

Hillside High School

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High School

Attendance policy

School:	<i>Excellence in the Heart of the Community</i>	Hillside High School
Date of Governing Body Review:		June 2026
Next Review Due:		June 2027
Signed:		
Chair:		Mike Cunliffe
Principal:		J Anderson-Nicholls

Our Attendance Vision

Attendance is the gift

1. We work in partnership with parents and carers to secure excellent attendance because:

- Any absence affects the pattern of a child's education and regular absence will seriously affect their learning.
- Good attendance and punctuality are essential for future employment.

We commit to inclusive principles, mutual respect and a culture where every child:

- Learns in an encouraging environment
- Feels safe and cared for
- Achieves the best qualifications possible
- Enjoys their time in school
- Knows any adult can be approached for help

Our minimum expectation is **96–97% attendance**, with an ambition for every child to achieve **100%**.

2. Core Expectations

Students must:

- Attend regularly
- Arrive punctually
- Bring correct equipment
- Maintain a positive attitude to learning

Parents must:

- Ensure their child attends daily
- Contact school by **8:15–8:25am** on every day of absence
- Provide medical evidence when requested
- Avoid minor-ailment absences
- Book appointments outside school hours
- Work with school to resolve concerns

Staff must:

- Promote attendance daily
- Follow first-day response procedures
- Escalate concerns promptly
- Build strong relationships with families

- Reinforce the link between attendance, behaviour and progress

3. Why Attendance Matters

- Absence disrupts learning for the pupil and the class
- Regular absence damages progress and attainment
- Attendance is a safeguarding priority
- Parents have a legal duty to ensure attendance
- Schools must follow statutory guidance and LA processes

4. Types of Absence

Authorised Absence

- Illness (with evidence if requested)
- Medical/dental appointments (evidence required)
- Interviews
- Public performances (licensed)
- Approved educational activities
- Birth of a child (up to 18 weeks)

Unauthorised Absence (not exhaustive)

- Parents/carers keeping children off unnecessarily
- Truancy
- Absences never properly explained
- Students who arrive too late to get a mark
- Shopping, birthdays
- Hair appointments
- Looking after siblings
- Day trips
- Holidays in term time.

Also unauthorised:

- No uniform
- Visits from relatives
- Holidays (including cheaper holidays, work commitments, COVID-moved holidays)

5. Daily Attendance System

Morning Routine

Form Tutors

- Meet & Greet
- Take registers at **(XXX)**
- Record known reasons for absence
- Celebrate weekly attendance
- Hold return-from-absence conversations
- Promote belonging

Attendance Team

- Run First Day Absence Report
- Phone/text parents
- Trigger home visit if no contact
- Conduct safe & well visits every 1–2 days
- Notify police if a child cannot be seen within 48 hours

Subject Teachers

- Mark every lesson register
- Use buzzer for missing pupils
- Report internal truancy
- Deliver engaging lessons and insist on punctuality

6. Persistent Absence (PA)

A pupil becomes PA at **10% absence**.

Actions include:

- Daily monitoring
- Action Plan
- Weekly pupil meetings
- Attendance Support Plan
- Warning letters
- Governor/Principal meeting
- LA referral
- Statutory intervention

PA students are tracked and monitored carefully as absence affects progress and attainment.

7. Attendance Intervention Waves

Wave 1 – Universal (Form Tutor)

- Weekly attendance focus
- Celebrate 100% and most improved
- 1:1 return-from-absence conversations
- Promote belonging

Wave 2 – Targeted (APL/PL)

- Daily attendance huddle
- Mentor 5–10 targeted pupils
- Analyse patterns
- Refer to support programmes
- Communicate with parents

Wave 3 – Strategic (SLT Link)

- 1:1 with PA pupils
- Review wave movements
- Celebrate top forms and improvements

Wave 4 – Statutory (School + LA)

- Attendance summit meetings
- Multi-agency support
- Attendance Contracts
- Education Supervision Orders
- Prosecution where necessary

8. Punctuality System

Start Times

- **Hillside 8:30am**

Late Codes

- Late before registers close = L
- After registers close (9:30am) = **U code (unauthorised)**

Consequences

- Detention after school (1 hour)
- Escalation for repeated lateness

- Possible Penalty Notice if persistent

Poor punctuality is not acceptable.

9. Safe & Well Procedures

- Home visit on Day 1 or Day 2 of absence
- Weekend home visits
- Daily/alternate-day checks
- Police welfare check after 48 hours if child cannot be seen

This is a safeguarding requirement.

10. Leave of Absence (Term Time)

Not exceptional:

- Holidays
- Cheaper travel
- Work commitments
- Overlap with term dates
- COVID-moved holidays

Exceptional circumstances may include:

- Serious illness of a close family member
- Bereavement
- Cultural/religious obligations
- Trauma requiring family support

Requests must:

- Be submitted **4 weeks in advance**
- Include evidence
- Be confirmed in writing

All unauthorised leave meeting criteria will receive a **Penalty Notice**.

