



# Attendance Policy

**Reviewed by:** Polly Shields, February 2018

**Approved by:**

**Next review:** February 2020 (TBD)

**Statutory**

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## **1. Aim**

Hanover Primary School is committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all its pupils and recognises this can only be achieved by supporting and promoting excellent school attendance for all. This is based on the belief that only by attending school regularly and punctually will children and young people be able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. High attainment depends on good attendance.

The whole school community – pupils, parents and carers, teaching and support staff, and school governors, have a responsibility for ensuring good school attendance and have important roles to play. The purpose of this policy is to clarify everyone's part in this.

This policy is supported by our policies on safeguarding and inclusion.

## **2. Legal framework**

The Education Act 1996 states that:

The parent/carer of every child of compulsory school age shall cause them to receive efficient full-time education suitable –

- a) to their age, ability and aptitude, and
- b) to any special educational needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

A person begins to be of compulsory school age –

- a) when they attain the age of five, if they attain that age on a prescribed day, and
- b) otherwise at the beginning of the prescribed day next following their attaining that age.

A person ceases to be of compulsory school age at the end of the day which is the school leaving date for any calendar year –

- a) if they attain the age of 16 after that day but before the beginning of the school year next following,
- b) if they attain that age on that day, or
- c) (unless paragraph (a) applies) if that day is the school leaving date next following their attaining that age.

Hanover School aims to comply with attendance laws set out by the legal framework and has set out this attendance policy accordingly.

## **3. Roles and responsibilities**

### **3.1 Governing body**

The governing body of a maintained school shall make arrangements for ensuring that their

functions relating to the conduct of the school are exercised with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who are pupils at the school.

Our Governing Body believes that good attendance at school is the first step towards pupil progress and achievement. Good punctuality shows respect for teachers and peers and ensures that children are ready and willing to learn.

The Governing Body has nominated the Safeguarding Link Governor to take the lead on attendance issues.

### **3.2 School leadership team**

As part of our whole-school approach to maintaining high attendance, the school leadership team will:

- Be active in their approach to promoting good attendance to pupils and their parents/carers, which includes forming positive relationships with families;
- Ensure that the school's teaching and learning experiences encourage regular attendance and that pupils are taught the value of high attendance for their own progression and achievement;
- Draw up an attendance policy and plan, and seek governing body approval of these;
- Ensure that all staff are up to date with the school's attendance policy and plan, and government legislation;
- Nominate or appoint a senior manager to take the responsibility of overseeing and monitoring attendance provision and that this person has sufficient time and resources to give to this job;
- Report attendance data to the governing body each term;
- Ensure that systems to record and report attendance data are in place and working effectively;
- Develop multi-agency relationships to help with poor attendance and support families who are having difficulties getting their child to attend.

The School has nominated the Deputy Head as the senior manager responsible for attendance issues.

### **3.3 Teachers and support staff**

As part of our whole-school approach to maintaining high attendance, the school's teachers and support staff will:

- Be active in their approach to promoting good attendance to pupils and their parents/carers, which includes forming positive relationships with families;
- Ensure that the school's teaching and learning experiences encourage regular attendance and that pupils are taught the value of high attendance for their own personal progression and achievement;
- Ensure that they will seek support if they are unsure how to deal with an attendance issue;
- Ensure that they are following the correct systems for recording attendance and that the attendance register is taken twice daily (at 9am and at 1.30pm).

### **3.4 Parents and carers**

Hanover Primary School expects that parents / carers will:

- Ensure their child(ren) attend(s) school regularly;
- Support their child's attendance by keeping requests for absence to a minimum, including avoiding medical and dental appointments during school time;
- Not expect the school to automatically agree any requests for absence, and not condone unjustified absence from school;
- Notify Hanover on the first day of absence (see section 4), and include an expected date for return.

We also expect parents/carers to:

- Engage with their children's education – support their learning and take an interest in what they have been doing at school, and promote the value regular school attendance;
- Inform the school of any circumstances which may affect their child's attendance;
- Enforce a regular routine at home in terms of homework, bedtime, etc. so the child is used to consistency and the school day becomes part of that routine. It is vital the child receives the same message at home as at school about the importance of attendance.

