Pupil Attendance Policy

Date reviewed	September 2026
Next review	September 2027
Review cycle	Annual, or sooner where required by DfE / legislation
Reviewing committee	Governing Body
Lead Governor Responsible	Nermin Holland
Headteacher	Miss Powell
Attendance Officer	Miss Lewis
Senior Attendance Leader	Mrs Bailey (Deputy Headteacher)
SENDCo & Inclusion Leader	Miss Carne

This revision incorporates the Department for Education statutory guidance Working together to improve school attendance (July 2026).

Linked policies and guidance

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Behaviour and Relationships Policy
- Education of Children and Young People Unable to Attend School due to Medical Needs
- Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions
- DfE: Working together to improve school attendance (July 2026)
- DfE: Children missing education
- DfE: Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026

DfE: Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions

DfE: Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools

1. Introduction and aims

At Hook Junior School, regular attendance is fundamental to pupils' education, safeguarding, wellbeing and wider life chances. We want school to be a calm, orderly, safe and supportive place where pupils want to attend and are ready to learn. We recognise that barriers to attendance are often complex and individual. We will therefore work in partnership with pupils, parents, the local authority and other services to understand barriers and put appropriate support in place as early as possible.

This policy aims to:

- set high expectations for attendance and punctuality for all pupils;
- promote a whole-school culture in which attendance is everyone's responsibility;
- ensure accurate admission and attendance registers and robust day-to-day follow-up of absence;
- use attendance data intelligently to identify patterns and pupils or cohorts who need support;
- listen to pupils and families and remove in-school barriers, including through reasonable adjustments where required;
- reduce persistent and severe absence through early, proportionate and increasingly intensive support;
- work effectively with Hampshire County Council and wider partners;
- use formal and legal intervention fairly and only in accordance with the law, statutory guidance and the local code of conduct.

For pupils resident in Hampshire, the school will work with Hampshire County Council's Legal Intervention Team (LIT), part of the Inclusion Support Service, where legal intervention is being considered. The LIT determines whether legal sanctions are appropriate and the local authority is responsible for prosecution. Before legal sanctions are considered, support and reasonable attempts to engage the family will be evidenced and exhausted where this is appropriate.

- To build strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school

2. Legal and statutory framework

Parents have a legal responsibility to ensure that a child of compulsory school age receives full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs they may have. Where a child is registered at a school, parents must ensure that the child attends regularly (97%+ attendance), except where a statutory reason for absence applies.

This policy has regard to, among other provisions:

- Education Act 1996, including sections 7 and 444;
- Education Act 2002;
- Children and Families Act 2014;
- Equality Act 2010, including the duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils;
- School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024;
- Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007, as amended;
- DfE statutory guidance: Working together to improve school attendance (July 2026);

DfE statutory guidance: Children missing education (September 2025);

DfE statutory guidance: Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026;

DfE guidance: School attendance parental responsibility measures.

For this policy, 'parent' includes a natural parent, a person with parental responsibility, and a person who has day-to-day care of the child. The school will identify the adult or adults it is most appropriate to work with in each case.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 Governing Body

- set high expectations for attendance and ensure attendance is reflected across the school's ethos, safeguarding and improvement priorities;

- ensure a named senior leader acts as Senior Attendance Lead and has sufficient time and resources to fulfil the role;
- regularly review attendance data, including persistent and severe absence and key cohorts, and challenge leaders about trends and impact;
- ensure leaders fulfil statutory duties, staff receive appropriate training, and the policy is reviewed and published;
- ensure the school works effectively with Hampshire County Council's Inclusion Support Service, including the Legal Intervention Team where appropriate, and other partners.

3.2 Senior Attendance Leader

Mrs Bailey, Deputy Headteacher and Attendance Leader, is the school's Senior Attendance Leader. She has strategic oversight of attendance and is accountable for championing and improving attendance across the school. The day-to-day operational attendance role is undertaken by Miss Gemma Lewis, Attendance Officer. The Senior Attendance Leader will:

- set a clear vision for improving and maintaining attendance;
- establish effective systems for tackling absence and ensure they are followed consistently;
- maintain a strong grasp of attendance data and use it to focus school improvement efforts;
- lead or oversee more formal conversations with families where absence is becoming persistent or severe;
- liaise with the local authority and external agencies;
- regularly monitor and evaluate the impact of attendance strategies and processes.

3.3 Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team

- promote the importance and benefits of attendance and punctuality;
- ensure accurate electronic admission and attendance registers and effective first-day and subsequent follow-up;
- ensure staff communicate expectations consistently and receive appropriate training;
- ensure barriers within school are identified and addressed, including reasonable adjustments where appropriate;
- analyse individual, cohort and whole-school data and ensure timely interventions are implemented;
- ensure statutory returns and data-sharing requirements are met.

The Headteacher is responsible for implementing this policy and for authorising any school absence or request for a Penalty Notice in accordance with Hampshire County Council procedures and the current local code of conduct.

The Headteacher will ensure that required information from the admission and attendance registers is shared with the local authority and DfE in accordance with statutory requirements.

3.4 Attendance Officer

- monitor attendance and punctuality and follow up unexplained or concerning absence;
- maintain constructive relationships with pupils and families and help identify barriers;
- record actions, support and outcomes appropriately;
- coordinate attendance meetings, home visits and referrals where required;
- work with the Senior Attendance Leader, safeguarding team (including Children’s Services where appropriate), SENDCo, class teachers, local authority and external agencies including Hampshire Inclusion.

3.5 Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for completing attendance registers accurately and promptly where this forms part of their role, using the correct national codes and alerting the Attendance Officer or safeguarding team to unexplained absence, repeated lateness or emerging concerns.

3.6 School office / administration staff

School office staff receive and record day-to-day absence information from parents, ensure messages and evidence are passed promptly to the Attendance Officer, and direct families to the appropriate member of staff when more detailed attendance support is needed.

3.7 All staff

- promote a welcoming culture and high expectations for attendance;
- take registers accurately and on time where this is part of their role;
- notice and share concerns about absence, lateness, wellbeing or barriers to attendance;
- use consistent, respectful messages with pupils and parents;
- contribute to agreed support and reasonable adjustments.

