



Hopton CEVC Primary School Attendance Policy

Approved by: FGB

The Governing Body of Hopton CEVC Primary School adopted this policy
November 2015

Document change history

Review date:	Reviewed & approved by	Change details
October 2017	Claire Wright & Terri Baker	
October 2019	Claire Wright & Terri Baker	Reference to Statutory Guidance updated pages 2&4
October 2021	Claire Wright & Terri Baker	Page 2. 1:3 Reference to Statutory Guidance updated. Page 2. Point 2. Parent Mail added as a point of contact. Page 5. 6:3 Added detail around COVID Annex A. Point 3. Added Parent Mail Annex B: Added 'X' code for COVID Page 8: Point 8:2 Added expectation of evidence of appointment.
September 2022	Claire Wright & Terri Baker	Page 5 Point 5 Frequency of attendance review by Governors updated. Page 5 6:1 Frequency of attendance review by Head teacher updated. Page 14 8:3 School Strategies information updated Page 15 8:4 Referral to Education Welfare Officer updated Annex C Copies of Attendance Letters and Attendance Monitoring Flow Chart
November 2023	Claire Wright & Sue Palmer (Educational Welfare Officer)	Page 7: Removal of 'special occasions' sentence. Page 7 & 14: Five sentences removed relating to service and agricultural exceptions. The detail is not required under new guidance . Annex E: Leave of absence form added
September 2024	Claire Wright & Terri Baker	Updated in response to Working Together to Improve School Attendance & merge with Suffolk County Council Model Policy
September 2025		

At Hopton CEVC Primary School we live out the words of Jesus in Matthew 19 vs 26 'With God all things are possible'. We raise aspirations and encourage perseverance to reach goals in life and learning.

Hopton CEVC Primary School

The name and contact details of the senior leader responsible for the strategic approach to attendance in our school, is:

Name: Ben Hemmings

Email address or contact details: Head@hopton.suffolk.sch.uk

The name and contact details of the school staff member pupils and parents should contact about attendance on a day-to-day basis is:

Name: Mrs Terri Baker & Mrs Sarah Adnett

Email address or contact details: admin@hopton.suffolk.sch.uk

Improving attendance is everyone's business.

“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, and 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 nonteaching staff in school, the trust or governing body, the local authority, and other local partners.”

Working together to improve school attendance –September 2022
Department for Education.

1 Introduction and Background

Hopton CEVC Primary School recognises that positive behaviour and good attendance are essential in order for pupils to get the most of their school experience, including their attainment, wellbeing and wider life chances.

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, 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, on time. 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 for an absence in advance from the school.

The Department for Education (DfE) has produced statutory guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools, and local authorities. It is called "[Working together to improve school attendance](#)" and it includes a National Framework in relation to absence and the use of legal sanctions. Our School Attendance Policy reflects the requirements and principles of that guidance.

This policy is written with the above guidance in mind and underpins our school ethos to:

- promote children's welfare and safeguarding;
- ensure every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled;
- ensure that pupils succeed whilst at school;
- ensure that pupils have access to the widest possible range of opportunities at school, and when they leave school.

It has been developed in consultation with school governors, teachers, the Local Authority and parents and carers. It details the responsibilities of individuals and groups involved and the procedures in place to promote and monitor pupil attendance.

In addition, all schools follow the DfE's statutory safeguarding guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education, which emphasises the importance of understanding the potential vulnerabilities of children who are missing or absent from education.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

Our policy aims to raise and maintain levels of attendance by:

- Promoting a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which pupils feel safe, secure and valued;
- Raising and maintaining a whole school awareness of the importance of good attendance and punctuality;
- Ensuring that attendance is monitored effectively and reasons for absences are recorded promptly and consistently.

For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. **It is a rule of this school that pupils must attend every day, unless there are exceptional circumstances, and it is the Headteacher, not the parent, who can authorise the absence.**

Promoting Regular Attendance

At Hopton CEVC Primary School, we believe in developing good patterns of attendance and set high expectations for the attendance and punctuality for all our pupils from the outset. It is a central part of our school's vision, values, ethos and day to day life. We recognise the strong connections between attendance, attainment, safeguarding and wellbeing.

The name and contact details of the senior leader responsible for the strategic approach to attendance in our school, is:

Name: Vicki Gascoyne-Cecil & Ben Hemmings

Email address or contact details: Head@hopton.suffolk.sch.uk

The governor with responsibility for monitoring attendance is **Gillian McGill & Sarah Almond**

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is the responsibility of parents, pupils and all members of school staff.

To help us all to focus on this, we will:

- Submit a daily attendance return to the Department of Education, in line with the legal expectations placed on all schools;
- Build strong relationships and work jointly with families;
- Give parents/carers details on attendance in our newsletters;
- Promote the benefits of high attendance;
- Accurately complete admission and, with the exception of schools where all pupils are boarders, attendance registers and have effective day to day processes in place to follow-up absence as required by law;
- Celebrate excellent attendance by displaying and reporting individual and class achievements;
- Reward good or improving attendance;

Parents' / carers' responsibilities

The prime responsibility for ensuring children receive an appropriate and full-time education rests with parents / carers (defined by the Education Act 2011 as those with parental responsibility and those who have the care of a child), who will be supported and encouraged by Hopton CEVC Primary School. The Act says:

"If a child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at a school failed to attend regularly at the school, his/her parent is guilty of an offence."