### **3.5 Pupils**

As part of our whole-school approach to maintaining high attendance, we request that pupils:

- Are aware of the importance of regular school attendance.
- Speak to their class teacher or another member of staff if they are experiencing difficulties at school or at home which may impact on their attendance;
- Attend all lessons ready to learn, with the appropriate learning tools requested and on time for the class;
- Follow the correct set school procedure if they arrive late (see section 4.6).

## **4. Categories of absence and procedure for reporting absences**

### **4.1 Unauthorised Absences**

Absences will be treated as unauthorised unless a satisfactory explanation for the pupil's absence is given to the school. Only the Headteacher can authorise absences, not parents or carers.

When a child is to be absent from school without prior permission, parents/carers should inform the school by telephone at the beginning of the first day of absence and let them know what date they expect the child to return. For a prolonged absence, this should be followed up with a written note from parents including evidence requested justifying the absence. Alternative arrangements will be made individually with non-English speaking parents/carers.

### **4.2 Illness**

Most cases of absence due to illness are short term, but parents/carers will need to make a

phone call to alert the school at the beginning of the each day of absence. Parents/carers will need to be prepared to explain the nature of the illness and when they expect their child will return. The school will decide whether the absence is authorised or unauthorise

Islington guidance is as follows:

“Your child should only be kept away from school if they have an infectious illness, need care during school hours that cannot be carried out in school, or are not able to cope with lessons. Many children experience common ailments from time to time. Most of these do not need a prescription, are rarely serious, do not require a visit to your doctor and do not require time away from school.”

#### **4.3 Exclusion**

Exclusion is treated as an authorised absence. The Headteacher/class teacher will arrange for work to be sent home.

#### **4.4 Term-time Holidays and Requests for Absence**

No time off for holidays during term time will be authorised for any reason. Applications for term time absence will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances.

Requests for leave for exceptional circumstances from school must be made using the request form (available from the school), and given to the Headteacher at least two weeks in advance of the leave being taken. We will consider every application individually. In line with guidance from Islington Local Authority, our policy is NOT to grant leave of absence for a home country visit.

When deciding whether to authorise absence, the Headteacher will take the following into account:

- the purpose of the leave;
- the period of time that the child will be absent from school during the request period;
- attendance of pupils; this should be at least 95%;
- how close the time is to statutory assessment.

If permission is not granted, but the child is still absent, the absence is classed as unauthorised and parents/carers may be issued with a penalty notice. Retrospective applications will not be considered and this time taken will be processed as unauthorised absence.

#### **4.5 Religious Observance**

Hanover School recognises that there may be times where children of different faiths observe religious festivals that fall outside of school holidays and weekends, and will allow authorised absence for these time. Parents/carers will be aware of these dates and should give the school written notification in advance.

#### **4.6 Late arrival**

Punctuality is an important habit. Late arrival at school causes disruption to the child’s education, the education of his/her class, and disrupts the smooth-running of the office.

We expect pupils to arrive at school by 8.55am to enable them to reach their classroom in time

for the register at 9.00am. Pupils who miss registration at 9am must sign in at the office; they will get a late mark. All parents/carers bringing in children late after 9.05am are required to fill in a 'late arrival form' (Appendix 1). It is vital that pupils sign in at the office to ensure that all pupils on site are accounted for. The number of minutes late is recorded. Any child arriving after 9.30am will be marked as 'unauthorised late'.

**Persistent lateness will result in action by the School. We will alert parents/carers with an LL1, LL2 or LL3 letter (see appendices 2, 3 and 4). If the persistent lateness continues, the School may take further action with the support of the local authority. 5. School action: following up absences 5.1 Explanations of absence**

Class registers are passed electronically to the school office at the end of the registration period. Where there are unexplained absences, the school will contact the parents/carers as soon as possible (usually the morning of the first day of absence) for an explanation. If we do not receive a satisfactory explanation, the absence will be classified as unauthorised. We will continue to call parents/carers for an explanation. If after two weeks no satisfactory reason for an absence is provided, parents/carers will be receive an AL1 letter (appendix 5) and asked to provide a written explanation.