3.8 Parents and carers

- ensure their child attends every session (x2 sessions per day) for the full duration unless a statutory reason for absence applies;
- ensure their child arrives on time and ready to learn;
- contact the school by 8.55am on each day of unexpected absence, unless the school has agreed different reporting arrangements for a known longer absence;
- give a specific reason for absence and provide information reasonably requested by the school;
- make routine medical and dental appointments outside school hours wherever possible;
- request any planned leave at least 10 days in advance and provide relevant information or evidence;
- work with the school and other services to remove barriers and attend requested attendance meetings;
- keep the school informed of changes to contact details and provide more than one emergency contact number where reasonably possible.

3.9 Pupils

- attend school and lessons punctually and ready to learn;
- speak to a trusted adult if something at school or home is making attendance difficult;
- take part, where appropriate, in planning and reviewing support intended to improve attendance.

4. Attendance and absence: expectations and coding

The school will use the national attendance and absence codes set out in the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 and current DfE guidance. The attendance register is a legal record.

4.1 School day, registration and lateness

The school gates open at 8.30am and close at 8.40am. Pupils are expected to be in school by 8.40am. Morning registration is taken at 08:45. Afternoon registration is taken at 13:05. The school day ends at 3.20pm.

The morning register is taken at 08:45 and closes at 08:55. The afternoon register is taken at 13:05 and closes at 13:15. The register therefore remains open for the same 10-minute period in each session, in line with the DfE expectation that the register-closing period is consistent across sessions and does not exceed 30 minutes.

A pupil arriving after the register is taken but before it closes will be recorded as late (code L). A pupil arriving after the register has closed will be recorded as absent for that session using code U, unless another absence code is more appropriate.

Arriving Late to School

If your child arrives after the school gates have closed, please ensure that they are accompanied by a parent, carer or responsible adult to Reception. Children must not enter the school site or make their way to class unaccompanied. The accompanying adult will be asked to sign the child in using our electronic system and provide a reason for the lateness. These procedures help us maintain accurate attendance records and ensure the safety of all pupils.

4.2 Unexpected absence and first-day response

How to report an absence

If your child is absent from school due to illness, please contact us by 8.55am on the first day of absence and provide:

- your child's name
- your child's class
- a clear reason for the absence

This information is required because every absence is followed up as part of our safeguarding procedures. Knowing why a child is not in school helps us ensure they are safe and well.

Please avoid general explanations such as “not well”, as we may need further information before the absence can be authorised. Where the reason provided is insufficient or unclear, the Attendance Officer will contact the parent/carer to establish an acceptable reason for the absence. The school may also provide guidance on whether the child is well enough to attend school.

You can report an absence by one of these methods:

- email the school office (adminoffice@hook-jun.hants.sch.uk)
- phone the school and leave a message on our absence line (01256 762 468)

Subsequent days of absence
If your child remains absent after the first day, parents/carers must continue to inform the school of the reason for absence on each subsequent day, unless a return date has already been agreed with the school. This continued contact enables the school to maintain appropriate safeguarding oversight and to monitor the length and reason for the absence. Where contact is not received, or the reason remains unclear or insufficient, the Attendance Officer will follow up with the parent/carer.

The 48-hour rule and non-infectious symptoms
Children with diarrhoea and/or vomiting should remain away from school until at least 48 hours after the last episode, in accordance with current NHS and UKHSA guidance.

The school recognises that some children experience non-infectious gastrointestinal symptoms, for example nausea, abdominal discomfort or an urgent need to use the toilet associated with anxiety, emotional distress or an established health condition. These

symptoms do not automatically require a 48-hour absence where the child has not had diarrhoea or vomiting and is otherwise well enough to attend school.

Where parents/carers believe symptoms have a known non-infectious cause, they should contact the school. The school will consider the individual circumstances, any known health or SEND needs and current public-health guidance, and will work with the family to support the child's attendance where it is safe and appropriate to do so.

4.3 Illness and medical evidence

In most cases, a parent's notification that their child is too ill to attend school will be accepted and the absence recorded as authorised illness (code I). Physical and mental health-related illness can both fall within this code. The school will not routinely request medical evidence for illness absence.

Where a pupil is persistently absent and there is a repeated or prolonged pattern of absence attributed to illness, the school may notify parents that reasonable evidence will be required to support the authorisation of subsequent illness absence. This forms part of the school's attendance support and monitoring arrangements and reflects the school's established partnership working with the local medical practice.

The school will consider each absence individually and will not be rigid about the form of evidence required. Appropriate evidence might include an appointment confirmation, prescription or medication information, correspondence from a health professional, or other reasonable evidence available to the family. The school will not require parents to obtain a GP appointment or letter solely for the purpose of providing evidence where other reasonable evidence is available.

Where written evidence is not available, the school will discuss the circumstances with the parent and, where appropriate, the pupil before deciding which attendance code accurately reflects the absence.

Where the school has requested reasonable evidence because of a pupil's repeated or prolonged pattern of illness absence, and the information available does not satisfy the school that the pupil was unable to attend because of illness, the absence may be recorded as unauthorised.

Where repeated illness is contributing to persistent absence, the school's priority will also be to understand whether there is an underlying physical or mental health need and what support or reasonable adjustments may be required to improve attendance.

The school will make a sickness return to Hampshire County Council where there are reasonable grounds to believe a pupil will miss 15 school days consecutively or cumulatively in the current school year because of illness.

4.4 Medical and dental appointments

Parents/carers must make routine medical and dental appointments outside school hours wherever possible. Where this is not possible, parents/carers must notify the school in advance of the appointment and provide the date, time and nature of the appointment. The school may ask to see reasonable confirmation of the appointment, such as an appointment letter, text message, email or appointment card.

Pupils must attend school before and/or after the appointment wherever reasonably possible and should only be absent for the minimum amount of time necessary to attend the appointment.

Where appointments are taking place locally after 9:00am, pupils are expected to be in school for morning registration and collected thereafter. Where appointments are taking

place locally after 1:20pm, pupils are expected to be in school for afternoon registration and collected thereafter.