11. Penalty Notices (National Framework 2024)

- £80 if paid within 21 days
- £160 if paid within 28 days
- Second notice within 3 years = £160 flat
- Maximum of two fines per parent per child in 3 years

- After limit reached moves to prosecution or Education Supervision Order

12. Children Missing from Education (CME)

Triggers include:

- 10+ consecutive days absent
- Repeated unexplained absence
- Safeguarding concerns

Actions:

- Immediate safeguarding referral
- LA notification
- Police involvement if child cannot be located

A child going missing can be a warning sign of a range of safeguarding issues.

13. Rewards & Recognition

- 100% attendance certificates
- 96%+ recognition
- Most improved awards
- Attendance assemblies
- Breakfast clubs
- Intervention rooms for reintegration

14. Parent Partnership Summary

We work with parents to:

- Promote regular attendance
- Support families with barriers
- Communicate concerns early
- Celebrate success
- Ensure every child feels safe, cared for and able to achieve

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility.

15. Staff Quick-Reference Guide

If a pupil is absent:

- Tutor records
- Attendance Team contacts home
- Home visit if needed
- Escalate patterns

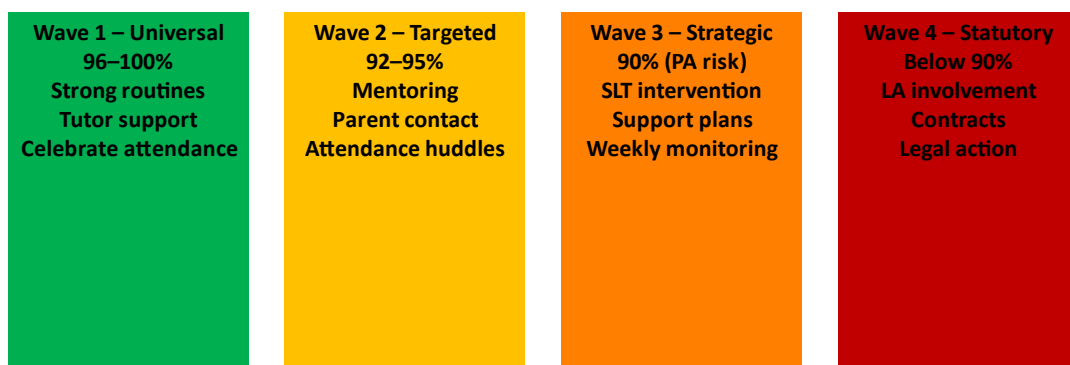
If a pupil is late:

- Mark late
- Issue detention
- Escalate repeated lateness

If a pupil is missing from lesson:

- Use buzzer
- Attendance Team investigates
- Tutor follows up

Graduated Approach to Attendance



Graduated Approach to Attendance – Staff Guidance

Core Principle

Attendance is everyone's responsibility.

Your role is to **identify early, act quickly, and escalate appropriately.**

Wave 1 – Universal (All Staff / Tutors)

Focus: Prevention and culture

What you must do:

- Meet & greet every morning
- Take accurate registers (every lesson)
- Track attendance patterns weekly
- Hold **return-from-absence conversations**
- Promote belonging and positive relationships
- Celebrate 96%+ and 100% attendance

Key message:

Most attendance issues are prevented here through strong routines and relationships.

Wave 2 – Targeted (Tutors / APLs / PLs)

Focus: Early intervention (92–95%)

Trigger:

- Attendance drops below ~95%
- Emerging patterns (e.g. Mondays, specific lessons)

What you must do:

- Raise in **attendance huddles**
- Identify patterns and barriers
- Begin **targeted mentoring (5–10 pupils)**
- Make early contact with parents
- Refer to support (pastoral / SEND if needed)

Key message:

Intervene early before absence becomes persistent.

Wave 3 – Strategic (SLT / Attendance Team)

Focus: Persistent Absence (below 90%)

Trigger:

- 10% absence (Persistent Absence threshold)

What you must do:

- Implement **Attendance Support Plan**
- Hold **weekly pupil check-ins**
- Coordinate with SLT/attendance lead
- Attend or contribute to parent meetings
- Monitor impact of interventions closely

Key message:

Structured, consistent support to stop long-term disengagement.

Wave 4 – Statutory (Attendance Team + SLT + LA)

Focus: Severe / sustained absence

Trigger:

- Continued PA despite intervention
- Safeguarding concerns or non-engagement

What you must do:

- Support **multi-agency plans**
- Provide evidence for:
 - Attendance contracts
 - Penalty notices
 - Education Supervision Orders
- Maintain consistent expectations in school

Key message:

This is a **last resort**—but essential to protect the child’s education.

Daily Non-Negotiables (All Staff)

-  Mark every register accurately and on time
-  Follow up missing pupils immediately
-  Challenge lateness consistently
-  Report concerns early (do not wait)

When to Escalate

Escalate immediately if you notice:

- A drop in attendance over 2 weeks
- Patterns (same day/lesson absence)
- Safeguarding concerns
- No parental engagement

How This Links to Behaviour Policy

- Poor attendance = increased behaviour risk
- Same **graduated approach applies**:
 - **Early intervention over punishment**
 - **Support alongside accountability**
- Strong attendance improves **learning, behaviour and outcomes**

Key Staff Mindset

“Every absence is a lost opportunity – intervene early, act consistently, and support relentlessly.”