



Old Hill Primary School

Attendance Policy

September 2023

Review – September 2024

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Statement of Intent

Old Hill Primary School is a successful school and together we aim for an environment which enables and encourages all members of the community to reach out for excellence. Our school target is 96% and for the children to gain the greatest benefit from their education, it is vital that they attend school regularly and punctually every day the school is open, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

We are committed to:

- promoting and modelling good attendance
- ensuring equality and fairness of treatment for all
- intervening early and working with other agencies to ensure the health and safety of our pupils
- rewarding regular attendance
- following the framework set in Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 which states:

“the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient full-time education suitable:-

(a) to age, ability and aptitude and

(b) to any special educational needs or additional learning needs he/she may have

Either by regular attendance at school or otherwise”.

1. Legal Framework

1.1 This policy has due regard to the following legislation and guidance, including, but not limited to:

- The Education Act 1996
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- DfE School Attendance Advice 2019
- DfE (2013) ‘Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs’
- DfE (2015) ‘Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions’
- DfE (2022) ‘Working Together to Improve School Attendance’.

1.2 All staff must ensure they adhere to and implement the requirements of any equality legislation.

2. Definitions

2.1 Old Hill Primary School defines “absence” as not attending school at any time without authorisation.

- 2.2 Old Hill Primary School defines “persistent absenteeism (PA)” as missing 10 per cent or more of schooling across the year for any reason

3. Key Roles and Responsibilities

- 3.1 The Governing Body has overall responsibility for the implementation of the attendance policy and procedures of Old Hill Primary School and ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.
- 3.2 The Governing Body should review attendance data, discuss, and challenge trends and help school leaders focus on improvements.
- 3.3 The Governing Body has overall responsibility for ensuring that the attendance policy does not discriminate on any grounds, including, but not limited to, ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- 3.4 The Governing Body has responsibility for handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school’s complaints policy.
- 3.5 The Headteacher will be responsible for the day-to-day implementation and management of the attendance policy and procedures of Old Hill Primary School.
- 3.6 The Headteacher will also be responsible for ensuring the policy is implemented fairly and consistently.
- 3.7 Staff, including teachers, support staff, and volunteers will be responsible for modelling good attendance behaviour and implementing the agreed policy.
- 3.8 Designated members of staff will take the attendance register at the start of each school day and start of each afternoon session.
- 3.9 Old Hill Primary School will ensure that every pupil has access to full-time education and will act as early as possible to address patterns of absence (Flowchart Appendix A).
- 3.10 Old Hill Primary School will inform the Local Authority (LA) of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly or has an unauthorised absence (Legal Action - Appendix B).
- 3.11 Parents/guardians/carers/adults over the age of 18 at the same address are legally responsible for the attendance and punctuality of the child/ren during term-time.
- 3.12 Parents/guardians/carers/adults will be expected to promote good attendance and ensure that pupils attend school on time every day.
- 3.13 Parents/guardians/carers/adults are responsible for the punctuality of their child/ren and ensure they arrive at school on time. Pupils who arrive after the close of registration will receive an unauthorised absence (U code).

4. Training of Staff

- 4.1 At Old Hill Primary School, we recognise that early intervention will help to remove barriers to attendance and safeguard pupils.
- 4.2 Teachers and support staff will receive training on the attendance policy as part of their new starter induction.
- 4.3 Teachers and support staff will receive regular updates and ongoing training as part of their development.

5. Parent Expectations

- 5.1 Parents/guardians/carers/adults are expected to ensure that their children attend school on time every day as it is a legal responsibility.
- 5.2 Parents/carers/guardians/adults are expected to report any absence to the school on the first day and each subsequent day of absence.
- 5.3 In addition, written evidence may be requested to support any absences and you may be required to provide doctor's notes, appointment letters or other relevant medical evidence (where appropriate).

6. Children Missing from Education (CMfE)

- 6.1 All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In very exceptional circumstances there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet a pupil's individual needs. For example, where a medical condition prevents a pupil from attending full-time education and a part-time timetable is considered as part of a re-integration package.
- 6.2 CMfE children are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of abuse and becoming NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) later on in life.