Routine appointments should not normally be reported for the first time on the day of the appointment. Where a parent/carer has had prior knowledge of an appointment but has not informed the school in advance, the school will consider the circumstances before deciding whether the absence can be authorised.

The school recognises that some appointments are urgent, emergency appointments or are offered at very short notice. In these circumstances, parents/carers should contact the school as soon as reasonably possible. The school will consider each case individually.

Where a pupil is present at morning or afternoon registration and subsequently leaves school for a medical or dental appointment during that same session, an absence does not need to be recorded for that session.

Interviews and entrance examinations for prospective schools

Where a pupil is required to attend an interview or entrance examination for a prospective school, parents/carers must notify the school in advance. The Headteacher will consider the request individually and, where leave is granted, will authorise only the minimum time reasonably necessary to attend, including reasonable travel time. Code J1 will be used for an interview for admission to another educational institution where the statutory conditions for that code are met; an entrance examination will be coded according to the circumstances and the national coding rules. Where possible, pupils are expected to attend school before and/or after the interview or examination. Absence for preparation, revision, tutoring or practice examinations will not normally be authorised.

4.5 Leave of absence and exceptional circumstances

Leave of absence must be requested at least 10 days in advance. The Headteacher will consider each application individually, taking account of the specific facts, circumstances and relevant background context. The school will not operate a blanket policy under which leave is automatically granted for particular events or circumstances.

A need or desire for a holiday or other absence for leisure and recreation is not considered an exceptional circumstance. Leave will not be granted for protest activity during school hours. Where exceptional leave is granted, the school will determine the period authorised.

How to request leave of absence

Parents/carers must complete the school's Request to Authorise Pupil Absence from School in Term Time form (Appendix 1) and return it to the school office at least 10 school days before the first requested day of absence wherever possible. The request should explain the exceptional circumstances and include any relevant supporting information or evidence. Parents/carers should not make firm arrangements until they have received the school's decision. Retrospective requests will not be authorised.

Weddings and funerals

Requests for absence to attend a wedding or funeral will be considered individually by the Headteacher, taking account of the specific circumstances and the pupil's relationship to the person concerned.

Leave to attend the funeral of a close family member or another person of significant importance to the pupil is likely to be considered an exceptional circumstance. The school will consider the reasonable time required to attend the funeral and for necessary travel. Any additional absence associated with bereavement will be considered separately in light of the pupil's individual circumstances and support needs.

Attendance at a wedding is not automatically considered an exceptional circumstance. In some circumstances, for example the wedding of an immediate family member or another

person with a particularly significant relationship to the pupil, a limited period of leave may be authorised.

Additional absence for a holiday, extended stay or other leisure activity connected with a wedding or funeral will not be authorised. Each request will be considered on its individual merits and there is no automatic entitlement to leave.

Examples of absence that will not be authorised

The following are examples of circumstances that would not be considered sufficient reason for absence. This list is not exhaustive and each request will be considered according to its individual circumstances:

- A pupil's or family member's birthday.
- Shopping, including shopping for school uniform.
- Hair appointments.
- Closure of a sibling's school, including INSET days.
- Absence arising from inadequate personal or family organisation.
- Keeping a pupil at home when they are considered well enough to attend school.
- Holidays, leisure trips or extended travel during term time.
- Illness of a parent or other family member.
- A pupil being kept at home to provide care for another person.
- Tiredness, including following a late night or poor night's sleep.
- Extreme weather, unless conditions make attendance unsafe or the school is closed.
- Non-urgent appointments that could reasonably be arranged outside school hours.
- Transport difficulties.
- Additional time associated with a wedding or funeral that has not been authorised as exceptional leave.
- Preparation, revision, tutoring or practice examinations for entrance examinations or interviews.

4.6 Religious observance

Absence may be authorised for a day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parent belongs. Parents are asked to notify the school in advance wherever possible.

4.7 Parent travelling for occupational purposes

The school will apply code T only where the statutory conditions are met for a mobile child travelling with a parent in the course of the parent's trade or business. Parents should tell the school about travelling patterns and expected return dates as early as possible.

4.8 Part-time timetables

All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to full-time education. A temporary part-time timetable may be used only in very exceptional circumstances where it is in the pupil's best interests; it must not be used to manage behaviour. It must be agreed with the parent the pupil normally lives with, form part of a wider support, healthcare or reintegration plan, have regular reviews and a proposed end date, and be in place for the shortest time necessary. Code C2 will be used where applicable.

4.9 Remote education

Remote education is not a routine alternative to attendance. Where it is considered for an individual pupil who is unable to attend, it will be used only as a last resort, where appropriate, and as part of a plan to support reintegration into school. Attendance coding will continue to follow the statutory register requirements.

5. Day-to-day attendance procedures

5.1 Register keeping

- The admission and attendance registers will be kept electronically.
- The attendance register will be taken at the start of each morning session and once during each afternoon session, at the same time for all registered pupils.
- The appropriate national code will be recorded for every pupil.

The register will record whether each pupil is present, attending an approved place other than school, absent, or unable to attend because of an unavoidable cause, using the appropriate national code.

- Amendments will preserve the original entry and record the amended entry, reason, date and person making the amendment.
- Registers will be retained for 6 years after the date on which the entry was made.

5.2 Alternative provision and education off site

Where a pupil remains on roll but attends alternative provision or another approved educational activity, the school will maintain timely knowledge of attendance, ensure safeguarding arrangements are suitable and use the appropriate national code. Providers must notify the school promptly of unexpected or unexplained absence.

5.3 Unexplained and continuing absence

The school's priority is to establish that the pupil is safe, understand the reason for absence and support a prompt return. Escalation will be proportionate to vulnerability, the length and pattern of absence and any safeguarding information.

If by 10:00am there is no response or reason for the child's absence, attempts will be made to ensure the child's safety by contacting all emergency contacts held on the child's school record.

If the school is still unable to establish the child's whereabouts, the Attendance Officer or another appropriate member of staff will visit the home and, where appropriate, assist the child to school.

If there is no response at the home, the Attendance Officer or another appropriate member of staff will leave a letter requesting that the parent/carer contacts the school as soon as possible to explain why their child is absent.