If a pattern of unauthorised absence emerges, the Deputy Head will contact the parent/carer to discuss possible reasons and school support systems that could help.

## 5.2 Poor attendance

<b>Attendance metrics to be used to describe attendance of individual pupils</b>	
100%	outstanding
98 – 99%	excellent
96 - 97%	good
95%	average (minimum accepted by both the school and Islington)
90 – 94%	poor attendance, must improve
Below 90%	Persistent Absenteeism (PA) cause for concern. At risk of penalty notice.
Below 85%	Persistent Absenteeism (PA) serious concern. At risk of penalty notice.

Poor attendance leads to poor outcomes for children. Even 96% attendance is the equivalent of eight days of missed education per year.

90% attendance =	19 days of missed education per year – almost 4 weeks
85% attendance =	29 days missed – almost 6 weeks
80% attendance =	38 days missed – almost 8 weeks
75% attendance =	47 days missed – over 9 weeks

We monitor attendance regularly. When a child's attendance falls below 90% to date we alert parents/carers with an AL2 letter (appendix 6 ). We monitor these children over the next half term to ensure their attendance improves; if it does, no further action is taken.

If attendance does not improve over the next half term, parents will be written to again with an AL3 or AL3A letter (appendices 7 and 8) to explain that any further absence during the following two weeks will trigger a formal meeting (appendix 9, AL4 letter) with the Attendance Lead where strategies to improve attendance will be discussed.

Where poor attendance continues beyond this point, we will take advice from Islington's Access and Engagement Team, and may refer families on to them. This may result in a penalty notice being issued.

## **6. Rewarding good attendance**

### **6.1 Class attendance**

Attendance and punctuality levels are shared in our Friday assembly. The classes with the best attendance and punctuality each week get to 'look after' some special soft toys for the week.

### **6.2 Individual attendance**

At the end of each term, we celebrate those children whose attendance has been above 98%, and those with 100% attendance, by rewarding them with a special certificate and a small gift. These children have their names listed in our attendance display in the school foyer.

### **6.3 Improved attendance**

When families make effort to improve attendance significantly, we write to tell them that this has been noted, and encourage them to keep up the good work. Children with markedly improved attendance also receive a certificate at the end of term assembly.

## **7. Links with other policies**

This policy is linked to our safeguarding and child protection and inclusion policies.



## 7. Appendices

### Appendix 1: Late Arrival form

HANOVER PRIMARY SCHOOL  
Noel Road NI 8BD • 020 7689 8949 • [admin@hanover.islington.sch.uk](mailto:admin@hanover.islington.sch.uk)  
**Headteacher:** Jack Sloan



### LATE ARRIVAL FORM

Date:

Time:

Childs Name:

Class:

Reason for late arrival (Parent/carer to complete):

Appendix 2: LL 1, 3 lates this half term

# HANOVER PRIMARY SCHOOL



Noel Road NI 8BD • 020 7689 8949 • [admin@hanover.islington.sch.uk](mailto:admin@hanover.islington.sch.uk)

Headteacher: Jack Sloan

DATE

Dear \_\_\_\_\_

Your child \_\_\_\_\_ has been late \_\_\_\_\_ times this half term. This adds up to \_\_\_\_\_ minutes of lost learning time. This will have had a significant impact on their learning.

Children must be in school by 8:55 each morning. If they are not, they miss out on vital instruction at the start of the first session, which means that they may not achieve their potential. Late arrival means that children are not well settled before lessons, and disrupts both other children and teaching staff in the class.

\_\_\_\_\_’s punctuality needs to improve, or you may be asked to attend a meeting with me.

*If pupils are late to school by just 10 minutes every day,  
they are missing out on this much learning:*

<i>50 minutes a week</i>
<i>300 minutes (3 hours 20 minutes) per month</i>
<i>650 minutes (10 hours 50 minutes) per term</i>
<i>1950 minutes (32 hours and 30 minutes) per year</i>
<i>missed minutes = missed learning = missed opportunities</i>

If you are finding punctual arrival at school difficult, please do arrange to talk to your child’s teacher. We may be able to offer support.