Hopton CEVC Primary School expects parents / carers will:

- ensure their children attend the school regularly;
- support their children's attendance by keeping requests for absence to a minimum;
- not expect the school to agree any requests for absence, and not condone unjustified absence from school.
- Avoid making medical/dental appointments for their children in school hours;
 - notify the school by telephone or Parent Mail on the first day of absence;
 - ensure their children arrive at school on time, properly dressed and with the right equipment for the day;
 - ensure that their child follows school procedures if they arrive late;

- work in partnership with the school, for example by attending parents' meetings and consultations, signing homework/reading diaries when asked to do so, taking an interest in their children's work and activities;
- contact the class teacher without delay if they are concerned about any aspects of their children's school lives or of difficulties that might prevent them from attending regularly and on time. Hopton CEVC Primary School will endeavor to support parents to address their concerns.

A guide for parents is included as Annex A.

Pupils' responsibilities

All pupils will be made aware of the importance of regular school attendance. If they are having difficulties that might prevent them from attending school regularly, they should speak to their class teacher.

Staff responsibilities

School staff have a responsibility for ensuring that pupils have good attendance by:

- Working to provide an environment in which all pupils are eager to learn, feel valued members of the school community and look forward to coming to school every day;
- Contributing to an ethos that places a high value on regular attendance and punctuality and setting a good example in their own behaviour;
- Ensuring attendance registers are kept accurately;
- Differentiating appropriately between authorised and unauthorised absence according to this policy;
- Responding to absenteeism promptly, firmly, consistently and with care;
- Contacting parents when they are concerned about a pupils' absences, and recording the contact;
- Consulting with the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) if a pupil's attendance continues to give cause for concern;
- Promoting regular school attendance through school and class reward schemes;
- Operating the first day calling system.

Governors' responsibilities

The governing body of Hopton CEVC Primary School will examine data on attendance at least termly at Full Governing Bodies Meeting, further to briefings given at SLT Steering Meetings and will monitor the implementation of the policy, reviewing it at least every two years. It will consider the school's attendance data in comparison to other schools.

Registration

The school is required to mark the attendance register twice each day: once at the start of the day and once during the afternoon session. On each occasion classroom teachers are responsible for recording whether every pupil is:

- Present;
- Attending an approved educational activity;
- Absent; or
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

The school will follow up any absence to:

- Ascertain the reason;
- Ensure the proper safeguarding action is taken;
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not; and
- Identify the correct code to use for completion of the electronic register which is used to download data to the Schools Census. The prescribed codes are included in Annex B.

The register will be called promptly at **8:45am** and **1.00 pm** by each class teacher and a mark will be made during the registration period in respect of each child.

The registers will close at **9.00 am** and **1.15 pm**. Any pupil who arrives **after** the closing of the register will count as **absent**. Pupils who arrive before the register closes will be counted **present** but will be dealt with under the school's policy on punctuality and lateness (see para. 4.5).

Understanding Types of Absence

Any absence affects the routine of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning journey and ability to progress. Any pupil's absence or late arrival disrupts teaching routines and so may affect the learning of others in the same class. Ensuring a child's regular attendance at school is a parental responsibility and allowing absence from school, without a good reason, creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parent), as either **authorised** or **unauthorised**. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required. Each half-day is known as a 'session'.

Authorised absences are morning or afternoon sessions away from school for a genuine reason such as illness (although you may be asked to provide medical evidence for your child before this can be authorised), medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been granted. This type of absence can lead to the school referring to the Local Authority for penalty notices and/or legal proceedings.

Unauthorised absence includes, (however this list is not exhaustive):

- parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily e.g. because they had a late night or for non-infectious illness or injury that would not affect their ability to learn;
- absences which have never been properly explained;
- children who arrive at school after the close of registration are marked using a 'U'. This indicates that they are in school for safeguarding purposes, however is counted as an absence for the session;
- shopping trips;
- looking after other children or children accompanying siblings or parents to medical appointments;
- their own or family birthdays;
- holidays taken during term time, not deemed 'for exceptional purposes' by the headteacher, including any arranged by other family members or friends;
- day trips;
- other leave of absence in term time which has not been agreed.

Persistent Absenteeism (PA) and Severe Absenteeism (SA)

A pupil is defined by the Government as a '**persistent absentee**' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for any reason; this can be authorised or unauthorised absence. 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. All pupils who have attendance levels of 90% or below are considered to be a persistent absentee.

A pupil who has missed 50% or more schooling is defined by the Government as '**severely absent**'. 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.

6.5 Approved educational activity

Where a student is engaged in off-site approved educational activities, the school will check his/her attendance on a daily basis before entering the appropriate code in the register.

