

Learning together to be
the best we can be

Headteacher - Nichola Irving



Attendance Policy

Excellent attendance is a key priority for all at Horton Grange Primary School. We promote a positive attitude to attendance, we believe that every second counts and is crucial to allowing children to maximise the educational opportunities available to them for a prosperous future. Parents, staff and pupils all have a responsibility to ensure children maintain excellent attendance standards.

Safeguarding Statement

Everyone at Horton Grange shares an objective to help keep children and young people safe by contributing to:

- Providing a safe environment for children and young people to learn in school and;
- Identifying children and young people who are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, and taking appropriate action with the aim of making sure they are kept safe both at home and in school.

Date adopted: June 2024
Reviewed: November 2025
Next review: November 2026

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INTRODUCTION

The aim of this policy is to provide a framework and guidance to all staff and parents to encourage children to attend school regularly so that they can take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. The policy is based on current legislation contained in the Education Act 1996 and 2011 and best practice guidance produced by the Department for Education (DfE) and with reference to Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024. This policy reflects the working together to improve school attendance statutory guidance published in February 2024, which is applied from August 2024. This policy is also informed by Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 and the Children Missing Education statutory guidance (DfE, September 2025).

Excellent attendance promotes excellent learning. Regular school attendance is essential if children are to achieve their full potential academically, socially and emotionally. Good attendance maximises the daily opportunities we, as a school, provide and helps children become emotionally resilient, confident and competent adults who are able to achieve their goals and aspirations and make a positive contribution to their community. We don't want any child to be disadvantaged by poor attendance, therefore we will work with families and aim to identify the reasons for poor attendance at the earliest opportunity and try to resolve any difficulties and offer support where necessary.

Improving attendance is everyone's responsibility. "Good attendance begins with school being a place in which the children want to be and therefore the foundation of securing good attendance is that school is a calm, orderly, safe and supportive environment where all pupils are keen and ready to learn." (Working together to improve school attendance 2024). The responsibility for good attendance is shared, involving the whole school, parents and the local community. Our Attendance Policy should not be viewed in isolation; it is a thread that runs through all aspects of school improvement, and is supported by our policies on safeguarding, bullying, behaviour and special educational need and disability. This policy also takes into account the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality act 2010 and the Race Relations Act 2000.

HOW ATTENDANCE IS JUDGED

There are 190 days in a school year and we define our key levels of attendance as:

Attendance	Description	Approx. days lost per year	Sessions Each day has 2, a.m. and p.m.	Approx. weeks lost per year
100 - 99%	Exceptional	0 to 3	0-8	Less than 1
96-98.9%	Good	4 to 9	10-18	1 to 2
95.9-90.1%	At Risk	10 to 18	20-37	2 to 4
90% and less	Persistent Absence	19 or more	38 and more	4 or more

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Principles

Horton Grange Primary School believes the following important principles underpin our approach to managing attendance:

Roles and Responsibilities

Pupils, parents/carers and all school staff including governors understand the issues and procedures for attendance and punctuality.

Anyone with attendance concerns, including pupils and parents feel they can raise concerns and share in addressing those concerns.

Time and resources are in place to support good attendance. Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined.

Procedures linked to attendance – early identification, tracking and reporting

There are clear procedures in place for maximising pupil attendance, tracking and reporting absence.

Sanctions for failing to ensure regular attendance are fully understood by the whole school community including parents/carers.

There is a transparency in dealing with attendance issues.

Identifying patterns of absence and intervening early are crucial. Patterns of attendance are established early in a school career. Children who miss significant amounts of their education in primary schools are more likely to truant later on. School will work closely in partnership with the allocated Education Welfare Officer (EWO), Northumberland County Council (NCC) and Children's Services.

Rewards and Promotion

Rewards are given for good attendance and to those who strive to improve it.

Each of these principles is explained in full detail in the following guidance.

Rights/Roles/ Responsibilities

Attendance is essential for pupils to get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, wellbeing and wider life chances. The pupils with the highest attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4 have higher rates of attendance compared to those with lowest attainment. For the most vulnerable pupils, regular attendance is also an important protective factor and the best opportunity for needs to be identified and support provided. Research has shown associations between regular absence from school and a number of extra-familial harms, including crime. (Working together to improve school attendance, 2024). Therefore it is paramount that children have good attendance in order for all children to be next stage ready and achieve a successful future.