7. Absence Procedures

- 7.1 Parents/carers/guardians/adults must contact the school before 8.55am on the first day of any absence and each subsequent day of absence.
- 7.2 A phone call, text message or email will be made to the parent/carer/guardian/adult of any child who has not reported their absence on the first day of absence.
- 7.3 Absence will be monitored on a daily basis. Staff will make home visits to pupils who are absent without authorisation in relation to the Home Visit policy.
- 7.4 The school will always follow up any absences in order to:

- a) ascertain the reason for the absence
 - b) ensure that proper safeguarding action is being taken
 - c) identify whether the absence is authorised by the school or not
 - d) identify the correct code to use to enter the data onto the school register.
- 7.5 If a pupil is absent appropriate action will be taken by the school to support parents/carers/guardians to improve their child's attendance.
- 7.6 In the case of persistent absenteeism arrangements will be made for parents/carers/guardians to meet with a member of the attendance team.
- 7.7 Old Hill Primary School may inform the LA of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly or has been absent without the school's permission.

8. Contact Information

- 8.1 Parents/carers/guardians must provide accurate and up-to-date contact details of more than one adult; this is to ensure school have additional information to make contact to determine the nature of absence.
- 8.2 Parents/carers/guardians are responsible for informing and updating the school of contact details.

9. Attendance Register

- 9.1 The designated staff members will accurately take the attendance register at the start of each school day and at the start of the afternoon session. This register will record whether the pupil is:
- a) present
 - b) absent (authorised/unauthorised)
 - c) attending an approved educational visit
 - d) unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.
- 9.2 Old Hill Primary School will use the national attendance codes to record and monitor attendance and absenteeism in a consistent way.
- 9.3 Where a pupil is attending another school at which they are registered (for example, a Pupil Referral Unit (PRU)), a member of the Attendance Team will confirm the pupil's attendance at the other school on a daily basis.
- 9.4 When the school has planned in advance to be fully or partially closed, the code # will be used for the relevant pupils who are absent. This code will also be used to record year groups who are not due to attend because the school has set different term dates for different years, for example, induction days.

- 9.5 All amendments made to the attendance register will include the original entry, the amended entry, the reason for the amendment, the date of amendment, and the name and role title of the person who made the amendment.
- 9.6 Every entry into the attendance register will be preserved for three years.

10. Unauthorised Absence

- 10.1 If unauthorised absence becomes an issue, pupils will be referred to a member of the Attendance Team who will attempt to resolve the situation through a face-to-face meeting.
- 10.2 As part of the resolution an attendance contract may be agreed between the school and the parent/carer/guardian.
- 10.3 If the situation cannot be resolved and attendance does not improve, school will communicate with the Attendance and Prosecution Service to aid resolution.
- 10.4 The Attendance and Prosecution Team have the power to issue sanctions such as warnings, prosecutions or penalty notices.

11. Lateness

- 11.1 Punctuality is of the utmost importance and lateness will not be tolerated.
- 11.2 The school day starts at 8:55am and pupils must be in their classroom at this time.
- 11.3 Registers are marked by 9am; pupils will receive a late mark if they are not in their classroom by this time.
- 11.4 The register closes at 9:15am; pupils who arrive after this time will receive a mark of absence (unauthorised U code).
- 11.5 Attendance after the register is closed will receive a mark to show that they are on-site but will count as an absent mark.

12. Absence in Term Time

- 12.1 At Old Hill Primary School, our aim is to prepare children for their future lives and career. With this in mind, we request that parents/carers/guardians observe the school holidays as prescribed.
- 12.2 Following the September 2013 amendment to The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, Headteachers no longer have the discretion to authorise holidays during term time.
- 12.3 Absence of leave during term time will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances.

(Attendance Policy draft 2022-23)

- 12.4 Any requests for absence of leave during term time will be considered on an individual basis. Requests for leave must be submitted on the Leave of Absence Request form (obtainable from the school office).
- 12.5 Unauthorised absence of leave will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and may have sanctions such as a penalty notice.

13. Religious Observance

- 13.1 Old Hill Primary School will allow one day for the observance of religious festivals.
- 13.2 Parents/carers/guardians must inform the school in advance if absences are required for a day of religious observance.
- 13.3 The day of absence must be exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious board to which the children's parents/carers/guardians belong.

