



## Pupil Attendance Policy

# Heymann Primary and Nursery School

### Version control

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| <b>Scope: Applicable to all Trust Schools</b><br><i>(to be made school specific in certain parts)</i> |                                   |
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| Author/Reviewer:                                                                                      | Working Party of Leadership Group |

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This policy has been written and updated to reflect the changes within the Department for Education's and Nottinghamshire County Council's 2024 school attendance legislation, guidance and procedures. Further details in regard to specific items and processes referred to in the policy can be found in their two documents which are hyperlinked below.

Department for Education: [Working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/115444/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance.pdf) ([publishing.service.gov.uk](https://publishing.service.gov.uk))

DfE Attendance Toolkit for Schools (July 2026) <https://attendancetoolkit.blob.core.windows.net/toolkit-doc/Attendance%20toolkit%20for%20schools.pdf>

Nottinghamshire County Council: [Improving School Attendance Toolkit | NCC School](#)

Education Endowment Fund – Supporting School Attendance

<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/leadership-and-planning/supporting-attendance>

This policy also operates within the statutory safeguarding framework set out in *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026*. KCSIE 2026 identifies *Working Together to Improve School Attendance (DfE, July 2026)* as statutory guidance and clarifies that persistent absence should always be considered a potential safeguarding concern. Attendance monitoring therefore forms part of the school's wider safeguarding systems and early-help processes.

## The importance of school attendance

Improving attendance is everyone's business. The barriers to accessing education are wide and complex, both within and beyond the school gates, and are often specific to individual pupils and families. The foundation of securing good attendance is that school is a calm, orderly, safe, and supportive environment where all pupils want to be and are keen and ready to learn.

Some pupils find it harder than others to attend school and therefore at all stages of improving attendance, schools and partners should work with pupils and parents to remove any barriers to attendance by building strong and trusting relationships and working together to put the right support in place. Securing good attendance cannot therefore be seen in isolation - effective practices for improvement will involve close interaction with schools' efforts on curriculum, behaviour, bullying, special educational needs support, pastoral and mental health and wellbeing, and effective use of resources, including pupil premium. It cannot solely be the preserve of a single member of staff, or organisation, it must be a concerted effort across all teaching and non-teaching staff in school, the trust, the local governing body, the local authority, and other local partners.

In line with *KCSIE 2026*, all staff understand that patterns of absence, lateness or sudden changes in attendance may indicate wider safeguarding or welfare concerns. Such information should be shared promptly with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and considered alongside other safeguarding records.

## The law on school attendance and right to a full-time education

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to a full-time education suitable to their age and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school.

Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. This means their child must attend every day that the school is

open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission from the school for an absence in advance.

## **Working together to improve attendance**

Successfully treating the root causes of absence and removing barriers to attendance requires schools and local partners to work collaboratively with families — and not against families. All partners should work together to remove barriers and improve attendance.

Attendance improvement is inseparable from safeguarding practice. *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026* emphasises that patterns of absence or sudden changes in attendance may highlight pupils who are at risk of harm, neglect or exploitation. Schools should therefore use attendance information as part of their wider safeguarding monitoring and decision-making processes.

### **Monitor**

Rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance as soon as possible so all parties can work together to resolve them before they become entrenched.

### **Expect**

Aspire to high standards of attendance from all pupils and parents and build a culture where all pupils can, and want to, be in school and ready to learn by prioritising attendance improvement across the school.

### **Listen & understand**

When a pattern is spotted, discuss with pupils and parents to listen and understand barriers to attendance, and agree how all partners can work together to resolve them.

### **Facilitate support**

Remove barriers in school and help pupils and parents to access the support they need to overcome the barriers outside of school. This might include an early help or whole family plan where absence is a symptom of wider issues.

### **Formalise support**

Where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or engaged with, the school and partners should work together to explain the consequences clearly and ensure support is also in place to enable families to respond. Depending on the circumstances, this may include formalising support through an attendance contract or education supervision order.

### **Enforce**

Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working, or not being engaged with, enforce attendance through statutory intervention: a penalty notice in line with the National Framework or prosecution to protect the pupil's right to an education.

## **Expectations of schools**

All schools have a continuing responsibility to proactively manage and improve attendance across their school community. Attendance is the essential foundation to positive outcomes for all pupils and is therefore seen as everyone's responsibility in school.