Where an unexplained absence gives rise to a safeguarding concern, staff will immediately inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a deputy and follow the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. Where there is reason to believe that a child is in immediate danger or at risk of harm, the school will make an immediate referral to Children's Social Care and/or contact the police, as appropriate.

Absence without any parental explanation – second day

On the second day of unexplained absence, the Attendance Officer or another appropriate member of staff will repeat the first-day procedures above and the Senior Leadership Team will be informed of any concerns. Where appropriate, the school will seek advice from and/or make a referral to Hampshire County Council for safeguarding purposes and will take any advised action.

Where a pupil's whereabouts remain unknown, or there are concerns that the pupil may be missing education, the school will follow section 9, Safeguarding and Pupils Missing Out on Education / Children Missing Education.

- Where a pupil has a social worker and/or youth offending team worker, unexplained absence will be shared with that professional.
- Where statutory thresholds for local-authority returns or children-missing-education action are met, the school will make the required referral/return without delay.

6. Monitoring, analysis and targeted support

Hook Junior School will use attendance information to act early rather than waiting for a fixed percentage threshold.

- Monitor individual and cohort attendance and punctuality patterns regularly, including by year group and relevant pupil groups.
- Look beyond headline percentages to days missed, patterns of codes, repeated days of absence and changes over time.
- Benchmark appropriately against national, local and comparable data, while avoiding simplistic comparisons that obscure individual needs.
- Share relevant information with class teachers, the SENDCo, Designated Safeguarding Lead, pupil premium lead and governors.
- Evaluate the impact of interventions and adjust them with the pupil and family where they are not working.
- Regularly inform parents about attendance in an understandable way, including time missed and likely impact on learning rather than relying only on a percentage.

Attendance returns: in accordance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 and statutory attendance guidance, the school will provide Hampshire County Council with the required details of pupils of compulsory school age who fail to attend school regularly and of pupils who have a continuous period of 10 school days (20 sessions) of unauthorised absence recorded using one or more of codes G, N, O and/or U. Returns will be made at the intervals required by Hampshire County Council and at least as frequently as required by statutory guidance.

6.1 Persistent and severe absence

As part of the school's early identification and communication strategy, automated attendance emails are sent weekly to parents/carers via Arbor where a pupil is persistently absent (attendance below 90%) or is at risk of becoming persistently absent (attendance between 90% and 95%). These regular communications are intended to ensure that families are aware of the pupil's current attendance level, to identify emerging concerns early and to encourage parents/carers to contact the school if there are barriers affecting attendance or support is required. Automated communications form part of the school's wider attendance monitoring and support process and do not replace individual discussion, reasonable adjustments or targeted support where these are needed.

Persistent absence means missing 10% or more of possible sessions for any reason. Severe absence means missing 50% or more of possible sessions for any reason. The school will identify pupils at risk before these thresholds are reached.

For pupils at risk of persistent or severe absence, the school will:

- meet with the pupil and parent to listen to and understand barriers;
- agree actions, support, reasonable adjustments and review dates;
- remove in-school barriers and make referrals for wider support where needed;
- intensify support as absence increases and work with Hampshire County Council and other partners;
- hold regular review meetings for pupils considered vulnerable or persistently/severely absent;
- consider formal support and legal intervention only in line with section 8 of this policy.

6.2 Pupils with SEND, disabilities, health needs and anxiety-related barriers

Attendance ambition remains high for pupils with SEND, disabilities or health needs. Having SEND does not, in itself, exempt a pupil from this Attendance Policy or the expectation of regular attendance. Regular attendance is important in enabling pupils with SEND to access education, receive appropriate support and make progress towards their individual outcomes. However, additional support or reasonable adjustments may be required. The school will understand individual needs, work with parents, review support regularly, consider adjustments to routines, uniform, transport, access to support and lunchtime arrangements, and involve relevant health and local authority services. Where appropriate, a time-limited phased return may be used as part of a reintegration plan.

Where a pupil has an Education, Health and Care Plan and attendance barriers relate to the pupil's needs, the school will communicate with the local authority and consider whether the plan needs review or amendment.

6.3 Young carers, disadvantaged pupils, pupils with social workers and other barriers

Young carers may face additional barriers to attendance. Where caring responsibilities may be contributing to absence, the school will work with the pupil and parent to understand barriers and facilitate appropriate support, including local early help arrangements where required. The school will also work closely with social workers and other statutory professionals for pupils who are open to those services.

Support will be based on the pupil's individual circumstances rather than assumptions about a group or cohort. The school will apply this policy fairly and consistently while considering its duties under the Equality Act 2010 and pupils' rights and best interests, including the principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

6.4 Promoting and recognising good attendance

The school will promote the benefits of regular attendance through consistent messages from staff, assemblies, class discussion, parent communications and the school website. We will recognise good and improving attendance sensitively, focusing on engagement, effort and improvement and avoiding approaches that disadvantage pupils whose absence is linked to disability, medical needs or other significant barriers.

6.5 Returning after lengthy or unavoidable absence

Where a pupil returns after a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence, the school will work with the pupil and family to plan a successful return. This may include a reintegration meeting, reasonable adjustments, pastoral or curriculum support, a time-limited phased return where appropriate, and regular review of progress towards full attendance.

7. Support pathway

Stage	School response
Expect	Set and communicate high expectations for attendance and punctuality.
Monitor	Use data and staff knowledge to identify emerging patterns early.
Listen and understand	Meet pupils and parents to understand barriers, including sensitive or complex circumstances.

Facilitate support	Remove in-school barriers and help families access appropriate voluntary support.
Formalise support	Where absence persists and voluntary support is ineffective or not engaged with, work with the local authority to formalise support, for example through an attendance contract or Education Supervision Order.
Enforce	Where support is not appropriate, has failed, or is not engaged with, consider a Notice to Improve, penalty notice or prosecution in accordance with the law and local code of conduct.

8. Attendance legal intervention

Legal intervention applies to pupils of compulsory school age and will be considered case by case. The school will work with Hampshire County Council and follow its current Local Code of Conduct.

