



Hampton Court House

Attendance Policy

Reviewed By: ACB

Last Updated: August 2026

Next Review: August 2027

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1. Purpose and statutory framework

Hampton Court House (HCH) is committed to securing high attendance and punctuality because regular attendance supports pupils' education, wellbeing, relationships and safeguarding. The school works with pupils and families to identify barriers early and to provide support before absence becomes entrenched.

This policy applies to all pupils registered at HCH, including pupils below and above compulsory school age. The statutory parental duty to secure regular attendance and the related enforcement provisions apply to pupils of compulsory school age.

This policy reflects the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, the Department for Education's statutory guidance Working together to improve school attendance (July 2026), the Children Missing Education statutory guidance (September 2025), Keeping children safe in education and the Equality Act 2010. It should be read alongside the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Children Missing Education procedures, Behaviour Policy and SEND arrangements.

2. Leadership and responsibilities

The school's Senior Attendance Champion is Amy Burgess, who is also the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). She has overall responsibility for championing attendance, setting a clear vision, monitoring patterns, coordinating support and reporting to the Principal and governing body. Day-to-day attendance queries should be directed to the School Office.

The governing body will promote attendance across the school, hold leaders to account for implementation, ensure appropriate resources and training, and review attendance information and the impact of support.

The Principal and Senior Attendance Champion will ensure that HCH has effective registration systems, follows up absence promptly, analyses attendance data, works with local authority services and other partners, and keeps this policy under review.

All staff must take registers accurately and promptly, record information consistently, report concerns immediately and remain alert to safeguarding indicators. Tutors, class teachers and pastoral staff build trusting relationships with pupils and families and help identify barriers to attendance.

Parents and carers are expected to ensure that their child attends every day the school is open, arrives on time and ready to learn, and that the school holds at least two current emergency contacts where reasonably possible. They should report absence promptly, provide the reason and likely duration, and work with the school and relevant services to resolve barriers.

Pupils are expected to attend regularly and punctually, follow registration arrangements and speak to a trusted adult if difficulties at school or elsewhere are affecting attendance.

3. Registration and punctuality

HCH keeps its admission and attendance registers electronically. If the electronic system is temporarily unavailable, staff will record attendance using the school's contingency process and transfer the information to the electronic register as soon as practicable.

The attendance register is taken at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session. The morning register closes at 09:05. A pupil who arrives after the register has opened but

before it closes is recorded as late (code L); arrival after it closes without an authorised reason is recorded as unauthorised absence (code U).

TO BE ADDED: Confirm whole school time of PM reg. Must remain open for no more than 30 minutes.

Pupils arriving after their expected start time must sign in at the gate on Inventory and make their way to their form or first lesson. If necessary, they can check in with Reception to explain their lateness. Persistent lateness will be addressed with the pupil and parents and may form part of an attendance support plan.

Nursery pupils should arrive by 10:30. If a child will arrive later, parents must contact Reception in advance. Late attendance may be declined where safe staffing, meal or activity arrangements cannot reasonably be adjusted. This operational arrangement does not alter the school's duty to keep an accurate attendance register.

For Years 5 and above, lesson registers are taken as an additional safeguarding check. They do not replace the statutory morning and afternoon attendance registers.

4. Recording and following up absence

HCH will use the national attendance and absence codes and apply the statutory criteria for each code. Code N (reason not yet established) is temporary: the school will establish the reason promptly and amend the register within the permitted period. If no satisfactory reason is established, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

On the first day of an unreported absence, the School Office will contact a parent or carer as soon as practicable. If contact is not made, staff will use the child's emergency contacts and consider further proportionate action, including a welfare check or contact with children's social care or the police, according to the level of safeguarding concern.

Where a pupil leaves during the school day, they must be signed out by Reception and, where they return, signed back in. The statutory attendance mark records the pupil's status when the register was taken; the sign-out record provides the additional safeguarding record.

5. Reporting absence

Parents and carers must notify the School Office before the start of the school day, giving the reason for absence and the expected date of return. They should keep the school updated if the absence continues. A message that a pupil is "unwell" may be followed up where more information is needed to apply the correct code or provide support.

Illness and medical evidence

In most cases, a parent's notification that a child is too ill to attend will be accepted without medical evidence. HCH will not operate a blanket requirement for evidence. Where there is genuine and reasonable doubt, or a prolonged or repeated pattern of absence, the school may ask for reasonable evidence to help establish the reason and understand what support is needed. Evidence may include an appointment card, prescription, consultation note or other appropriate information; it need not be a doctor's letter.

HCH will work with families and health professionals where physical or mental ill health affects attendance. Adjustments and support will be considered in line with the Equality Act 2010, SEND duties and the DfE guidance on pupils with medical conditions. Absence will not be authorised automatically solely because a pupil has a health condition; the school will consider the individual circumstances and

available evidence.

Appointments

Routine medical and dental appointments should be arranged outside school hours where possible. Where an appointment during the school day is unavoidable, parents should provide the appointment details in advance. Only the time reasonably necessary for the appointment and travel will normally be authorised, and the pupil should attend before or afterwards where practicable.

Religious observance

Absence will be authorised for a day set apart exclusively for religious observance by the religious body to which the parent belongs. Additional days may be considered as exceptional leave on their individual merits but are not automatically authorised.

6. Leave of absence

All requests for leave must be made in writing in advance to the Principal. Each application will be considered individually and on its own facts. For pupils of compulsory school age, leave during term time will be granted only where the school is satisfied that exceptional circumstances justify it, except where another statutory leave code applies. Leisure trips and holidays are generally not exceptional circumstances.