Schools will:

- Develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance
- Have a clear school attendance policy which all leaders, staff, pupils, and parents understand
- Accurately complete admission and attendance registers and have effective day to day processes in place to follow-up absence

- Regularly analyse attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require support with their attendance and put effective strategies in place
- Build strong relationships with families, listen to and understand barriers to attendance and work with families to remove them
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities and other partners when absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe
- Be particularly mindful of pupils absent from school due to mental or physical ill health or their special educational needs and/or disabilities and provide them with additional support.
- Ensure attendance information is regularly reviewed by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) so that patterns of absence can inform safeguarding, early-help and multi-agency support as set out in *KCSIE 2026*

## **Expectations upon the trust boards and locally governing bodies**

Improving attendance requires constant focus. Effective whole school approaches require regular ongoing support, guidance, and challenge. The expectation upon the Trust and local governing bodies is to:

- Recognise the importance of school attendance and promote it across the school's ethos and policies
- Ensure school 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
- Share effective practice on attendance management and improvement across schools

## **Expectations of local authorities**

The local authority has a crucial role in supporting pupils to overcome barriers to good attendance and ensuring all children can access the full-time education to which they are entitled. Local authorities are facilitators of wider support needed by individual families and schools to overcome barriers in the short term. They are also strategic leaders that work across a geographical area to remove barriers in the longer term. The expectation upon the local authority is to:

- Rigorously track local attendance data to devise a strategic approach to attendance that prioritises the pupils, pupil cohorts and schools on which to provide support to, and focus its efforts to unblock area wide barriers to attendance
- Provide a School Attendance Support Team that offers the following:
  1. Communication & advice
  2. Targeting support meetings
  3. Multi-disciplinary support for families
  4. Legal intervention
- Monitor and improve the attendance of children with a social worker through their Virtual School Head
- Schools and local authorities must also ensure that alternative provision used for pupils with attendance or behavioural challenges meets safeguarding expectations. As clarified in *KCSIE 2026*, schools must obtain written confirmation from any alternative provider that all appropriate safeguarding checks and procedures are in place before commissioning placements.

## **Persistent and severe absence**

Where absence escalates and pupils miss 10% or more of school, working alongside the local authority, schools will put additional targeted support in place to remove any barriers to attendance and re-engage

these pupils. In doing so, schools should sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence and understand the importance of school as a place of safety and support for children who might be facing difficulties, rather than reaching immediately for punitive approaches.

Severely absent pupils are those that are missing 50% or more of school. Particular focus should be given by all schools and partners to prioritise these pupils for support.

Persistent or severe absence should be shared with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and, where appropriate, with children's social care or the local authority early-help team, in accordance with *KCSIE 2026* and *Working Together to Improve School Attendance (2026)*.

## **Attendance legal intervention**

As absence is so often a symptom of wider issues a family is facing, schools, the Trust and the local authority will work together with other local partners to understand the barriers to attendance and provide support. Where that is not successful, or is not engaged with, the law protects pupils' right to an education and provides a range of legal interventions to formalise attendance improvement efforts, and where all other avenues have been exhausted, enforce it through prosecuting parents. Attendance legal intervention can only be used for pupils of compulsory school age and decisions should be made on an individual case by case basis.

The full range of legal interventions are to be considered when making decisions on an individual case by case basis. These are:

- Attendance contract
- Education supervision orders
- Attendance prosecution
- Fixed penalty notices

## **Contents of the admissions register ('the school roll')**

The school admission register, sometimes known as the 'the school roll', must be kept in accordance with regulation 8 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.

It is vital that the admission register is kept up to date. Schools should encourage parents to inform them of any changes whenever they occur and ensure the admission register is amended as soon as possible. Changes could include pupils with a new address and/or school.

A pupil's name can only be deleted from the admission register for a reason set out in regulation 9 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. A pupil's name must not be removed for any other reason and doing so would constitute off-rolling.

## **Contents of the attendance register**

All schools must keep an attendance register in accordance with regulation 10 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.

Schools must take the attendance register at the beginning of each morning session and once during each afternoon session. On each occasion the register is taken, the appropriate national attendance and absence code must be entered for every pupil. The codes are set out in regulation 10 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.

The national attendance and absence codes are used to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way and are used to collect statistics through the School Census system. This data helps schools and the Trust to gain a greater understanding of the level of, and the reason for, absence and the delivery of education.

## **Roles and responsibilities**

All members of the school community have roles and responsibilities in promoting and ensuring good attendance and punctuality. Please read the following tables and appendices to see the detail of these and actions taken in relation to them.