8.1 Attendance contracts and Education Supervision Orders

Where voluntary support has not secured improvement or has not been engaged with, the school and local authority may formalise support through an attendance contract or consider an Education Supervision Order where appropriate.

An attendance contract is a voluntary written agreement and is not legally binding. A parent cannot be compelled to enter one. Where a contract is appropriate, the school will meet with the parent and, where appropriate, the pupil to agree actions, support and review arrangements. If the agreement does not lead to improvement, the school and local authority will review the barriers and consider whether different support or another lawful intervention is appropriate.

8.2 National Framework for Penalty Notices

All state-funded schools must consider whether a penalty notice is appropriate when a pupil reaches the national threshold of 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks. The sessions may be consecutive or non-consecutive, may comprise different unauthorised codes, and the 10-school-week period may span terms or academic years. The sessions do not have to be consecutive and different types of unauthorised absence can be combined. In Hampshire, a penalty notice may also be considered where there is evidence that a parent/carer has deliberately sought to avoid the national threshold. A bank holiday, INSET day or other session when the school is closed does not itself count as an unauthorised absence session; however, the timing and pattern of unauthorised absence may be considered when deciding whether there has been deliberate avoidance of the threshold. Meeting the national threshold does not mean that a penalty notice will automatically be issued; the individual circumstances and the appropriate response will be considered in accordance with the national framework and Hampshire County Council's Code of Conduct.

Reaching the threshold does not mean a penalty notice is automatic. The school/local authority must consider the individual case, whether support is appropriate and has been provided, whether a penalty notice is the best tool to change behaviour, and relevant Equality Act duties. Where support is not appropriate, as will usually be the case for an unauthorised holiday in term time, a penalty notice may be considered without first offering support.

8.3 Notice to Improve

Where the national threshold has been met, support is appropriate, and previous support has not worked or has not been engaged with, a Notice to Improve should usually be used as a final opportunity to improve attendance before a penalty notice. Where used, the improvement period will be between 3 and 6 weeks and the notice will set out the attendance concerns, support offered, further support available, the improvement required and the consequences of insufficient improvement.

8.4 Penalty levels and repeat offences

- First penalty notice to the same parent for the same child within a rolling 3-year period: £160 if paid within 28 days, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.
- Second penalty notice to the same parent for the same child within that 3-year period: £160, payable within 28 days, with no reduced rate.
- A third penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent for the same child within 3 years of the first; alternative action, often prosecution, must be considered.

Penalty notices will be issued to each parent liable for the offence, but should usually be issued only to the parent or parents who allowed the absence. Any penalty notice will be issued in accordance with the current Hampshire County Council Local Code of Conduct.

Where a Penalty Notice is issued, payment is made to the local authority. If payment is not made within 28 days, the local authority will decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice in accordance with the applicable legislation and Hampshire procedures.

9. Safeguarding and children missing education

Pupils Missing Out on Education / Children Missing Education (CME)

The school has a legal responsibility to monitor attendance, follow up unexplained absence and work with Hampshire County Council where a pupil may be at risk of missing education. For clarity, current statutory guidance defines a child missing education (CME) as a child of compulsory school age who is not registered at a school and is not receiving suitable education otherwise. A pupil who remains on Hook Junior School's admission register is therefore not formally CME solely because they are persistently or severely absent, although they may be at risk of missing education.

Where a pupil on roll is unexpectedly or unexplainedly absent, the school will make immediate and reasonable enquiries to establish the pupil's whereabouts and circumstances, following the first- and second-day safeguarding procedures above. Where there is reason to believe that a child is in immediate danger or at risk of harm, the school will follow its safeguarding procedures and make a referral to Children's Social Care and/or the police where appropriate.

If enquiries lead the school to reasonably believe that the pupil will no longer be attending Hook Junior School, and the parent/carer has not provided written notice that the child will attend another school or will receive education otherwise than at school, the school will refer the case to the child's home local authority Children Missing Education team as soon as possible. The school will continue reasonable enquiries and work with the local authority until it is agreed that enquiries have concluded or there are no further reasonable actions the school can take.

Removal from the admission register is separate from the duty to make attendance or CME referrals. A pupil's name will only be removed where one of the statutory grounds in regulation 9 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 is fully met. In particular, where a pupil has not returned within 10 school days following the end of an authorised leave of absence, or has been continuously absent without authorisation for 20 school days or more, the school and local authority must make joint reasonable enquiries and satisfy the relevant statutory conditions before the pupil can be

removed from roll. The school will not remove a pupil from roll simply because they are persistently or severely absent.

The school will follow the Department for Education's statutory guidance 'Children missing education' (updated September 2025), 'Working together to improve school attendance' (updated July 2026), and Hampshire County Council's Children Missing Education procedures.

10. Communication, publication and review

This policy will be published on the school website, provided or signposted to parents when pupils join the school, and brought to parents' attention at the beginning of each school year and when it is updated. The school will seek the views of pupils and parents when reviewing attendance approaches and will update the policy as barriers, statutory requirements or local procedures change.

The policy will be reviewed at least annually, and sooner where national or Hampshire guidance changes. The Senior Attendance Champion and Headteacher will oversee the review, and the Governing Body will approve the policy at each review.

11. Contact information

School office / attendance reporting	01256 762468 | adminoffice@hook-jun.hants.sch.uk
Attendance Officer	Mrs Gemma Lewis - via school office: 01256 762468 | adminoffice@hook-jun.hants.sch.uk
Senior Attendance Champion	Mrs Bailey (Deputy Headteacher / Attendance Leader) - via school office: 01256 762468 | adminoffice@hook-jun.hants.sch.uk
Headteacher	Miss Powell - via school office: 01256 762468 | adminoffice@hook-jun.hants.sch.uk
Deputy Headteacher	Mrs Bailey - via school office: 01256 762468 | adminoffice@hook-jun.hants.sch.uk

Appendix 1: Request to Authorise Pupil Absence from School in Term Time

HOOK JUNIOR SCHOOL

Request For Pupil Absence from School in Term Time

This leave of absence form serves as a Penalty Notice Warning letter to parent/carers. Any unauthorised absence during this period of time may be subject to a penalty notice for non-attendance being issued.