We have high expectations for all children at Hanover, and want all to reach their potential. We hope that you will work with us to ensure this success.

Regards,

Polly Shields  
Deputy Head Teacher

Appendix 3: LL 2, 6 lates this half term, no improvement

# HANOVER PRIMARY SCHOOL



Noel Road NI 8BD • 020 7689 8949 • [admin@hanover.islington.sch.uk](mailto:admin@hanover.islington.sch.uk)

Headteacher: Jack Sloan

DATE

Dear \_\_\_\_\_

You will have already received a letter from school expressing concern at \_\_\_\_\_'s late arrival to school. This has not improved, and he/she has now been late for school \_\_\_\_\_ times this half term.

As stated in the previous letter, lateness has a real impact on your child's learning, and we are concerned that he/she is missing out on their education.

*If pupils are late to school by just 10 minutes every day, they are missing out on this much learning:*

*50 minutes a week*

*300 minutes (3 hours 20 minutes) per month*

*650 minutes (10 hours 50 minutes) per term*

*1950 minutes (32 hours and 30 minutes) per year*

*missed minutes = missed learning = missed opportunities*

If you would like support from us, or from Families First, an agency which can help families who are finding it difficult to get their children into school on time, please do contact me.

If your child is late again this half term, you will be asked to attend a meeting with me to discuss next steps.

Regards,

Polly Shields  
Deputy Head Teacher

Appendix 4: LL 3, 7 + lates this half term, no improvement – meeting invite

# HANOVER PRIMARY SCHOOL



Noel Road NI 8BD • 020 7689 8949 • [admin@hanover.islington.sch.uk](mailto:admin@hanover.islington.sch.uk)  
Headteacher: Jack Sloan

DATE

Dear \_\_\_\_\_

We have now sent you two letters regarding \_\_\_\_\_'s punctuality to school. As this still remains an issue, we are asking you to attend a meeting with me on the \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_.

During this meeting, we will discuss the reasons why your child has been late, and will put a plan together to ensure that this improves. We will also outline next steps, including the option of referral to Families First for support.

<i>If pupils are late to school by just 10 minutes every day, they are missing out on this much learning:</i>
<i>50 minutes a week</i>
<i>300 minutes (3 hours 20 minutes) per month</i>
<i>650 minutes (10 hours 50 minutes) per term</i>
<i>1950 minutes (32 hours and 30 minutes) per year</i>
<i>missed minutes = missed learning = missed opportunities</i>

If you cannot attend the meeting, please telephone the school to rearrange.

Regards,

Polly Shields  
Deputy Headteacher

Appendix 5: AL1, No reason given for absence

# HANOVER PRIMARY SCHOOL



Noel Road NI 8BD • 020 7689 8949 • [admin@hanover.islington.sch.uk](mailto:admin@hanover.islington.sch.uk)  
Headteacher: Jack Sloan

DATE

Dear \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ was absent from school on the following days:

It appears that you have not informed the school about the reason for this absence.

Please return the slip below, explaining why your child was not in school. Failure to return this letter within four school days will result in your child's absence being marked as 'unauthorised'.

If you have already let the school know, please accept our apologies but complete and return the form anyway, for our records.

Regards,

Polly Shields  
Deputy Headteacher, Attendance Lead

Name of child \_\_\_\_\_

Date(s) of absence \_\_\_\_\_

Reasons for absence

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Appendix 6: AL 2, 1st WARNING attendance below 90% ALL PUPILS

# HANOVER PRIMARY SCHOOL



Noel Road NI 8BD • 020 7689 8949 • [admin@hanover.islington.sch.uk](mailto:admin@hanover.islington.sch.uk)

Headteacher: Jack Sloan

Date:

Dear \_\_\_\_\_

We expect children to be at school every day. When children miss a lot of school, they are at significant risk of not achieving their potential. There is lots of evidence that shows that poor attendance leads to poor performance, and will have a negative impact on your child's future success.