14. Appointments

- 14.1 As far as possible parents/carers/guardians should attempt to book medical and dental appointments outside of school hours.
- 14.2 Where this is not possible, evidence in the form of an appointment card or letter should accompany any request to take children out of school during the school day.
- 14.3 If the appointment requires the pupil to leave during the school day, the pupil must be signed out by a member of staff or the parent/carer/guardian.
- 14.4 Pupils must attend school before and after the appointment wherever possible.
- 14.5 If a pupil's attendance is under 96%, the school will make the decision about whether the appointment will be authorised.

15. Pupils with Additional Health Needs

- 15.1 Pupils who have additional health needs that result in longer-term absence will be managed under the Pupils with Additional Health Needs Attendance Policy.

16. Young Carers

- 16.1 Old Hill Primary School understands the difficulties young carers face and will endeavour to identify young carers at the earliest opportunity from enrolment at the school, as well as throughout their time at the school.
- 16.2 Old Hill Primary School takes a caring and flexible approach to the needs of young carers and each situation will be examined on a case-by-case basis, involving other agencies if appropriate.

17. Exceptional Circumstances

- 17.1 Exceptional circumstances include when a pupil is unable to attend because:
- a) the school is fully or partially closed
 - b) transport provided by the school or LA is not available and the pupil's home is not within walking distance
 - c) there has been widespread disruption to travel services which have prevented the pupil from attending
 - d) an unavoidable and unplanned event.
- 17.2 Absences for exceptional circumstances do not affect your child's attendance.

18. Rewarding Good Attendance

- 18.1 Old Hill Primary School acknowledges and rewards good attendance and punctuality in the following ways:
- a) Termly 100% attendance: pupils receive a letter from the Headteacher congratulating them on their attendance.
 - b) Top two classes are celebrated weekly in praise assembly.
 - c) Half-termly: The class with the most trophies will have 20 minutes extra play.