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Horton Grange Primary School believes that improved school attendance can only be achieved if it is viewed as a shared responsibility of the school staff, governors, parents/carers, pupils and the wider school community.

The Governing Body will:

- Ensure that the importance and value of good attendance is promoted to pupils and their parents/carers.
- Have a named senior attendance for attendance (SAL) (Debby Carr/Sarah Cornwall- Assistant Head Teachers)
- Annually review the school's Attendance Policy and ensure the required resources are available to fully implement the policy
- Identify a member of the governing body to lead on attendance matters- This is currently Janet Dyson.
- Ensure that *The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007* (and subsequent amending and related legislation,) is complied with together with statutory and non statutory guidance such as Working together to improve school attendance, 2024 issued by the Department of Education.
- Monitor the school's attendance and related issues through termly reporting at Governing Body Meetings
- Ensure that attendance data is reported to the Local Authority and Department of Education as required and on time
- Have clear systems in school to report, record and monitor the attendance of all pupils, including those who are educated off-site
- Ensure that there are procedures for collecting and analysing attendance data frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence
- Ensure that data is understood and used to devise solutions and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions.

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A positive learning climate is essential for promoting good attendance

The Senior Leadership Team will:

- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to pupils and their parents/carers.
- Form positive relationships with pupils and parents/carers
- Ensure that there is a whole school approach which reinforces good school attendance; with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all pupils to attend and to achieve.
- Monitor the implementation of the Attendance Policy and ensure that the policy is reviewed annually
- Make staff aware of the Attendance Policy and are adequately trained to address attendance issues
- Ensure that *The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007* (and subsequent amending and related legislation,) is complied with together with statutory and non-statutory guidance such as Working together to improve school attendance, 2024 issued by the Department of Education.
- Have a named senior manager (SAL) to lead on attendance and allocate sufficient time and resource (June Hewes, Debby Carr/Sarah Cornwall).

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- Ensure that the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is notified of any attendance concerns that could indicate safeguarding issues, in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025.
- Return school attendance data to the Local Authority and Department of Education as required and on time
- Ensure that there are procedures for collecting and analysing attendance data frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence. These will be disseminated to the Head Teacher and Assistant Head Teacher weekly.
- Report the school's attendance and related issues through termly reporting to the Governing Body and on a half termly basis to the lead governor for attendance.
- Have systems in place to report, record and monitor the attendance of all pupils, including those who are educated off-site.
- Collate and analyse attendance data frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence.
- Interpret the data to develop solutions and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions.
- Involve Education Welfare and develop a multi-agency response to improve attendance and support pupils and their families.
- Document interventions used to a standard required by the local authority should legal proceedings be instigated.

All staff will:

- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to pupils and their parents/carers.
- Form positive relationships with pupils and parents/carers.
- Contribute to a whole school approach which reinforces good school attendance; with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all pupils to attend and to achieve. A positive learning climate is essential for promoting good attendance.
- Comply with the Registration Regulations, England, 2024 and the working together to improve school attendance, 2024 and other attendance related legislation.
- Implement systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all pupils, including those who are educated off-site
- Analyse attendance data to identify causes and patterns of absence.
- Contribute to the evaluation of school strategies and interventions.
- Work with the Education Welfare Officer and other agencies to improve attendance and support pupils and their families.
- Document interventions used to a standard required by the local authority should legal proceedings be instigated.

Parents/Carers will:

- Talk to their child about school and what goes on there. Take a positive interest in their child's work and educational progress.
- Instil the value of education and regular school attendance within the home.
- Encourage their child to look to the future and have aspirations.
- Contact the school if their child is absent to let them know the reason why and the expected date of return. Follow this up with a note where possible
- Avoid unnecessary absences. Wherever possible make appointments for the Doctors, Dentists etc. outside of school hours.
- Ask the school for help if their child is experiencing difficulties.
- Inform the school of any change in circumstances that may impact on their child's attendance.
- Support the school; take every opportunity to get involved in their child's education, form a positive relationship with school and acknowledge the importance of children receiving the same messages from both school and home.