### **Statutory guidance and legislation**

- Working together to improve school attendance, DfE, July 2026
- School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026
- Children Missing Education: statutory guidance

### **Supporting guidance and resources**

- DfE Attendance Toolkit / RISE attendance improvement resources
- Nottinghamshire County Council Improving School Attendance Toolkit

# Expectations and Actions

|                                                             | Expectations and Actions                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
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| Element                                                     | Academy Trustees<br><i>(Actions to meet expectations)</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | School Governors                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Schools<br><i>(see appendix 1 for detailed actions)</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Parents<br><i>(see appendix 2 for summary of key responsibilities )</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Local Authority<br><i>(as per the Notts CC toolkit hyperlinked at the start of this document )</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| All Pupils to have strong attendance (attendance above 97%) | <p>Take an active role in attendance improvement, support their school(s) to prioritise attendance, and work together with leaders to set whole school cultures. <i>(Termly monitoring at school by school level via EQT Standards Committee meetings. Monitoring of attendance figures and also EQT School Overview documents which have absence as a specific factor that is evaluated/ graded)</i></p> <p>Ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties. <i>(Integrated into EQT Governing Body checklists that feed back into the EQT Trust Board for review)</i></p> <p>Ensure relevant school staff receive training on attendance. <i>(EQT Leadership Group to identify</i></p> | <p>Take an active role in attendance improvement, support their school(s) to prioritise attendance, and work together with leaders to set whole school cultures. <i>(Termly monitoring via Head Teacher report)</i></p> <p>Ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties. <i>(Annual monitoring via EQT Governor Checklist)</i></p> <p>Ensure school staff receive training on attendance. <i>(Annual monitoring via EQT Governor Checklist)</i></p> | <p>Have a clear school attendance policy on the school website which all staff, pupils and parents understand.</p> <p>Develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance.</p> <p>Accurately complete admission and attendance registers.</p> <p>Have robust daily processes to follow up absence.</p> <p>Have a dedicated senior leader with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance.</p> | <p>Ensure their child attends every day the school is open except when a statutory reason applies.</p> <p>Notify the school as soon as possible when their child has to be unexpectedly absent (e.g. sickness).</p> <p>Only request leave of absence in exceptional circumstances and do so in advance.</p> <p>Book any medical appointments around the school day where possible.</p> | <p>Have a strategic approach to improving attendance for the whole area and make it a key focus of all frontline council services.</p> <p>Have a School Attendance Support Team that works with all schools in their area to remove area-wide barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Provide each school with a named point of contact in the School Attendance Support Team who can support with queries and advice.</p> <p>Offer opportunities for all schools in the area to share effective practice.</p> |

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|                                                                                                            | <i>any training needs and plan response)</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent (attendance between 90 - 95%) are supported to prevent this | Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.<br><i>(Termly monitoring at school by school level via EQT Standards Committee meetings. Monitoring of attendance figures and also EQT School Overview documents which have absence as a specific factor that is evaluated/ graded)</i> | Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.<br><i>(Termly monitoring via Head Teacher report)</i> | Proactively use data to identify pupils at risk of poor attendance.<br><br>Where appropriate, work with each identified pupil and their parents to understand and address the reasons for absence, including any in-school barriers to attendance.<br><br>Where out of school barriers are identified, signpost and support access to any required services in the first instance.                                                                                                                                                                     | Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.<br><br>Proactively engage with the support offered to prevent the need for more formal support.                                                                       | Provide opportunity for every school to identify, discuss and signpost or provide access to services for pupils who are persistently or severely absent or at risk of becoming so.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Persistently absent pupils (attendance below 90%)                                                          | Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it. <i>(Termly monitoring at school by school level via EQT Standards Committee meetings. Monitoring of attendance figures and also EQT School Overview documents which have absence as a specific factor that is evaluated/ graded)</i>    | Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.<br><i>(Termly monitoring via Head Teacher report)</i> | Continued support as for pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent and:<br><br>If the issue persists, take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the local authority and other partners. Act as the lead practitioner where all partners agree that the school is the best placed lead service.<br><br>Where the lead practitioner is outside of the school, continue to work with the local authority and partners.<br><br>Where absence becomes persistent, consider putting additional support in place to remove any barriers. Where | Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.<br><br>Proactively engage with the formal support offered – including any parenting contract or voluntary early help plan to prevent the need for legal intervention. | Continued support as for pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent and:<br><br>Where there are out of school barriers, provide each identified pupil and their family with access to services they need in the first instance.<br><br>If the issue persists, facilitate a voluntary early help assessment, where appropriate. Take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the school and other partners. Provide the lead practitioner where all |