Absence Procedures

The school will call parents on the first day of unexpected absence to establish the reason and will continue to actively monitor progress until the pupil returns to school. Repeated or prolonged periods of absence, due to illness, we require evidence of a Doctor's appointment.

School strategies:

The Head teacher is responsible for the school management of attendance, policy and systems to ensure that there is intervention for non-attendance and emerging patterns of absence are discussed and dealt with at an early stage.

The school follows a staged approach to absence monitoring. Attendance is monitored every half term, including persistent absence and vulnerable group reporting. Examples of Attendance letters and Attendance Stage Flowchart are contained in Annex C.

Stage 1 Attendance Letter – Advises parent child's attendance has fallen below 90% during the previous half term, ask they encourage excellent attendance going forward.

Stage 2 Attendance Letter – Advises parent child's attendance has continued to report at below 90%, letter requests a meeting with Head teacher. Offers of support may include pastoral support to include routines at home, subsidised breakfast club attendance, resources from Lending Library, external agency referral e.g. school nursing team, Primary Mental Health Team to support 'emotion-based school avoidance' and psycho-education. The Educational Welfare Officer may issue a 'concerned letter'.

Stage 3 Attendance Letter - Advises parent child's attendance has continued to report at below 90%, a referral is to be made to the Educational Welfare Officer for further support. Further absences to be authorised only when supported by medical evidence, appointment card/letter or copy of a prescription certificate.

Stage 4 Governor Attendance Letter - Advises parent child's attendance has continued to report at below 90%, letter requesting parental support with children attending school when feeling unwell. Penalty Notice issue to be considered if applicable.

Attendance Improvement Letter – Advises parent subsequent half term reporting shows an improvement in attendance to over 90%.

Copies of letters and subsequent action plans will be documented and kept in an attendance file allowing easy access for the admin team.

Referral to the Educational Welfare Officer:

The schools will refer attendance issues with a pupil to the local authority Education Welfare Officer in the following circumstances:

- If support and assistance has been provided to a pupil but there continue to be unauthorised absences by the end of the specified time (or sooner if the pupil is failing to attend school at all).
- A Stage 3 Attendance Letter has been issued.
- If a pupil has unauthorised absence of 6 sessions (3 days) in any 12 week period.

- If a pupil is persistently late.
- The local authority has the power to issue penalty notices and fines to parents when a pupil's absence has not been authorised by the school.
- If a Fixed Penalty Notice has already been issued to parents and a child has further unauthorised absences within the academic year (for example, a second term time holiday), the school will refer matters to the Local Authority, with a recommendation from the school for prosecution.

The Educational Welfare Officer visits the school at least termly where individual cases and actions are discussed.

Lateness

Poor punctuality is not acceptable and can sometimes lead to irregular school attendance patterns. Good time-keeping is a vital life skill which will help children as they progress through their school life and out into the wider world.

Pupils who arrive late disrupt lessons and, if a child misses the start of the day, they can feel unsettled and embarrassed and risk missing vital work and important messages from their class teacher.

The times of the start and close of the school day for all pupils at Hopton CEVC Primary School are:

Gates open: **8:40am**

Registration starts: **8:40am**

Registration closes: **9:00am**

End of the school day: **3:15pm**

How we manage lateness:

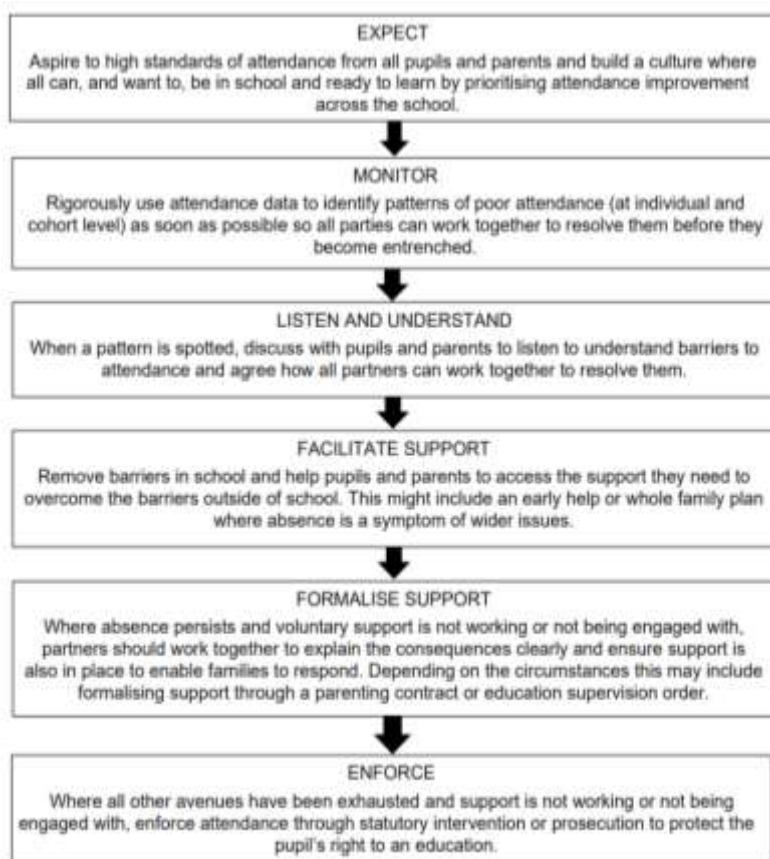
- The school day starts at **8: 40am** when children can begin to come into school;
- Registers are taken at **8:40-8:50am**;
- Children arriving after **8:50am** are required to come into school via the school office. If accompanied by a parent/carer they must sign them into our 'Late Log' and provide a reason for their lateness, which is recorded.
- At 9:00am the registers will be closed. In accordance with the Regulations, if your child arrives after that time, they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site – 'U', but this will **not** count as a present mark and it will mean that they have an unauthorised absence;
- The school may contact parents/carers regarding punctuality concerns;