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- Encourage routine at home, for example, bed times, homework, preparing school bag and uniform the evening before.
- Not keep their child off school to go shopping, to help at home or to look after other members of the family.
- Avoid taking their child on family holidays during term-time.

Legal Framework

Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act states that parents must ensure that children of compulsory school age receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude to any special educational needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

A child is of compulsory school age at the beginning of the term following their 5th birthday. A child ceases to be of compulsory school age on the last Friday in June of the school year in which they reach the age of 16.

Under the Education Act 1996, the Local Authority has a statutory responsibility to ensure that parents secure education for children of compulsory school age and where necessary, use legal enforcement. This responsibility is undertaken by Education Welfare team.

The School Attendance (Pupil Registration (England) Regulations 2024), expect schools to take an attendance register twice a day, once at the start of the morning session and then again during the afternoon session.

On each occasion they must record whether each registered pupil is physically present in school or, if not, the reason they are not in school by using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from regulation 10 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.

Every state school in England is required to share their daily attendance registers across the education sector - including with the department for education, councils, and trusts as part of the government's drive to reduce pupil absence in school.

Procedures linked to attendance – early identification, tracking and reporting

Categorising absence

Where pupils of compulsory school age are recorded as absent, the register must show whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised.

Absence can only be authorised by the school and cannot be authorised by parents/carers. All absences will be treated as unauthorised unless a satisfactory explanation and or evidence for the pupil's absence has been received.

Parents/carers should advise the school by telephone on the first day of absence and provide the school with an expected date of return. This should be followed up in the form of a written note from the parent/carer, though verbal explanations may be acceptable where this is considered appropriate. Alternative arrangements will be agreed with non-English speaking parents/carers.

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Absence will usually be categorised as set out below, however, this is not an exhaustive list and should be read in conjunction with relevant legislation and statutory guidance (for example - The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 / [Working together to improve school attendance](#))

Absence will be categorised as follows:

Authorised absence

Illness

In most cases a telephone call or a note from the parent/carer informing the school that their child is ill will be acceptable. Where there are repeated absences due to reported illness parents/carers may be asked to provide medical evidence. This will usually be in the form of an appointment card, prescription etc.

Medical/Dental Appointments

Parents /carers are advised where possible to make medical and dental appointments outside of the school day. Where this is not possible, pupils should attend school for part of the day. Parents should show the appointment card to school. Where a pupil cannot attend because of medical needs, the school will liaise with health professionals and the LA to arrange suitable alternative provision and support a phased return.

Other Authorised Circumstances

This relates to occasions where there is cause for absence due to exceptional circumstances which will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the Headteacher.

Excluded (No alternative provision made)

Exclusion from attending school is counted as an authorised absence. The child's class teacher/form tutor/Head of Year will make arrangements for work to be sent home.

Religious Observance

Horton Grange Primary School acknowledges the multi-faith nature of British society and recognises that, on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside school holiday periods or weekends and is recognised as such by a relevant religious authority. Where this occurs, the school will consider either authorising the pupil absence or making special leave for religious observance. Parents are requested to give advance notice to the school.

Traveller/mobile child Absence

Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) pupils are among the lowest achieving groups of pupils at every key stage in education, although some GRT pupils achieve very well at school. We recognise that there are many complex and interwoven factors that may influence the educational attainment of GRT pupils. At our school, we have high expectations of all pupils, regardless of their background whilst recognising the lifestyle and cultural traditions of GRT communities. In line with The Education Act 1996, Section 444(6) the school will authorise the absence of a pupil who is a mobile child^[1] and is unable to attend school because:

- the parent is engaged in a trade or business of such a nature as to require him to travel from place to place,
- that the child has attended at a school as a registered pupil as regularly as the nature of that trade or business permits, and

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- if the child has attained the age of six, that he has made at least 200 attendances during the period of 12 months ending with the date on which the proceedings were instituted

This provision applies *only* when the family has no fixed abode and are engaged in a trade or business that requires them to travel and when the child is attending school as regularly as that trade permits. In these circumstances, parents have a duty to ensure that their children are receiving suitable education when not at school.

