesson attendance and Punctuality

Students should attend all lessons but where student attendance drops below 96% the school will take action. Students must be on time for all lessons and registration periods. When a student is marked as late this is because they have arrived 5 minutes or more after the bell. Where a student attends the lesson more than 10 minutes after the bell the classroom teacher may deny them entry to the lesson to prevent disruption. In either the case the student will be marked as late and be expected to catch-up all missed work in their own independent study time.

Persistent Absence and Persistent Lateness

To inform these procedures attendance scores for each student will be generated for each student on a half termly basis. We have also calculated the number of lesson hours missed to allow parents, carers and students to understand the effect missed lessons will have on their attendance.

Stage 1 – 91-95% attendance

At this stage the student is missing 1-2 hours of learning per week, 4-8 hours a month.

- The student will receive a negative synergy note which will notify home and act as record of the poor attendance for the half term.

Stage 2 – Continued poor attendance or attendance between 85%-90%

At this stage learning will be significantly affected and therefore further action is needed.

At this stage the student is missing 3-4 hours of learning per week, 9-16 hours a month.

- A meeting with the sixth form leadership team will take place to discuss improving attendance. An agreement to improve attendance and necessary interventions will be discussed and implemented. This will form an attendance contract.
- A summary of the meeting and agreement will be communicated home to parents via letter.
- Recorded on synergy as stage 2 attendance negative.
- Sustained periods at the level may result in the withdrawal of examination entry fees.

Stage 3 – Failure to improve attendance from stage 2 or attendance below 85%

At this stage learning is significantly affected and the student's absence is disrupting the progress of the student academically and significantly affecting their prospects when they leave the Sixth form after year 13.

At this stage a student is missing approximately 5 hours of learning per week, and 20 hours per month.

- A meeting will take place between the parents and carers of the student, a member of SLT and the sixth form pastoral team. A letter will be sent home.
- Strategies to improve attendance and why the attendance contract failed will be discussed. If the student has attendance below 85% without a stage 2 meeting, the student follows stage 3 procedures.

- Recorded on synergy as a stage 3 attendance negative note.
- Should no acceptable reasons be given for the attendance, a written warning will be issued to the parents and carers of the student outlining the final stage of these procedures.
- Sustained periods at the level may result in the withdrawal of examination entry fees.

Stage 4 – Failure to respond to stage 3 contract.

At this stage significant interventions have been put in place, a significant amount of pastoral involvement has occurred, and the student has still not improved their attendance.

- A final meeting will take place with parents and carers. Parents and Carers will be invited to the meeting via letter home.
- The school will seriously consider withdrawal of examination entry fees.
- Should no acceptable reasons be provided for continued failure to meet school expectations around attendance the school reserves the right to withdraw the Sixth Form place permanently.

Withdrawal of Examination Entry Fees

All students enrolled to complete examinations or coursework between the ages of 16-19 at Hutton C of E Grammar School and Sixth Form will be entered for their exams, the school funds the exams in the first instance. However, the school reserves the right to withdraw this payment for all or individual subjects the student is entered for on the grounds of attendance. Our ability to do so is outlined clearly in the Funding guidance for young people 2023 to 2024 from the ESFA (education and skills funding agency) section 2. The school may take this action if no improvement on attendance is seen from the point at which the student, parent, or carer is notified via synergy (Stage 2) or via letter (stage 3) that the student has reached stage this point of our attendance tracking staged approach. Should a student consistently fall below 90% attendance without acceptable reason the student may be required to source their own examination fees. Acceptable reasons are outlined in the above sections.

Appendix: School attendance and the law

There are many pieces of legislation and government regulations and guidance that are relevant to school attendance and to children and their parents and carers. The list below relates to this attendance policy but is not exhaustive. Some elements of government regulations and DfE guidance do not apply to academies and independent schools (but may apply to independent special schools).