Unauthorised lateness could result in the school referring to the Local Authority for sanctions and/or legal proceedings. If your child has a persistent lateness record, you may be asked to meet with the Head Teacher, but you can approach us at any time if you are having difficulties getting your child to school on time. We expect parents and staff to encourage good punctuality by being good role models to our children and, as a school, we celebrate good class and individual punctuality.

Understanding barriers to attendance

Whilst any child may occasionally have time off school because they are too unwell to attend, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any barriers preventing regular attendance are best resolved between the school, the parents and the child. If a parent thinks their child is reluctant to attend school, then we will work with that family to understand the root problem and provide any necessary support. We can use outside agencies to help with this, such as the School Nurse, Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing support services, a Child and Family Support Worker or the relevant Local Authority team/s.

Some pupils face greater barriers to attendance than their peers. These can include pupils who live with long-term medical conditions, who have special educational needs and disabilities, or have other vulnerabilities. High expectations of attendance remain in place for these pupils, however we will work with families and pupils to support improved attendance whilst being mindful of the additional barriers faced. We will discuss reasonable adjustments and additional support advice from external partners, where appropriate.



Local Authority attendance support services

The Local Authority Attendance Team work strategically by offering support to schools, to reduce persistent absences and improve overall attendance.

Parents are expected to work with the school and local authority to address any attendance concerns. Parents should proactively engage with the support offered, aiming to resolve any problems together. If difficulties cannot be resolved in this way, the school may consider more formal support and/or refer the child to the Local Authority. If attendance does not improve, legal action may be taken.

School Attendance and the Law

In accordance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 all children of compulsory school age must receive an appropriate full-time education (Education Act 1996). Parents have a legal duty to ensure their child attends school regularly at the school at which they are registered.

Parents may be recognised differently under education law, than under family law. Section 576 of the Education Act 1996 states that a 'parent', in relation to a child or young person, includes any person who is not a parent (from which can be inferred 'biological parent') but who has parental responsibility, or who has care of the child.

A person typically has care of a child or young person if they are the person with whom the child lives, either full or part time and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their biological or legal relationship is with the child.

National Framework for 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.

Sanctions may include issuing each parent (for each child) with a Penalty Notice for £160, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days (for the first offence). 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 the matter may be referred to the local authority for consideration of prosecution via the Magistrates Court. If prosecution is instigated for irregular school attendance, each parent may receive a fine of up to £2500 and/or up to 3 months in prison. If a parent is found guilty in court, they will receive a criminal conviction.

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.”

The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 set out the statutory requirements for schools. All references to family holidays and extended leave have been removed. The amendments specify that headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are "exceptional circumstances".

It is a rule of this school that a leave of absence shall not be granted in term time unless there are reasons considered to be exceptional by the headteacher, irrespective of the child’s overall attendance. Only the headteacher or his/her designate (not the local authority) may authorise such a request and all applications for a leave of absence must be made in writing, in advance, on the prescribed form provided by the school. The school will usually consider that the parent who has made the application is therefore allowing the leave of absence, and also that all parents who are on the holiday are allowing the leave. Where a parent removes a child after their application for leave was refused or where no application was made to the school, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. It is likely that penalty notices will be requested, in line with the National Framework and Suffolk Code of Conduct, in respect of each parent believed to have allowed the absence.

At Hopton CEVC Primary School 'exceptional circumstances' will be interpreted as:

The fundamental principles for defining ‘exceptional’ are events that are “rare, significant, unavoidable and short”. By 'unavoidable' we mean an event that could not reasonably be scheduled at another time, outside of school term time.

Generally, the DfE does not consider a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation an exceptional circumstance

(Working Together to improve School attendance s38 P18)

The headteacher/school may discuss the leave of absence request with other education settings and/or the Local Authority to determine any exceptional circumstances.

If leave of absence is unauthorised, the school will not provide work for children to do during their absence.

Where the headteacher/school believes a penalty notice would be appropriate in an individual case, the local authority retains the discretion to issue one before the threshold is met. examples may include, where parents are deliberately avoiding the national threshold by taking several term time holidays below threshold, or for repeated absence for birthdays or other family events.