When a family is trading or otherwise conducting their business in or around Northumberland, if a family can reasonably travel back to their base school (see below) then the expectation is that their child will attend full-time. Horton Grange Primary School will be regarded as the base school if it is the school where the child normally attends when he or she is not travelling. However, the pupil must have attended Horton Grange Primary School in the last 18 months. Parents can register their children at other schools temporarily while away from their base school; in such cases, the pupil's school place at Horton Grange Primary School will be kept open for them whilst travelling. This is to protect them from unfairly losing their place at their school of usual attendance.

To ensure we can effectively support all our pupils, we ask that parents:

- Advise the school of their forthcoming travelling patterns as soon as these are known and before they happen; and inform the school regarding proposed return dates

Late Arrival/Punctuality

The school doors open at 8:45. Morning registration is at 8:55am and children will need to be in school by that time to be marked on time. Children arriving after 8:55am should access school through Main Reception. Children arriving after 8.55am will be marked as present but arriving late (L).

The register will close at 9.15am. Children arriving after the close of register (9:15am) will be recorded as late after registration (U). This will not be authorised and will count as an absence for that school session. The register is taken twice a day therefore the day counts as two attendances. Children arriving late to school must immediately report to the main reception where a late slip will be required to be completed by the parent/carer if they are present. This is so that we can be responsible for their health and safety whilst at school.

Late absences will only be **authorised** if a satisfactory explanation for the late arrival can be provided, for example, evidence of attendance at a medical appointment such as dentist, doctors or hospital.

The absence will be recorded as **unauthorised** if the pupil has arrived late without justifiable cause, for example, if they woke up late, had no uniform to wear or were waiting for their uniform to dry.

Unauthorised absence

Leave of absence during term time – Generally the DfE does not consider the need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure or recreation and can only be authorised in an exceptional circumstance. This is entirely at the discretion of the Head Teacher and is not a parental right.

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If a parent/carer fails to notify school of their child's daily absence, the school office will record this as an unauthorised absence in the register. This will count as an absence for that school session.

Absence will not be authorised unless parents have provided a satisfactory explanation that has been accepted as such by the school.

Examples of unsatisfactory explanations include:

A pupil's/family member's birthday
Shopping for uniforms/shoes
Having hair cut
Closure of a sibling's school for training day (or other) purposes
Illness where the child is considered well enough to attend school
Leave of Absence taken without the authorisation of school

Deletions from the Register

- Any deletions from the Register will be in accordance with regulation 9 of The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024,

Horton Grange Primary School follows Northumberland County Council's Children Missing Education Protocol when a pupil's whereabouts is unknown.

[Children-Missing-Education-procedures-01-06-19.pdf \(northumberland.gov.uk\)](#)

The school will complete and submit a *Children Missing Education (CME) notification* to Northumberland County Council within 5 school days of any pupil being added to or removed from the admissions register outside standard transition points, in accordance with Regulation 13 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.

Before removing a pupil from roll, the Attendance Lead will make reasonable enquiries to confirm the pupil's new school or destination and record evidence of those checks on CPOMS. If the child's whereabouts cannot be confirmed, the case will be referred immediately to the LA CME Officer and the DSL.

Using Attendance Data

It is a duty for school registers to be kept electronically and every entry in a register is to be kept for at least six years (previously 3 years)

Pupil's attendance will be monitored and will be shared with the Local Authority and other agencies if a pupil's attendance is a cause for concern.

Indicators next to a pupil's name will show if their attendance has stayed the same, improved or deteriorated. This pupil level data will be used to trigger school action as set out in the escalation of intervention (See Appendix 1 – Horton Grange Primary School Attendance Procedure).

Horton Grange believes that early intervention is a key component to support regular attendance.

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Attendance data will also be used to identify emerging patterns and trends to inform the whole school to improve attendance and attainment.

Horton Grange Primary School will share attendance data with the Department for Education and the local authority as required.

All information shared will be done so in accordance with the UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018.

Persistent and Severe Absence

Persistent absence (PA) is defined as 10% or more missed sessions, and severe absence (SA) as 50% or more missed sessions. The school will review attendance data every two weeks to identify pupils at risk of becoming PA and intervene early in line with the graduated approach.

A pupil is defined by the Government as a '**persistent absentee**' (PA) when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for any reason; this can be authorised or unauthorised absence. Over a full academic year this would be 19 school days (38 sessions) missed. Absence at this level will cause considerable damage to any pupil's education and we need the full support and co-operation of parents to resolve this.