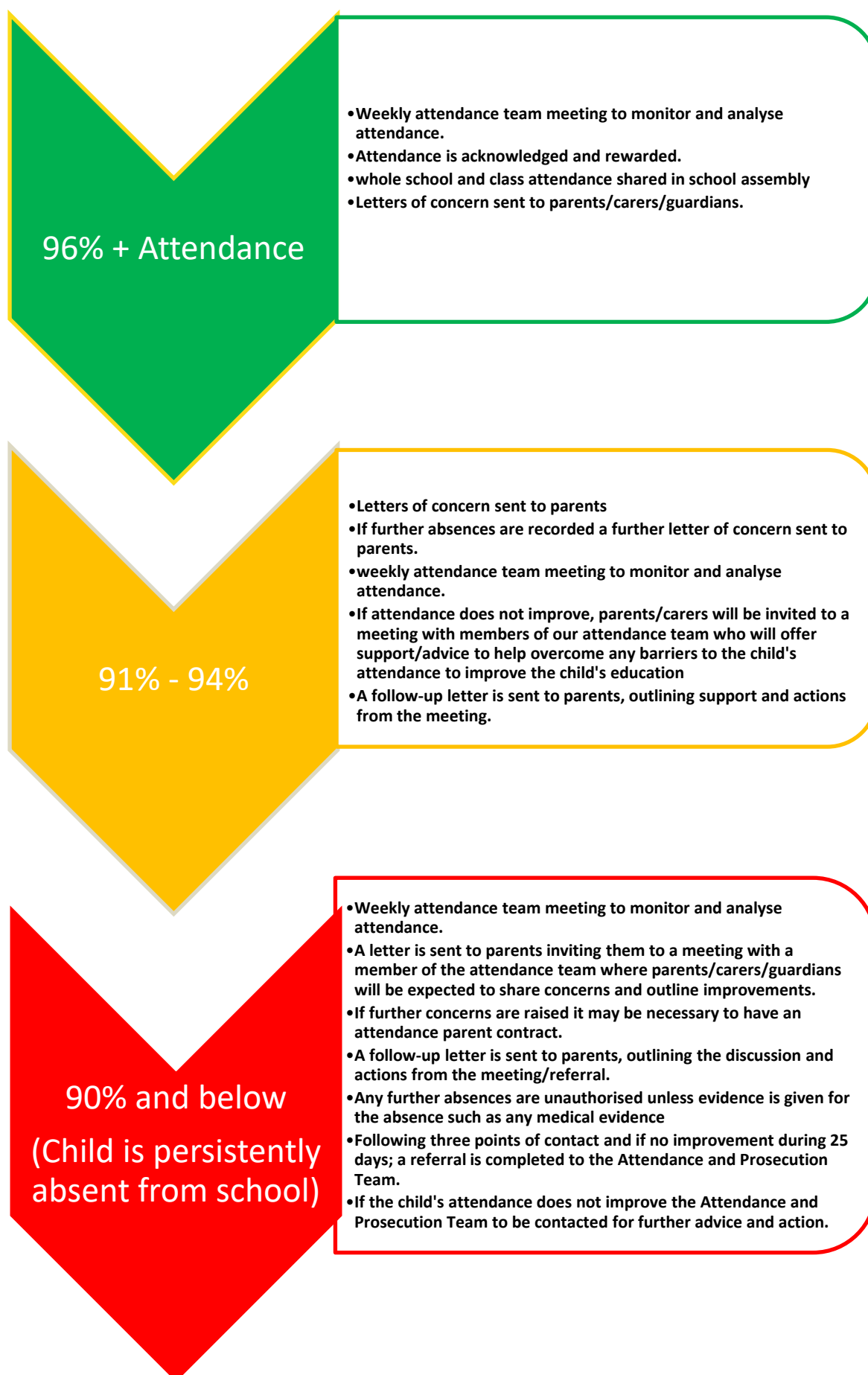
19. Monitoring

- 19.1 Old Hill Primary School monitors attendance and punctuality throughout the year.
- 19.2 Old Hill Primary School's attendance target is 96%.
- 19.3 Pupils will be closely monitored daily and before/after school holidays; this will include pupils who are absent before and after the weekend.

20. Attendance in Early Years and Nursery

- 20.1 All children who attend Old Hill Primary School and Nursery will need to follow our high expectations for attendance.
- 20.2 If your child is below 5 years of age parents/carers/guardians will still need to make sure their child meets our school target of 96% or above.
- 20.3 We will follow our attendance policy for all pupils and offer support to improve a child's attendance.
- 20.4 If a child in the early years is persistently absent, as with any child, this raises welfare and safeguarding concerns. Therefore, the school procedures in section 7 will be followed.

Appendix A – Attendance flowchart – Actions taken by school



Appendix B

Legal Action Information for Parents

Section 23(1) Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2007:

- a) Penalty Notices may be issued to the parent of pupils who have unauthorised absence from school. The amount of the penalty is £60.
- If this is not paid within 21 days the amount rises to £120.
 - If not paid within 28 days the Local Authority may prosecute under Section 444(1) unless it comes to our attention that the penalty notice had been issued in error.

b)

Section 444(1) Education Act 1996:

“If you are the parent of a child of compulsory school age who fails to attend school regularly, you are guilty of an offence.”

- The court can fine each parent up to £1,000 per child, order payment of the prosecution costs and/or impose a Parenting Order.

Section 444(1A) Education Act 1996:

“If in the above circumstances you, the parent, know that your child is failing to attend regularly at the school and fail without reasonable justification to cause him/her to attend, you are guilty of an offence.”

- The court can fine you up to £2,500 per child, order payment of the prosecution costs, impose a Parenting Order and/or sentence you to a period of imprisonment of up to 3 months.

Please note that:

- Penalties and prosecutions are in respect of each parent for each child.
- “Parent” includes any person who is not a parent but who has parental responsibility for the child or who has care of him/her.

These prosecutions are criminal proceedings and could result in you having a criminal record.

How does your child compare?

Attendance during one school year	Equals this number of days absent	Which is approximately this many weeks absent	Which means this number of lessons missed
90%	19 days	4 weeks	100 lessons
80%	38 days	8 weeks	200 lessons
70%	57 days	11.5 weeks	290 lessons

Frequent absence can add up to a considerable amount of lost learning and can seriously disadvantage your child in adult life.