Deletion from Roll

For any pupil leaving XX primary School, other than at the end of year 6, parents/carers are required to complete a 'Pupils moving from *school*' form which can be obtained from the school office. This provides school with the following information: Child's name, class, current address, date of leaving, new home address, name of new school, address of new school. This information is essential to ensure that we know the whereabouts and may appropriately safeguard all of our pupils, even those who leave us.

It is crucial that parents keep school updated with current addresses and contact details for the pupil and key family members, in case of emergency.

Under Pupil Regulations, all schools are **legally required** to notify their Local Authority of **every new entry** to the admission register **within five days** of the pupil being enrolled. In addition to this, **every deletion** from the school register must also be notified to the Local Authority, as soon as the ground for deletion has been met in relation to that pupil, and in any event no later than the time at which the pupil's name is deleted from the register. This duty does not apply when a pupil's name is removed from the admission register at a standard transition point – when the pupil has completed the final year of education normally provided by that school.

Absence data

We use data to monitor, identify and support individual pupils or groups of pupils when their attendance needs to improve, and schools are required to submit pupil attendance data to the Department for Education on a daily basis Education (Information about Individual Pupils) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024. Persistently and severely absent pupils are tracked and monitored carefully. We also combine this with academic tracking, as increased absence affects attainment.

We 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.

School Penalty Notice for School Attendance are changing

from 19th August 2024

With the introduction of the new National Framework for Penalty Notices issued by DfE, the following changes will come into force for School Penalty Notice Fines issued after 19th August 2

National Threshold

There will be 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.

These sessions do not have to be consecutive and can be made up of a combination of any type of unauthorised absence.

The 10-school week period can span different terms or school years.

Please note: The DfE does not consider a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance.

First Offence

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for unauthorised absence the amount will be:
£160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days.
Reduced to £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days.



Second Offence (within 3 years)

The Second time a Penalty Notice is issued for unauthorised absence the amount will be:
£160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days.



Third Offence and Any Further Offences (within 3 years)

The third time an offence is committed a Penalty Notice will not be issued and the case could be presented straight to the Magistrate's Court. Prosecution can result in Criminal records and fines of up to £2,500
Cases found guilty in Magistrates' Court may show on the parent's future DBS certificate due to 'failure to safeguard a child's education'.

Per Parent*, Per Child

A School Penalty Notice is issued to each parent*, for each child that was absent.

For example: 3 siblings absent for term time leave, would result in each parent receiving 3 separate penalty notices.

*Parent

Section 576 of the Education Act 1996 defines "parent" as:

- All natural (biological) parents, whether they are married or not.
- Any person who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person.
- Any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person.

ANNEX A: A GUIDE FOR PARENTS

1. When does my child need to be in School?

Your child should be at school in good time for registration. The morning register will be called promptly at **8:45am** and the afternoon register at **1 pm**.

2. What happens if my child is late?

Registration finishes at **9.00 am** in the morning and **1.15 pm** in the afternoon.

If your child arrives after the register has been taken he/she will be marked **late**

If your child arrives after **9.00 am** he/she will be marked as **absent**

If your child arrives between **1 pm** and **1.15 pm** he/she will be marked **late**

If your child arrives after **1.15 pm** he/she will be marked **absent**

Pupils who arrive after registration should report to the school office, and sign in. If a pupil is late on two or more occasions a meeting will be arranged with a member of staff to discuss reasons/difficulties for lateness.

3. Does the School need letters explaining my child's absence or will a phone call do?

We expect a parent to telephone or Parent Mail the school on the first day of absence. If you do not connect us, we will phone you. If we do not receive an explanation, or if the explanation is unsatisfactory, we will not authorise the absence, and this will be shown on your child's end of year report.

4. What reasons will the school accept for absences?

- Illness
- Emergency dental/medical appointment that cannot be arranged out of school hours. Please make routine appointments after school or during the holidays.
- Day of religious observance
- Close family bereavement

Except in the case of illness, you should ask for permission for your child to miss school well in advance, giving full details. In cases of recurring absences through illness you may be asked to produce a medical certificate.

5. What is unacceptable?

The school will not authorise absence for day trips, visiting relatives, shopping, birthdays or looking after brothers or sisters etc.

6. Will the school contact me if my child is absent?

The school operates a first day response to absences: we will phone you if we have not heard from you. This is because we believe it is our responsibility to ensure your child's safety as well as their regular school attendance.

If we are concerned about aspects of your child's attendance or punctuality we will contact you to discuss the best way forward.

7. Can we take family holidays during term time?

Family holidays will not be authorised during term time except in limited and exceptional circumstances. Circumstances where a leave of absence will be considered include:

- When an exceptional family crisis occurs and a leave of absence is requested.

Requests for holidays for the following reasons will not be authorised:

- cheaper cost of holiday;
- availability of the desired accommodation;
- poor weather experienced in school holiday periods; and
- overlap with beginning or end of term.

The school will refer cases of unauthorised absence of 6 sessions (3 days) or more within a 12 week period to the Education Welfare Officer. The local authority has the power to issue penalty notices and fines to parents when a pupil's absence has not been authorised by the school.