A pupil who has missed 50% or more schooling is defined by the Government as '**severely absent**' (SA). Pupils within this cohort may find it more difficult to be in school or face bigger barriers to their regular attendance and, as such, are likely to need more intensive support.

The attendance of all pupils at our school is monitored to identify children who are PA, or are on track to becoming PA. Where emerging concerns are identified we will instigate appropriate and timely interventions as outlined in our policy. Referrals may also be made to external agencies for targeted support

Children open to Children Services

Registers are screened for absences where there are known child protection plans in conjunction with the Head Teacher/Family Support Guidance and Welfare Officer.

Children subject to a Child Protection plan

If a child on a child protection plan fails to attend school on the first day of absence without a reason and the family cannot be contacted that day by telephone, the Social Worker attached to the family will be contacted and notified of the absence. If contact can still not be established, a home visit will be made by the Assistant Head Teacher and Family Support Guidance and Welfare Officer at the earliest opportunity.

Children subject to a Child In Need plan

Where the school has concerns about a child's attendance, on the second day of absence without a reason, they will notify Children Services and report the concern to the identified Social Worker.

Support Systems

School recognises that poor attendance is often a sign that there are more serious issues going on in a child's life. This may be linked to problems at home and or in school. Parents/carers should make school aware of any difficulties or changes in circumstances that may affect their child's attendance and or

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behaviour in school, for example, bereavement, divorce/separation, incidents of domestic abuse. This will help the school identify any additional support that may be required.

Horton Grange Primary also recognises that some pupils are more likely to require additional support to attain good attendance, for example, those pupils with special educational needs, those with physical or mental health needs, migrant and refugee pupils and looked after children.

The school will implement strategies to support improved attendance. Strategies used will include:

Child Focused Rewards/Support

Reward systems e.g. daily Epraise point for attending school every day and pencils, stickers etc

Termly Asda Vouchers prize draws

Certificates (termly and yearly)

Assemblies

Horton Hero

Weekly attendance Trophy

Class reward for highest achieving class throughout the year

Individual weekly class incentives leading to class treat

Thrive support

Attendance 1:1's (tracking in school)

Family Support

Informal discussion with parents

Family Thrive

Family learning

Use of Early Help Action plans

Home visits by Assistant Head Teacher and Family Support, Guidance and Welfare Officer

Resources to help with establishing routines and early starts!

Yearly attendance drive with Education Welfare Officer

Breakfast club offered

Support from Outside Agencies

Referrals to support agencies

Additional learning support

Behaviour support

Regular meetings with Education Welfare Service

The first stages of applying the Attendance Policy will be focussed around offering families support in a child centred way. The emphasis will be on early intervention and communication will be a key focus. Open and honest discussions will take place between school, children and parents/carers. This will aim to avoid escalation to the Local Authority's Education Welfare Service.

Where parents/carers fail or refuse to engage with the support offered and further unauthorised absence occurs, Horton Grange Primary School will refer to Education Welfare and the use of legal sanctions will be considered.

Attendance Actions

All attendance concerns are recorded on CPOMs and are discussed and actioned accordingly, this includes phone calls with parents, letters, face to face meetings, home visits and any EWO involvement.

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Application Process

A parent/carer requesting leave of absence during term time should make the application in writing at least two weeks in advance.

School may invite the parent/carer into school to discuss the reasons for the application and the impact the absence may have on the child's education.

Responses for LOA will be responded to in writing clearly stating why the leave is not authorised and the possible consequences if the leave is taken. However, some applications may need further written communication from the Head Teacher. Registers are coded accordingly and if the child does not return on the expected date, the standard absence policy procedures are adhered to.

In line with government and local authority guidance, if a parent/carer removes their child from school without requesting leave of absence or without authorisation from the Head Teacher, school will have no alternative but to consider submitting a request for a Fixed Penalty Notice. The parent will be informed in writing that a request to the Local authority to issue a Penalty Notice is being made.
N.B. A minimum absence of 10 sessions (5 school days) which are unauthorised must be recorded against the pupils name within a rolling 10 week period. This guidance is in accordance with the Local Code of Conduct for issuing Penalty Notices for school absence which was reviewed and revised in July 2024.