You are advised not to make any arrangements until your request has been considered.

Applications must be received, as a minimum, 10 days before the first day of absence.

Both parents who have parental responsibility should sign this form, even if the child does not reside with you, as any penalty for removing a child from school for an unauthorised absence will apply to both parents.

Schools are only able to authorise absence for exceptional circumstances only.

There are 13 weeks of the year, during school holidays when absence for a family holiday can be taken

Details of Hampshire school holidays are available from the Hampshire website and it is parents' responsibility to know these.

There is no general right to authorise absence for a family holiday and we will not authorise absence for a family holiday in term time.

If you take your child out of school without permission the absence will be unauthorised and we will consider legal action.

School use only:

Date application is received by school office

……

Is this at least 10 days prior to first day of absence

YES NO

SECTION A – I wish to apply to the Headteacher for leave of absence in term time:

Child's name:…… Class: ……..

Child's name:…… Class: ……..

Child's name:…… Class: ……..

Please indicate inclusive dates and times:

From:…….....

To:……

Number of school days:……

SECTION B - Please explain why you are applying for an authorised absence and the **circumstances** which make your **application exceptional**. If you are requesting authorisation to attend a specific event, travel or an appointment you must provide evidence.

……

……

……

……

……

……

……

……

……

Please detail the evidence you are providing to support your application for leave of absence in term time (flight details, invitations, letters, appointments, government documentation):

……

……

……

……

SECTION C - I / We have parental responsibility for the child named above. The information given on this form is correct.

Role of Parent/Carer 1:

……

Name:

……

Signature: **I agree** to the application for this absence

……

Signature: **I disagree** to the application for this absence

……

Date

……

Role of Parent/Carer 2:

……

Name:

……

Signature: **I agree** to the application for this absence

……..

Signature: **I disagree** to the application for this absence

……

Date

……

SECTION D – School use only

	Request is not approved and is unauthorised as the circumstances are not considered to be exceptional, the absence will negatively impact on your child's/children's educational progress, social development and/or mental health. **You may be subject to a fixed penalty fine.**
	You are requested to make an appointment with the Attendance Leader to discuss your absence application.
	You are requested to make an appointment with the Headteacher to discuss your absence application.
	Request for leave of absence in term time is approved and recorded
	From:……..To:……. Number of days:……

Signed Headteacher (or DHT on HT behalf)

……..

Date

…….

Applications for leave of absence must be made in advance. Hook Junior School may grant leave only where the relevant statutory conditions are met. Requests for exceptional-circumstance leave will be considered individually on their merits; there is no general entitlement to term-time holiday.

Please submit this form at least 10 school days before the first requested day of absence wherever possible.

Appendix 2: Model responses to a leave-of-absence request

A. Approved request

Dear {Parent/Carer},

Re: Application for Pupil Absence from Hook Junior School – 2026/27

Student: {CHILD'S FULL NAME}

Attendance: {CHILD'S CURRENT ATTENDANCE %}

Missed Sessions/Days: {SESSIONS/DAYS}

I am writing in response to your application received on {FULL DATE}, requesting absence for {CHILD'S FULL NAME} from {FULL DATE} to {FULL DATE} for {STATE THE FULL REASON}.

Having considered the specific circumstances of your request, in accordance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 and the school's Attendance Policy, the request has been approved for the following dates/sessions: {DETAILS}.

This decision relates only to this individual application and does not establish that leave will be authorised in similar circumstances in the future.

Yours sincerely

Miss L Powell

Headteacher

B. Refused request

Dear {Parent/Carer},

Re: Application for Pupil Absence from Hook Junior School – 2026/27

Student: {CHILD'S FULL NAME}

Attendance: {CHILD'S CURRENT ATTENDANCE %}

Missed Sessions/Days: {SESSIONS/DAYS}

I am writing in response to your application received on {FULL DATE}, requesting absence for {CHILD'S FULL NAME} from {FULL DATE} to {FULL DATE} for {STATE THE FULL REASON}.

Having considered the specific circumstances of your request, in accordance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 and the school's Attendance Policy, the request has not been approved because the circumstances have not been considered sufficient to authorise the requested leave. If the absence is taken, it will therefore be recorded as unauthorised.

Please be aware that the national threshold for considering a Penalty Notice is 10 sessions of unauthorised absence within a rolling period of 10 school weeks. Reaching this threshold does not mean that a Penalty Notice will automatically be issued; each case will be considered individually in accordance with the national framework and Hampshire County Council's Local Code of Conduct.

Where a Penalty Notice is issued, the first notice is £160 per parent, per child, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days. A second Penalty Notice issued to the same parent for the same child within three years is £160, with no reduced rate. A maximum of two Penalty Notices may be issued to the same parent for the same child within a rolling three-year period; where the threshold is met again, other legal action may be considered.

If you would like to discuss this decision, please contact Miss Lewis, Attendance Officer, via the school office.

Yours sincerely

Miss L Powell

Headteacher

Appendix 3: Attendance quick guide for parents

HOOK JUNIOR SCHOOL

Attendance at Hook Junior School

A Guide for Parents and Carers

2026 – 27

Every day in school matters. Brighter futures start here.

At Hook Junior School we want every child to feel happy, safe and supported, and to attend school regularly so that they can achieve their full potential. This guide explains the key information from our Pupil Attendance Policy in a clear and simple way.

School and registration times

- School gates open: **8:40am**
- School starts / **registers taken: 8:55am**
- End of school day: **3:15pm**

Your child must be in school and registered by 8:55am every day.

Reporting an absence

- If your child is unwell and unable to attend, please contact the school before **8:55am** on each day of absence.
- Report via Arbor, by phone (01256 762468) or by email (**adminoffice@hook-jun.hants.sch.uk**).
- Please tell us the reason for the absence.
- If we do not hear from you, we will contact you to check on your child's safety.

If your child is unwell

- If your child has a minor illness (e.g. cough, cold, headache or mild stomach upset), they are usually well enough to attend school.
- If your child has had **vomiting or diarrhoea, please keep** them at home for **48 hours** after the last **episode.**
- Some symptoms, such as a headache or stomach ache, can be linked to anxiety or other non-infectious causes. If you are unsure, please contact the school for advice.