8. I am thinking about sending my child on an extended absence for an overseas visit to relatives. What should I do?

The school recognises that such absence can be important for children to keep in touch with their extended family. Contact the Headteacher as soon as possible to discuss the best time for such a visit.

Where possible, you should arrange the visit for the school holidays. The school would strongly recommend that such absences do not take place during your child's SATs years (Years 2 and 6). You need to complete an application form for extended leave of absence and if the Headteacher then approves the visit, the school will set work for your child to complete while away.

9. What can I do to encourage my child to attend school?

Make sure your child gets enough sleep and gets up in plenty of time each morning. Ensure that he/she leaves home in the correct clothes and properly equipped. Show your child, by your interest, that you value his/her education. Your child will bring home a homework/reading diary each evening. Please ensure you look at it with your child and sign it ready for the next day.

10. My child is trying to avoid coming to school. What should I do?

Contact your child's class teacher and the headteacher immediately and openly discuss your worries. Your child could be avoiding school for a number of reasons – difficulties with school work, bullying, friendship problems, family difficulties. It is important that we identify the reason for your child's reluctance to attend school and work together to tackle the problem.

In some cases, you may find it helpful to discuss the circumstances of your child's difficulties with an Education Welfare Officer. The school may also refer you to an Education Welfare Officer who works with staff and families if difficulties with attendance arise. The Education Welfare Service can be contacted on 01473 265364 and further information can be found on the Suffolk County Council website: <http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/education-and-careers/pupil-welfare-and-support/school-attendance/>

REGISTER CODES

Code	SIMS Description	DfE Description / Explanation
/	Present (AM)	Present for school morning session
\	Present (PM)	Present for school afternoon session
B	Attending any other Approved Education Activity	Attending any other approved educational activity
C	Other authorised circumstances	Leave absence for exceptional circumstance
C1	Leave of absence – regulated performance	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.
C2	Leave of absence – Temporary part-time timetable	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable
D	Dual registered	Dual registered to another school
E	Suspended or excluded without alternative provision	Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision
G	Family Holiday (not agreed)	Holiday not granted by the school
I	Illness	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)
J1	Leave of absence – Interview for employment or transfer to another educational institution	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution
K	Alternative provision provided by LA	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority
L	Late (before registers closed)	Late arrival before the register closed
M	Medical or dental appointment	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Reason absence not yet established
O	Absence in other or unknown circumstance	Absence in other or unknown circumstance
P	Participating in sports activity	Participating in sports activity
Q	Unable to attend – lack of access arrangements	Unable to attend the school because of lack of access arrangements

R	Religious observance	Religious observance
S	Study leave for public examination	Study leave for public examination
T	Traveling with parent for occupational purposes	Traveling with parent for occupational purposes
U	Late (after registers closed)	Late (after registers closed)
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Attending an educational visit or trip
W	Attending work experience	Attending work experience
X	Not required to attend-non-compulsory school age pupil	Not required to attend-non-compulsory school age pupil
Y1	Unable to attend – Transport not available	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being provided
Y2	Unable to attend – widespread travel emergency	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel
Y3	Unable to attend – unavoidable partial closure	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed.
Y4	Unable to attend – unavoidable full closure	Unable to attend due to the whole schools’ site being unexpectedly closed
Y5	Unable to attend – criminal justice detention	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention
Y6	Unable to attend – Public Health Guidance / Law	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law
Y7	Unable to attend – Unavoidable other than Y1-Y6	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause.
Z	Pupil not on roll	Prospective pupil not on admission requester
#	Planned whole school closure	Planned whole school closure

This is a list of the new codes that come into effect September 2024 academic year:

Code	SIMS Description	DfE Description / Explanation
C1	Leave of absence – regulated performance	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.
C2	Leave of absence – Temporary part-time timetable	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable
J1	Leave of absence - Interview	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution
K	Alternative provision provided by LA	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority
Q	Unable to attend – lack of LA access arrangements	Unable to attend the school because of lack of access
Y1	Unable to attend – Transport not available	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being provided
Y2	Unable to attend – Widespread travel emergency	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel
Y3	Unable to attend – unavoidable partial closure	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed.
Y4	Unable to attend – unavoidable full closure	Unable to attend due to the whole schools site being unexpectedly closed
Y5	Unable to attend – Detention sentence	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention
Y6	Unable to attend – Public Health Guidance / Law	Unable to attend in accordance with Public health guidance or law
Y7	Unable to attend – Unavoidable other than Y1-Y6	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause.

This is a list of codes where a reason will be required with the attendance code:

Code	SIMS Description	DfE Description / Explanation
B	Educated off-site (not Dual-Reg)	Attending any other approved educational facility.
K	Alternative provision provided by the LA	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority
Y7	Unable to attend – Unavoidable other than Y1-Y6	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause.

Annex C

Stage 1 Attendance Letter

Date

Dear Parent/carer

The attached registration certificate shows that your child's attendance has fallen below 90 % during the period _____ to _____. We are, therefore, concerned about _____ attendance, as he/she has now missed _____ days of school.