If a pupil fails to return and contact with the parents/carers has not been made or received, school **may** take the pupil off the school's roll in compliance with The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. This means that the child will lose their school place.

Legal Sanctions.

Where intervention by school and the Education Welfare Team fails to bring about an improvement in attendance, enforcement will be considered. A referral may be made to the Local Authority for enforcement action as appropriate. Parents do need to realise their own responsibilities in ensuring attendance at school and most importantly about returning children to education.

Enforcement action may include (but is not limited to):

- (a) the issue of a **Penalty Notice**, (*see below for further information relating to Penalty Notices*) which would require payment of a sum of **£80** (if paid **within 21 days** from receipt of the Notice), or **£160** (if paid **after 21 days** and **before 28 days** from the date of receipt);
- (b) **prosecution** in the Magistrates' Court for an **offence** under section 444 of the 1996 Act, for which the penalties on conviction are:
 - (i) a fine of up to **£1,000** for an offence under section 444(1); or
 - (ii) a fine of up to **£2,500** for an offence under section 444(1A) **and/or** a **custodial sentence** of up to **3 months**;
- (c) an application to the Magistrates' Court for a **Parenting Order** of up to **3 months** should the Local Authority be successful in a prosecution under section 444;

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(d) an application under section 36 of the Children Act 1989 for an **Education Supervision Order** to authorise the Council to take responsibility for advising, assisting and giving directions to you and the Child to secure that the Child is properly educated.

Penalty notices may be issued to a parent as an alternative to prosecution for irregular school attendance under s444 of the 1996 Act.

Penalty Notices

There is now a single consistent national threshold for when a Penalty Notice must be considered by all schools in England, of 10 sessions (usually equivalent to 5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school week period. The 10 sessions of absence do not have to be consecutive and can be made up of a combination of any type of unauthorised absence (G, O and/or U coded within the school's registers). The 10-school week period can span different terms, school years or education settings.

- code G (the pupil is absent without leave for the purpose of a holiday)
- code O (none of the other rows of Table 3 in regulation 10(3) of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 applies)
- code U (the pupil attended after the taking of the register ended but before the end of the session, where no other code applies)

- Sanctions may include issuing each parent (for each child) with a Penalty Notice which would require payment of a sum of **£80** (if paid **within 21 days** from receipt of the Notice), or **£160** (if paid **after 21 days** and **before 28 days** from the date of receipt).

- A **second Penalty Notice** issued within a three-year period will result in a fine of **£160** per parent, per child.

- If a third offence is committed within the 3 year period, the matter may be referred to the local authority for consideration of prosecution via the Magistrates Court.

As stated above if prosecution is instigated for irregular school attendance, the penalties on conviction are:

- (i) a fine of up to **£1,000** for an offence under section 444(1); or
- (ii) a fine of up to **£2,500** for an offence under section 444(1A) **and/or** a **custodial sentence** of up to **3 months**;

Penalty Notices will be issued in accordance with Northumberland County Council's Code of Conduct.

There is no entitlement in law for pupils to take time off during the term to go on holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure or recreation, or to take part in protest activity in school hours. In addition, the Supreme Court has ruled that the definition of regular school attendance is "in accordance with the rules prescribed by the school."

Should a penalty notice be issued, it should be noted that this is a direct alternative to prosecution, non-payment of the penalty notice may lead to a prosecution under section 444 of the 1996 Act

Statutory Framework

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This policy has been devised with assistance from the Education Welfare Team. Relevant legislation and statutory guidance has also been considered.

- [Working together to improve school attendance, DfE \(August 2024\)](#)
- [The School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)
- [Children missing education, DfE \(September 2025\)](#)
- [Keeping children safe in education, DfE \(September 2025\)](#)
- [Working together to safeguard children, DfE \(December 2023\)](#)