Medical and dental appointments

- Please make routine appointments **outside** school hours where possible.
- If an appointment is during the school day, please try to arrange for your child to attend for part of the day.
- Provide a copy of the appointment letter, card or text message.

Holidays and term-time leave

- Holidays during term time are **not allowed** and will not be authorised.
- Requests for leave of absence will only be considered in exceptional circumstances.
- A Leave of Absence Request Form must be completed in advance.
- If leave is taken without permission, the absence will be unauthorised and may result in a penalty notice or other action by Hampshire County Council.

If something is making it difficult for your child to attend, please talk to us early so that we can help.

We are here to support you and your child.

Page 1 of 2

HOOK JUNIOR SCHOOL

Special occasions (weddings, funerals, etc.)

- We understand that there may be times when your child needs to be absent for important family events such as a close family wedding or funeral.
- Please contact the school as early as possible to discuss the request.
- Any absence will be considered on an individual basis and is likely to be authorised only in **exceptional** circumstances.

Entrance examinations and interviews

- Absence for entrance examinations (e.g. for secondary school) or interview days will usually be authorised.
- Please provide evidence of the date and time, such as a letter or email from the relevant school.

Attendance levels and our support

- We aim for all pupils to have at least **95% attendance**.
- **90%** attendance is the threshold for persistent absence (PA). This means your child is missing around 4 weeks of school a year.
- We monitor attendance closely and will send weekly Arbor communications to families where attendance is below or approaching 95%.
- If we are concerned about your child's attendance, we will work with you to offer support and identify any barriers.

Medical evidence

- **For some absences**, we may ask for **medical evidence** (e.g. appointment letter, prescription or other evidence).
- This helps us to ensure we have the correct information and to support your child appropriately.

Unauthorised absence and penalty notices

- If your child is absent without a valid reason, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.
- A penalty notice may be considered where there are 10 or more sessions (equivalent to 5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling period of 10 school weeks. The sessions do not have to be consecutive and can include different types of unauthorised absence (e.g. holiday, late after registers close).
- **Bank holidays and INSET days do not** themselves count as unauthorised absence sessions, as pupils are not required to attend school on those days. However, in Hampshire, a penalty notice may also be considered where there is evidence that a parent/carer has deliberately sought to avoid the national threshold (for example, by arranging a shorter absence immediately before or after a bank holiday or INSET day).
- Meeting the threshold does not mean that a penalty notice will automatically be issued. Each case is considered individually in accordance with the national framework and Hampshire County Council's Code of Conduct.

Key contacts

School Office (to report absences)

01256 762468

adminoffice@hook-jun.hants.sch.uk

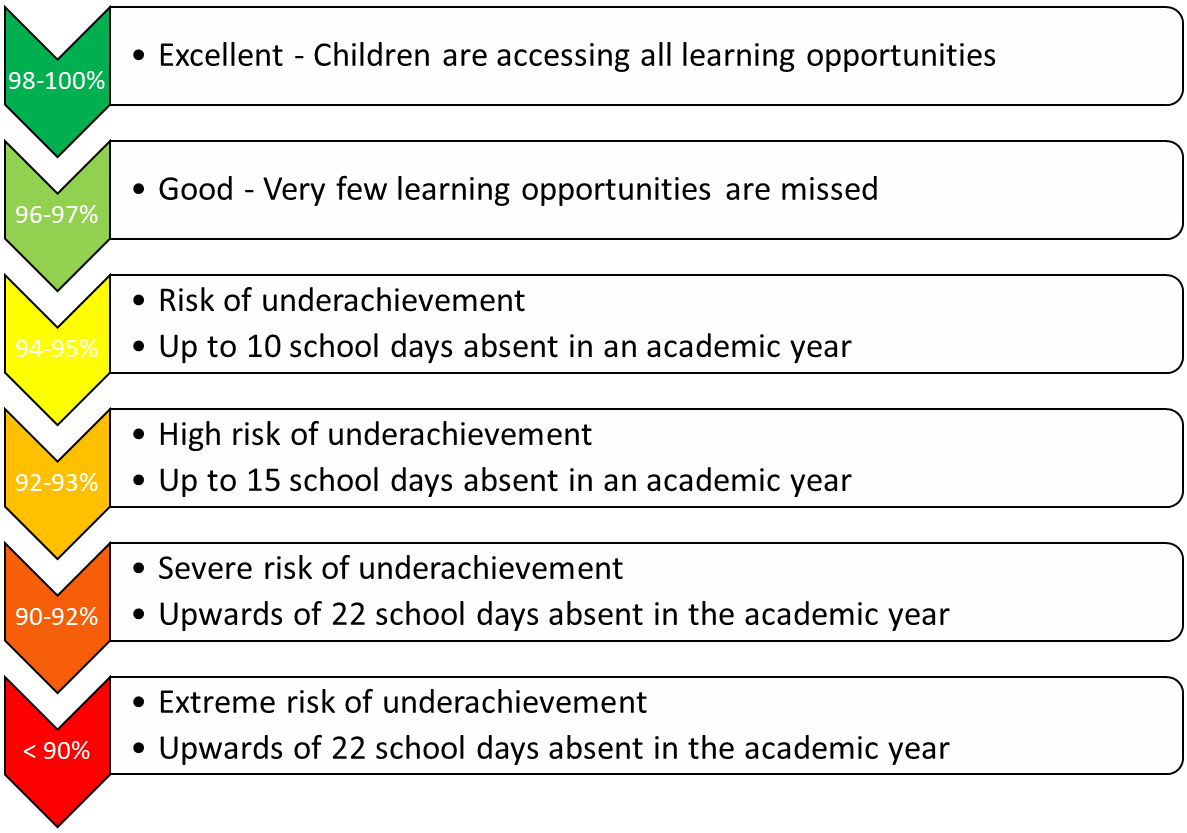
Hook Junior School
London Road, Hook, RG27 9ED

Senior Attendance Champion
Mrs Bailey

Attendance Officer
Miss Gemma Lewis

This guide summarises Hook Junior School's Pupil Attendance Policy 2026 – 27. It does not replace the full policy, which is available on the school website. Where there is any difference, the full policy applies.