We are concerned about the impact this is having on _____ progress, as we know that as attendance declines so does your child's chances of achieving the best possible levels whilst also affecting their emotional and social health and development (according to Ofsted).

Clearly there may be a number of explanations for this level of attendance. If your child has been ill that would explain the drop in attendance. We would ask you to encourage excellent attendance from this point forward so that your child's overall attendance rate improves over the next few weeks.

I am sure that you, like us, view attendance at school as very important and will do everything you can to help your child improve his/her attendance.

Yours sincerely

Annex C

Stage 2 Attendance Letter

Date

Dear Parent/carer

The attached registration certificate shows that your child's attendance has continued to fall below 90 % during the period _____ to _____.
_____ has now missed _____ days of school.

We continue to be concerned about the impact this is having on _____ progress, as we know that as attendance declines so does your child's chances of achieving the best possible levels whilst also affecting their emotional and social health and development (according to Ofsted).

We are keen to work with you to support your child, therefore, Mrs Wright would welcome a meeting to discuss supporting your child's attendance in the future.

Many different avenues are available to promote and support good school attendance such as pastoral support provided by Mrs Gardner, our Pastoral Co-ordinator.

You will be contacted by Mrs Baker shortly, to arrange a convenient appointment time.

In the meantime, we will continue to monitor _____ attendance.

Yours sincerely

Annex C

Stage 3 Attendance Letter

Date

Dear Parent/carer

The attached registration certificate shows that your child's attendance during the period _____ to _____ is %.

Since your meeting with Mrs Wright, unfortunately, your child's attendance still has not improved.

Hopton Primary School is truly committed to ensuring all children have access to education, therefore, we will be discussing your child's attendance with Suffolk County Council's Educational Welfare Officer, where hopefully more support can be put in place.

In the meantime, we will continue to monitor _____ attendance. Until this rises above 95% we will require medical evidence be provided to the school to authorise any further absence. Medical evidence may be an appointment card/letter or a copy of a prescription certificate.

Poor attendance continues to have a detrimental effect on the progress your child can make at school. Please support your child by doing everything you can to improve your child's attendance.

Yours sincerely

Annex C

Stage 4 Governor Attendance Letter

Date

Dear Parent/carer

This letter is being sent to parents where the child attendance continues to decline. We would like to reiterate that we are not aware of who these people are individually but are addressing the situation collectively.

As part of the Leadership role as Governors of Hopton CEVC Primary School, we are asked to monitor the attendance of the children and the support offered by the school should attendance become low.

This letter is not intended to upset or alarm parents, but is an opportunity to open up a discussion around your child's attendance and how this can be improved moving forward, as we know the effect of low attendance in school has been clearly documented.

There is room for improvement in terms of supporting and encouraging you to send your child into school when they are feeling 'slightly under the weather'. We are keen to reassure you that staff will care for your child, and if they consider them to be too poorly to be in school, they would call home.

Attached to the letter is your child's attendance certificate, and as you can see they have dipped below 90%. We feel it would be useful for you to see the certificate so you can see how a 'couple of days' here and there, add up to enormous amounts of lost learning. We are therefore asking you to consider changing your approach to the days where your child is reluctant to come to school because they are feeling poorly. We would like for you to encourage children to 'give it a go' first. We hope that you see the importance of putting a high priority on attending school and accessing learning and therefore the merits of coming, even if you are not feeling 100%.

As your child has dipped below 90%, the office staff will continue to be asking you for supporting medical documents should your child be away and under the consultation of a Doctor. If this cannot be provided the absence may be unauthorised which could lead to a fine if there are more than 6 unauthorised sessions (3 days) within a 12-week period.

We would ask you do everything you can to support and help your child improve his/her attendance.

Yours sincerely

Mrs G McGill
Chair of Governing Body

Annex C

Attendance Improvement Letter

Date

Dear Parent/carer

The attached registration certificate shows that your child's attendance stands at _____ for the period _____ to _____. Pleasingly, this is a (significant) improvement on the previous half term.