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Appendix 1

Horton Grange Attendance Procedure

% Attendance	Key Person	Action(s)
100% - 99%	All staff	All staff encourage regular attendance in a positive way
Exceptional Attendance		<u>Procedural level</u> The Class Teacher and Office Manager will record accurate and consistent marking of registers in SIMS The Office Manager to ensure all unexplained absences are followed up on daily basis by text or phone call <u>Class level</u> Postcards/letters home for positive attendance Epraise point awarded daily for attendance
98.9% - 96%	All staff	All staff continue to encourage attendance at a class level using the actions above.
Good Attendance	Assistant Head Teacher/SLT Office Manager	<u>Additionally</u> The Office Manager to ensure all unexplained absences are followed up on daily basis by making contact with parents/carer by text or phone call Class teachers to have a conversation with any child regarding absences.
95.9% - 90.1%	Phase Leader	<u>Procedural level</u>
At Risk	Class teacher	The Attendance Officer will monitor school attendance and attendance history will be considered. When a child's attendance continues to decline and hits the 93% threshold the Attendance Officer will contact parents/carers to ascertain the reasons behind the falling attendance. The Attendance Officer will then follow this up by requesting the first letter of concern is sent if appropriate or adequate reasons cannot be ascertained.
Early Intervention	Attendance Officer	
	Assistant Head Teacher/ SLT	
	Family Support Guidance and Welfare Officer	The Family Support Guidance and Welfare Officer and AHT will meet every fortnight with the Education Welfare Officer to discuss/monitor/review attendance concerns (typically those children whose attendance is below 93%, list compiled by Family Support Welfare and Guidance
	Education Welfare Officer	

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		Officer). Following the meeting with the EWO the following actions may be taken: Decision made to monitor attendance Phone call made to parents/carers to ascertain further reason or evidence for absence and to offer further support such as EHA, referrals to other agencies or home visits Letters sent according to attendance level Referral made to EWO Punctuality is also taken into consideration and monitored. Alarm clock will be offered. All actions will be recorded on CPOMS and AHT alerted to attendance concerns. At this stage parents will be advised that further absence due to illness will not be authorised without evidence. <u>SLT Level</u> At this stage AHT will begin to track children who are at risk or below. Conversations will be held weekly regarding attendance. (KS2) Support for children in school by setting attendance target <u>Class Level</u> In addition to existing class actions Discussions to be held in class to promote daily attendance with children.
90% and below Persistent Absentee	Class Teacher Phase Leaders Family Support Guidance and Welfare Officer Education Welfare Officer Assistant Head teacher/SLT Governors	<u>Procedural level</u> All PAs will have already been identified and tracked whilst at risk. <u>Referral process</u> Family Support Guidance and Welfare Officer to consider EWO referral where there is evidence of persistent absenteeism. Where children have been PA historically and received a PA letter prior to the term starting, all absences are unauthorised unless accompanied by medical evidence. A referral may be put in after 6 sessions.

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		Family Support Guidance and Welfare Officer to send letter home advising referral to EWO service. EWO will contact the family and commence support in conjunction with school. Further referrals to additional agencies may be considered or offered. <u>Class Level</u> Teachers will be made aware via CPOMS of referrals. Catch up on learning is offered and parents involved in this.
Additional Daily Actions	The Office Manager Attendance Officer Family Support/ Guidance/ Welfare Officer/DSL	On the first day of absence a text or phone call will be made On the second day of absence if school are not aware of the reason for absence the Office Manager/Attendance Officer will contact parent to ascertain a reason and/or if there are known pastoral issues refer to the Family Support Guidance and Welfare Officer or Assistant Head Teacher for further direction. All notes will be recorded on CPOMS under the attendance category. If parents do not confirm the reason for absence the Office Manager will ensure the register is coded as unauthorised. This will remain on the register until such times that an explanation can be provided by a parent/carer.
Weekly Basis	Office Manager / Attendance Officer Class Teachers AHT	On a weekly basis the Office Manager / Attendance Officer will provide the Assistant Head teacher with a report from SIMS to show percentage absence and punctuality for all children. The information is given to class teachers and the Assistant Head teacher to identify any cause for concern, inform tracking and feed into attendance data picture for SLT and governors. This includes checking of unauthorised absences including leave of absences and those within a 10 week rolling period.
Half termly	AHT	AHT to review attendance data and publish report for governors Attendance Officer, AHT and Family Support Worker will meet to discuss overall attendance concerns with a key focus around Persistent Absentees, Pupil Premium and SEND children. Following this meeting any causes for concern will be identified and appropriate letters and/or contact will be made to parents/carers.
Termly Basis	Office Manager /Attendance	Rewards given for exceptional attendance and Asda draw reward