Page 2 of 2


98-100%
• Excellent - Children are accessing all learning opportunities
96-97%
• Good - Very few learning opportunities are missed
94-95%
• Risk of underachievement
• Up to 10 school days absent in an academic year
92-93%
• High risk of underachievement
• Up to 15 school days absent in an academic year
90-92%
• Severe risk of underachievement
• Upwards of 22 school days absent in the academic year
< 90%
• Extreme risk of underachievement
• Upwards of 22 school days absent in the academic year

Appendix 4: National attendance codes - school summary

This appendix is a practical summary only. Staff responsible for coding must use the current DfE statutory guidance and the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 where a coding question arises.

Authorised absence codes

These codes count as authorised absence in DfE attendance statistics.

Code	DfE description / use
C	Absent with leave for other circumstances (exceptional circumstances not covered by another code).
C1	Absent with leave to participate in a regulated performance or regulated employment abroad.
C2	Absent with leave because a temporary part-time timetable does not require the compulsory-school-age pupil to attend.
E	Authorised absence because the pupil is suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision has been made.
I	Unable to attend because of illness (not medical or dental appointments).
J1	Absent with leave to attend an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution.
M	Absent with leave to attend a medical or dental appointment.
R	Absent for a day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parent belongs.
S	Absent with leave for the purpose of studying for a public examination.
T	Mobile child absent because their parent is travelling in the course of their trade or business and the child is travelling with them.

Unauthorised absence codes

These codes count as unauthorised absence. Code N is temporary while the reason is being established and should be replaced with the correct code as soon as the reason is known.

Code	DfE description / use
G	Absent without leave for the purpose of a holiday.
N	Absent - circumstances/reason not yet established. The correct code should be entered once the reason is established.
O	Absent in other circumstances where the absence has not been authorised and no other code applies.
U	Absent for registration because the pupil arrived after the register had closed.

Present / approved educational activity codes

These are not absence codes. They record that the pupil is present or attending an approved educational activity.

Code	DfE description / use
/	Present at the school for the morning session when the attendance register begins to be taken.
\	Present at the school for the afternoon session when the attendance register begins to be taken.
L	Late: absent when the register began to be taken but arrived before the register closed.
B	Attending another place for an approved educational activity.
K	Attending educational provision arranged by the local authority at a place other than a school.
P	Attending an approved sporting activity.
V	Attending an educational visit or trip.
W	Attending work experience.

Codes that do not count as possible attendance sessions

These codes are neither authorised nor unauthorised absence for attendance-percentage purposes because the session is not counted as a possible attendance session.

Code	DfE description / use
D	Attending another school at which the pupil is also registered (dual registered).
Q	Unable to attend because of a lack of access arrangements by the local authority.
X	Non-compulsory-school-age pupil not required to attend because their timetable does not require it.
Y1	Unable to attend because transport normally provided is not available.
Y2	Unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by an emergency.
Y3	Unable to attend because part of the school premises is unavoidably out of use.
Y4	Unable to attend because the whole school is unexpectedly closed when it was due to meet.
Y5	Unable to attend because the pupil is subject to a sentence of detention.
Y6	Unable to attend because attendance/travel would be contrary to public-health guidance or prohibited by law relating to infection or disease.

Y7	Unable to attend because of another unavoidable cause; the nature of the cause must also be recorded.

Administrative codes: Z = pupil's name entered on the admission register in advance of their start date; # = planned whole-school closure. These are not collected as pupil attendance sessions in the school census.

Appendix 5: Attendance strategy 2026-27

The school's strategy is based on early identification, respectful partnership with families and proportionate escalation. Percentage bands are used as prompts for professional attention, not as automatic rules for authorising absence or taking legal action.

Level	Core response
Universal - all pupils	Promote belonging and the benefits of attendance; accurate registers; first-day response; regular parent communication; monitor cohorts and patterns; praise improvement sensitively.
Emerging concern	Contact family early; listen to pupil and parent; identify barriers; agree practical actions; involve class teacher/SENDCo/DSL as relevant; review impact.
At risk of persistent absence	Track and challenge any uncertain absences, address any potential barriers to attendance & implement support strategies. Weekly communications via Arbor to family that their child is at risk of PA. Review any involvement from external agencies e.g. nurse referral or Family help. Hold a structured attendance meeting if attendance is in decline; consider attendance contract make reasonable adjustments/referrals; review frequently.
Persistent absence (10%+ missed)	Intensify support; Joint attendance meeting with class teachers to discuss the implications on progress and include child. Attendance Contract in place, thereafter regular face meetings and review with family. Further absences only authorised with medical evidence, weekly automated letter via Arbor, multi-agency work where needed; consider attendance contract/formal support if voluntary support is ineffective or not engaged with e.g., notice to improve. Involve local authority where appropriate.
Severe absence (50%+ missed)	Treat as a high-priority safeguarding and education concern; intensive multi-agency response; work closely with local authority; consider statutory social care involvement where safeguarding concerns exist.
Unauthorised absence / enforcement	Apply the National Framework and Hampshire Local Code of Conduct. Consider the 10-session/10-school-week national threshold case by case; use Notice to Improve where appropriate; escalate only where lawful and proportionate.

References used for this revision

Department for Education, Working together to improve school attendance: statutory guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities, July 2026. Key references include paragraphs 24-28 (minimum policy content and review), 32-42

(registers and day-to-day processes), 48-64 (data sharing and additional support), 65-70 (part-time timetables), and 179-200 (National Framework for Penalty Notices).

School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024; Education Act 1996; Equality Act 2010; and Hampshire County Council's current Local Code of Conduct for issuing penalty notices.

Hampshire County Council, Attendance guidance for parents/carers and school attendance expectations (current online guidance, accessed September 2026).

Hampshire County Council, Legal Intervention Team and Legal measures for unauthorised absence (including Hampshire's Code of Conduct for issuing Penalty Notices).

The Key Support Services Ltd, Attendance policy model (schools), July 2026, adapted to the school's context.

The Key Support Services Ltd, Attendance policy checklist (schools), September 2025.