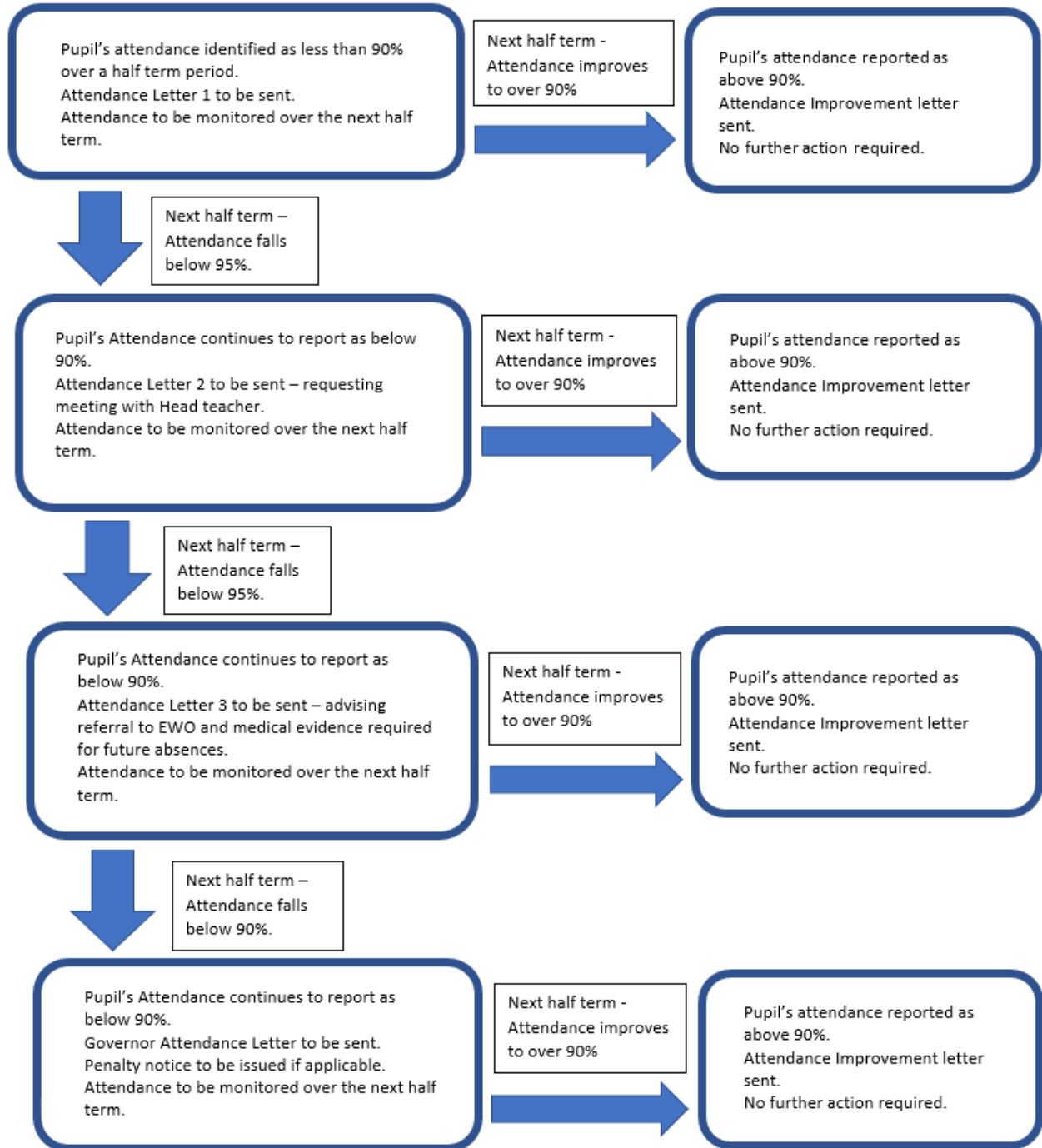
We would ask you to continue to encourage excellent attendance so that your child's overall attendance rate improves across the academic year. Excellent attendance will have a positive effect on the progress your child can make at school.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely

Annex D

Attendance Policy - Attendance Monitoring Flow Chart



Annex E: Leave of absence form.

Hopton Primary School
Leave of Absence Request Form

Taking your child out of school during term time may harm your child's academic progress.

Please read the Local Authority information overleaf which explains Penalty Notices issues for unauthorised absence during term time.

For Parents to Complete

Name of child/ren	
Date of Birth	
Class	
Date of first day of absence	
Date of return to school	
Number of days requested	
Please state reason for absence being requested during term time	
Signature of parent requesting absence	

For School Use Only

Number of authorised absence	
Number of unauthorised absences	
Number of late arrivals	
Request for leave	

To be returned to parent/carer via your child

Name of child _____ Class _____

The request for Absence/Leave meets the criteria and can be authorised

Regrettably the request for Absence/Leave does not meet the criteria and cannot be authorised

Signature of Head Teacher _____ Date _____

Taking your child out of school during term time may harm your child's academic progress.

Please read the Local Authority information below which explains Penalty Notices issued for unauthorised absence during term time.

Suffolk County Council is committed to providing all children with the best start in life. Good school attendance is a key factor in ensuring that children can make the most of their education.

In line with the DfE working together to improve school attendance guidance schools will consider every application for leave of absence individually; it is NOT policy to grant leave of absence other than in the most exceptional circumstances.

Time off school for families **is not a right**. An application must be made with appropriate evidence of the intended leave of absence.

Requests for an absence for the following reasons will not be authorised:

Cheaper cost of a holiday

Poor weather experienced during school holiday periods

Overlap with the beginning or end of term

Schools will not authorise a leave of absence during national tests, i.e. SATs, GCSE examinations

A request to Suffolk County Council Education Attendance Service for the issue of a Fixed Penalty Notice may be made in the following circumstances:

Where a pupil has taken an absence during term time for 3 or more days and the absence is not authorised by the school;

Where a pupil has missed at least 6 sessions (3 school days) due to unauthorised absence in a school term.

The penalty is payable to the Local Authority (details for payment will be contained in the Notice). The amount of the penalty is –

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for unauthorised absence the amount will be:

£160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days.

Reduced to £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days.