The school will decide both whether leave is authorised and, if so, the number of school days authorised. Retrospective authorisation will be rare. Absence beyond the authorised period will normally be unauthorised. Parents should not make travel arrangements until a decision has been received.

Requests connected with a regulated performance, employment abroad, a temporary part-time timetable, study leave, interview, education off site or other activity will be considered under the specific statutory criteria and coded accordingly. A part-time timetable will be used only in very exceptional circumstances, for the shortest necessary period, with parental agreement, regular review and a clear plan for return to full-time education.

7. Remote education

Remote education is not a routine alternative to attendance. It may be used only as a short-term, last-resort measure where attendance is not possible, but the pupil is able to learn, and where it forms part of a plan to reintegrate the pupil into face-to-face education. Providing remote education does not by itself make an absence authorised; the appropriate attendance code must still be used.

8. Monitoring attendance and identifying need

Attendance is monitored regularly at individual, group and whole school level. HCH will examine overall absence, authorised and unauthorised absence, punctuality, persistent absence and severe absence, and will look for patterns by year group and pupil characteristics, including SEND, disadvantage, pupils with a social worker and young carers where known. Information will be interpreted sensitively and used to target support.

A pupil is persistently absent when they miss 10% or more of possible sessions and severely absent when they miss 50% or more. These are indicators for action, not thresholds that the school waits to reach. Emerging patterns, repeated odd days, lateness and absence around particular lessons or days will be explored early.

Attendance information will be shared with parents through the school's usual reporting arrangements and when concerns arise. Records and reports will distinguish clearly between absence, attendance and late marks and will avoid presenting attendance percentages without appropriate context.

9. Support-first response

HCH will seek to understand the barriers affecting attendance by listening to the pupil and family. Support will be proportionate and may include pastoral help, reasonable adjustments, SEND review, help with routines or transport, work with health professionals, a trusted adult, a phased reintegration plan or a multi-agency meeting.

Where absence persists, the school may agree a written attendance support plan with clear actions, named responsibilities, review dates and measures of progress. The school will keep a record of support offered, parental engagement and the impact of interventions.

Where voluntary support is not effective or not engaged with, and unauthorised absence continues, HCH may request local authority support and consider formal action. Any notice to improve, penalty notice, prosecution or other legal intervention will be considered with the relevant local authority and in accordance with the national framework and local code of conduct. Formal action does not replace safeguarding assessment or appropriate support.

10. Safeguarding and children missing education

Unexplained, repeated or prolonged absence can be a safeguarding warning sign. Staff must consider risks including neglect, abuse, exploitation, criminal or sexual exploitation, harmful peer relationships, mental ill health, domestic abuse, forced marriage, female genital mutilation, radicalisation and a child going missing from education. Concerns must be reported immediately to the DSL in accordance with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

HCH will make reasonable enquiries promptly where a pupil's whereabouts are unknown. The school will work with the relevant local authority and other agencies, and will not remove a pupil from the admission register unless a statutory ground is met and the required enquiries, notifications and procedures have been completed. A safeguarding referral may be required before, alongside or after a children missing education referral.

11. Statutory information-sharing and returns

HCH will make the required attendance notification to the local authority for pupils of compulsory school age who fail to attend regularly and for pupils recorded with unauthorised absence codes G, N, O or U for a continuous period of 10 school days. The school will provide the information at the required frequency and respond to reasonable local authority requests.

HCH will make a sickness notification where it reasonably believes that a pupil of compulsory school age will miss 15 school days consecutively or cumulatively because of sickness. Only one sickness notification is required for a continuous period of sickness absence. The school will also make the required admission and deletion notifications and supply information for pupils joining or leaving at non-standard transition points.

As an independent school, HCH is not required to submit daily attendance data to the Department for Education. It will nevertheless maintain accurate electronic registers and share information lawfully with local authorities, safeguarding partners and other agencies where required or necessary.

12. Record management, privacy and review

Attendance records are personal data and will be processed in accordance with UK data protection law and the school's privacy notices. Access will be limited to those who need it. Records will be retained, backed up and disposed of in accordance with the 2024 Regulations and the school's retention schedule.

The Senior Attendance Champion will review this policy at least annually and sooner following a significant change in legislation, statutory guidance or school practice. The governing body/proprietor will approve material amendments. Operational contact details and register times must be kept current.

Appendix A: Attendance codes – quick reference

The full statutory criteria in the current DfE guidance must be consulted before a code is applied. This quick reference is not a substitute for those criteria.

Code	Meaning	Category
/ \	Present at morning / afternoon session	Attending
L	Late before the register closes	Attending
B	Attending another approved educational activity	Attending
D	Dual registered and attending another school	Attending
J1	Interview for employment or admission to another educational institution	Authorised absence
M	Medical or dental appointment	Authorised absence
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Authorised absence
C1	Leave for a regulated performance or employment abroad	Authorised absence
C2	Leave for a compulsory-school-age pupil subject to a part-time timetable	Authorised absence
C	Other exceptional circumstances	Authorised absence
G	Holiday not granted by the school	Unauthorised absence
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Unauthorised absence (temporary)
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	Unauthorised absence
U	Arrived after the register closed	Unauthorised absence
Q	Unable to attend because of lack of local authority access arrangements	Unable to attend
Y1–Y7	Specified circumstances where the pupil is unable to attend	Unable to attend

X	Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend	Not a possible attendance
Z	Prospective pupil not yet on the admission register	Not a possible attendance
#	Planned whole-school closure	Not a possible attendance

Appendix B: Key references

- Department for Education, Working together to improve school attendance (July 2026).
- School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.
- Department for Education, Children Missing Education: statutory guidance for local authorities and schools (September 2025).
- Department for Education, Keeping children safe in education (current version).