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|                                               |                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                   | <p>necessary this includes working with partners. Consider section 4 of NCC Toolkit.</p> <p>Where support is not working, being engaged with or appropriate, work with the local authority on legal intervention.</p> <p>Where there are safeguarding concerns, intensify support through statutory children's social care.</p> <p>Work with other schools in the local area, such as schools previously attended and the schools of any siblings.</p> |                                                                  | <p>partners agree that a local authority service is best placed to lead. Where the lead practitioner is outside of the local authority, continue to work with the school and partners.</p> <p>Work jointly with the school to provide formal support options including parenting contracts and education supervision orders.</p> <p>Where there are safeguarding concerns, ensure joint working between the school, children's social care services and other statutory safeguarding partners.</p> <p>Where support is not working or being engaged with, enforce attendance through legal intervention (including prosecution as a last resort).</p> |
| Severely absent pupils (attendance below 50%) | Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it. <i>(Termly)</i> | Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it. | Continued support as for persistently absent pupils and:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Work with the school and local authority to help them understand | Continued support as for persistently absent pupils and:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |

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|                                                                              | <p><i>monitoring at school by school level via EQT Standards Committee meetings. Monitoring of attendance figures and also EQT School Overview documents which have absence as a specific factor that is evaluated/graded)</i></p> | <p><i>(Termly monitoring via Head Teacher report)</i></p>                                                                                                          | <p>Monitor attendance daily and discuss with LA Support Officers.</p> <p>Agree a joint approach for all severely absent pupils with the local authority.</p>                                                                           | <p>their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the formal support offered – including any attendance contract or voluntary early help plan to prevent the need for legal intervention</p> | <p>All services should make this group the top priority for support. This may include a whole family plan, consideration for an education, health and care plan, or alternative form of educational provision.</p> <p>Be especially conscious of any potential safeguarding issues, ensuring joint working between the school, children's social care services and other statutory safeguarding partners. Where appropriate, this could include conducting a full children's social care assessment and building attendance into children in need and child protection plans.</p> |
| Support for cohorts and/or groups of pupils with lower attendance than peers | <p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p> <p><i>(Termly monitoring at school by school level via EQT Standards Committee meetings.</i></p>                          | <p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p> <p><i>(Termly monitoring via Head Teacher report)</i></p> | <p>Proactively use data to identify cohorts with, or at risk of, low attendance and develop strategies to support them.</p> <p>Work with other schools in the local area and the local authority to share effective practice where</p> | Not applicable.                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Track local attendance data to prioritise support and unblock area wide attendance barriers where they impact numerous schools.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |

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|                                                                                                                         | <i>Monitoring of attendance figures and also EQT School Overview documents which have absence as a specific factor that is evaluated/ graded)</i>                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                         | there are common barriers to attendance.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Support for individual pupils (eg pupils with SEND, SEMH needs, medical conditions , young carers) with poor attendance | Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.<br><i>(Termly monitoring at school by school level via EQT Standards Committee meetings. Monitoring of attendance figures and also EQT School Overview documents which have absence as a specific factor that is evaluated/ graded)</i> | Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.<br><i>(Termly monitoring via Head Teacher report)</i> | Maintain the same ambition for attendance and work with pupils and parents to maximise attendance.<br><br>Ensure join up with pastoral support and where required, put in place additional support and adjustments. If applicable, ensure the provision outlined in the pupil's EHCP is accessed.<br><br>Consider additional support from wider services and external partners, making timely referrals where relevant – eg: Early Help, EBSA guidance:<br><a href="#">EBSA Padlet - Nottinghamshire Educational Psychology Service</a><br><br>Regularly monitor data for such groups, including at board and governing body meetings and with local authorities. | Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.<br><br>Proactively engage with the support offered. | Work closely with relevant services and partners, for example special educational needs, educational psychologists, and mental health services, to ensure joined up support for families.<br><br>Ensure suitable education, such as alternative provision, is arranged for children of compulsory school age who because of health reasons would not otherwise receive a suitable education. |
| Support for pupils with a social worker                                                                                 | Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.                                                       | Inform the pupil's social worker if there are any unexplained absences and if their name is to be deleted from the register.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.                                                     | Regularly monitor the attendance of children with a social worker in their area.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |

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|  | <i>(Termly monitoring at school by school level via EQT Standards Committee meetings. Monitoring of attendance figures and also EQT School Overview documents which have absence as a specific factor that is evaluated/graded)</i> | <i>(Termly monitoring via Head Teacher report)</i> |  | Proactively engage with the support offered. | Put in place personal education plans for looked-after children.<br><br>Secure regular attendance of looked-after children as their corporate parent and provide advice and guidance about the importance of attendance to those services supporting pupils previously looked after. |
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