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	Officer Assistant Headteacher	
Children open to CS	Office Manager Family Support Guidance and Welfare Officer SENDCO Assistant Headteacher All DSLs	The Family Support Guidance and Welfare Officer will provide the Office Manager with the updated list for children who are open to children services. The Office Manager will screen for absences where children are open to children services. If no contact/reason has been given this is recorded as a safeguarding concern and DSLs are notified. Where there are known child protection plans, a DSL will follow up with parents, discuss with the Head Teacher and/or refer to Children Services/EWO services any unexplained absences on the first day of absence. For children on a child in need plan, a DSL will follow up with parents, discuss with the Head Teacher and or refer to Children Services/EWO services any unexplained absences on the second day of absence. A record of any discussions or any action taken will be recorded on CPOMS.

ALWAYS RECORD PHONE CALLS, MEETINGS AND ACTIONS ON CPOMS

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Appendix 2

Horton Grange Primary School ATTENDANCE CONTRACT

Name of Child:	DOB: AGE: School Year Group:
Home Address:	
School : Address:	
Parent/Carer (1):	
Parent/Carer (2):	

CONTRACT:-

For your child to gain the greatest benefit from her education it is vital that he/she attends regularly and be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. It is very important therefore that you make sure that Name attends regularly.

WHY REGULAR ATTENDANCE IS IMPORTANT

Any absence affects the pattern of your child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect her learning. Any pupil's absence disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning of others in the same class.

Ensuring NAME regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

UNDERSTANDING ABSENCE

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (NOT BY THE PARENTS), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required, preferably in writing.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason, such as emergencies or other unavoidable cause.

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Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This type of absence can lead to the Authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. This includes:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- truancy before or during the school day
- absences which have never been properly explained
- children who arrive at school after registration has closed.
- shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed.

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If NAME is reluctant to attend, it is not acceptable to cover up his/her absence or to give in to pressure to excuse him/her from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and usually make things worse. If NAME attendance at school is affected by persistent illness the school will not authorize the absence until they are satisfied the absence is valid.

PROCEDURES

If your child is absent you must:

- Contact the school as soon as possible on the first day of absence;
- Send a note in to school on the first day they return with an explanation of the absence and the dates of the absence – you should do this even if you have already telephoned.
- Or, you can call into school and report to reception, who will arrange for a member of staff to speak with you.

If your child's attendance deteriorates we will:

- Write to you.
- invite you in to school if absences persist to discuss the situation with the appropriate staff
- Refer you to the Education Welfare Service

CONTACT DETAILS

There are times when the school and Education Welfare need to contact you about lots of things, including absence, so we need to have your contact details at all times. Help us to help you and your child by making sure we always have an up to date number – if we don't then something important may be missed

Parents/Carers are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be sorted

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out in this way, Education Welfare will become involved. The service will also try to resolve the situation by agreement but, if other ways of trying to improve NAME attendance have failed and unauthorised absences persist, then sanctions such as Penalty Notices, Education Supervision Orders or prosecutions in the Magistrates Court will be used. Full details of the options open to enforce attendance at school are available from the Education Welfare Service/ Local Authority.

LATENESS

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If NAME misses the start of the day he/she can miss work and time with his/her class teacher getting vital information and news for the day. Late arriving pupils also disrupt lessons, can be embarrassing for the child and can also encourage absence.

The school day starts at 8:45 and we expect NAME to be in class at that time. Registers are marked by twice a day and NAME will receive a late mark if he/she is not punctual.

In accordance with the Regulations, if NAME arrives after the close of registration she will receive a mark that shows her to be on site, but this will **not** count as a present mark and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence.

If your child has a persistent late record you will be asked to meet with staff in school to resolve the problem, but you can approach staff at any time if you are having problems getting your child to school on time

Leave of Absence in term time.

Any applications for leave must be made in advance and at the discretion of the head teacher. In making a decision the Head Teacher will consider the exceptional circumstances of each application individually, including any previous pattern of leave or absence in term time.

Full details of policy and procedures are available from the school.

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 sanctions such as a Penalty Notice.

I have read and understood the terms and conditions of the School Attendance Contract.

Signed PARENT/CARER

SCHOOL

Date

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