Parents and carers

Duty to ensure children receive education

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 covers the duty of parents to secure the education of children in their care who are of compulsory school age and states:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable—

- (a) to his age, ability and aptitude, and*
- (b) to any special educational needs he may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.*

Offence if a child does not attend regularly

Under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996, if a child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at a school fails to attend regularly, their parent is guilty of an offence.

The offence is absolute as the only defences available to the parent are those statutory defences listed within that section of the Act, ie:

- the child was absent with leave granted by the school;
- the child was prevented from attending by reason of sickness or any unavoidable cause;
- absence was on a day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which their parent belongs;
- that the school is not within statutory walking distance and that the local education authority has made no suitable transport arrangements or enabled the pupil to become registered at an alternative nearer school.

Compulsory school age

Section 8 of the Education Act 1996 establishes that a child becomes of compulsory school age on the start date of the term following her/his fifth birthday, or that day if her/his fifth birthday falls on the day term starts.

A child ceases to be of compulsory school age on the last Friday in June in the academic year in which he/she reaches the age of 16 or if he/she reaches 16 after the last Friday in June but before the start of the new school year.

Legal definition of "parent" in relation to attendance

The law requires that all "parents" are held responsible for their child's attendance. This definition can include any person who has care of the child. Section 576 of the Education Act 1996 states:

Meaning of "parent".

(1) In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires, "parent", in relation to a child or young person, includes any person—

- (a) who is not a parent of his but who has parental responsibility for him, or*
- (b) who has care of him.*

Thus, the definition of “parent” means all natural parents, whether they are married or not, and includes any person who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility and/or care for a child or young person.

Schools

Attendance and absence registration codes

Working together to improve school attendance, DfE statutory guidance 2024, explains which codes schools should use to record attendance and absence in their registers, and specifies the DfE's expectations of schools and local authorities with respect to school attendance.

Data protection

Schools must ensure that personal data is handled in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018. See Hutton Church of England Grammar School 's Privacy Notice for information about how personal data will be used.

Duty for schools to include attendance information in reports for parents

The Education (Pupil Information) (England) Regulations 2005

Duty for schools to notify the local authority when pupils join or leave school

Regulation 13 of The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024

Duty for schools to report attendance concerns about individual pupils to the local authority

Regulation 13 of The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024

Duty for schools to safeguard and promote the welfare of children

Keeping children safe in education, DfE statutory guidance, regularly updated

Duty for schools to share attendance data with the Government

Section 537A of the Education Act 1996 and

Share your daily school attendance, DfE guidance 2024

Leave of absence

Regulation 11 of The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024

Legal interventions

Parents/carers commit an offence if a child who is on a school roll fails to attend regularly and those absences are recorded by the school as unauthorised.

Legal interventions are available under the following acts, guidance and regulations:

- [Section 444 of the Education Act 1996](#)
- [Section 36 of the Children Act 1989](#)
- [Section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2024](#)
- [School attendance parental responsibility measures, DfE guidance 2015](#)

Pupils experiencing social, emotional or mental health issues

[Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools, DfE 2023](#)

Pupils with health needs who cannot attend school

[Arranging education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs, DfE statutory guidance 2023](#)

[Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions, DfE statutory guidance 2015](#)

Pupils with individual needs and specific barriers to attendance

When considering the individual needs of pupils and families who have specific barriers to attendance, schools should be mindful of their obligations under the [UN Convention on the Rights of the Child](#) and the [Equality Act 2010](#). The [Technical Guidance for Schools in England](#), published by the Equality and Human Rights Commission, outlines the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 for schools.

Regulations regarding participation in performances

[The Children \(Performances and Activities\) \(England\) Regulations 2014](#)

Regulations regarding removal from roll

[Regulation 9 of The School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)

Regulations regarding the school day and number of sessions

[The Education \(School Day and School Year\) \(England\) Regulations 1999](#)

Requirement for mainstream, state-funded schools to deliver a school week of at least 32.5 hours

Length of the school week, DfE guidance 2023

Specialist and alternative provision settings are also encouraged to consider extending their core week where appropriate.