		<i>this means</i>	<i>outcome</i>
<i>Good attendance</i>	96 – 100%	0 – 8 days absence over the school year	<i>best chance of success</i>
<i>Poor attendance</i>	80 – 90%	19 – 29 days absence over the school year	<i>reduced chance of success at school</i>
<i>Very poor attendance</i>	75 – 80%	38 – 47 days absence over the school year	<i>serious impact on education</i>
<i>Extremely poor attendance</i>	below 75%	<i>more than 47 days absence over the school year</i>	<i>and reduced life chances</i>

We are sending you this letter to draw your attention to the fact that \_\_\_\_\_ has missed \_\_\_\_\_ days of school this academic year / term, and his/her attendance is \_\_\_\_%. This is below our expectations, and needs to improve.

We have high expectations for all children at Hanover, and want all to reach their potential. Because of this, we monitor attendance closely. We know that there has been a lot of illness around lately. However, we would ask you to take note of your child's attendance levels and make every effort to get your child into school every day.

If you feel that you need extra support in order to improve your child's attendance, please do contact me.

Regards,

Polly Shields  
Deputy Headteacher (Attendance Lead)

# HANOVER PRIMARY SCHOOL



Noel Road NI 8BD • 020 7689 8949 • [admin@hanover.islington.sch.uk](mailto:admin@hanover.islington.sch.uk)  
 Headteacher: Jack Sloan

DATE

Dear

We continue to be very concerned about \_\_\_\_\_'s attendance. So far this term, his / her attendance is \_\_\_\_\_ %, with him/her missing \_\_\_\_\_ days of school. [This appears to be an ongoing problem, as last term his / her attendance was \_\_\_\_\_%. ]

**This level of attendance is very worrying.**

We want to ensure that your child is happy and settled at Hanover, and has the best possible educational outcomes. However, poor attendance makes this harder to achieve.

		<i>this means</i>	<i>outcome</i>
<i>Good attendance</i>	96 – 100%	0 – 8 days absence over the school year	<i>best chance of success</i>
<i>Poor attendance</i>	80 – 90%	19 – 29 days absence over the school year	<i>reduced chance of success at school</i>
<i>Very poor attendance</i>	75 – 80%	38 – 47 days absence over the school year	<i>serious impact on education and reduced life chances</i>
<i>Extremely poor attendance</i>	below 75%	more than 47 days absence over the school year	

We are now monitoring your child's attendance particularly closely. **We need to see your child's attendance improving over the next two weeks (by x date).** If we are not satisfied that it has improved significantly, you will be asked to a meeting at school in order to discuss next steps.

We want to support you to improve attendance. Please take this letter seriously and make every effort to get your child into school every day.

Please do contact me if you wish to discuss this.

Regards

Polly Shields  
 Deputy Headteacher (Attendance Lead)

Appendix 8: AL 3A, UNDER 5s 2nd Warning Persistent low below 90% attendance

# HANOVER PRIMARY SCHOOL



Noel Road NI 8BD • 020 7689 8949 • [admin@hanover.islington.sch.uk](mailto:admin@hanover.islington.sch.uk)

Headteacher: Jack Sloan

DATE

Dear

We continue to be concerned about \_\_\_\_\_'s attendance. So far this term, his / her attendance is \_\_\_\_\_ %, with him/her missing \_\_\_\_\_ days of school. [This appears to be an ongoing problem, as last term his / her attendance was \_\_\_\_\_%. ]

**This level of attendance is worrying.**

We want to ensure that your child is happy and settled at Hanover. We also want him / her to have the best possible educational outcomes. However, poor attendance makes this harder to achieve.

		<i>this means</i>	<i>outcome</i>
<i>Good attendance</i>	96 – 100%	0 – 8 days absence over the school year	<i>best chance of success</i>
<i>Poor attendance</i>	80 – 90%	19 – 29 days absence over the school year	<i>reduced chance of success at school</i>
<i>Very poor attendance</i>	75 – 80%	38 – 47 days absence over the school year	<i>serious impact on education and reduced life chances</i>
<i>Extremely poor attendance</i>	<i>below 75%</i>	<i>more than 47 days absence over the school year</i>	

Although \_\_\_\_\_ is very young, and not yet of compulsory school age, good attendance in Nursery and Reception will help him / her to feel comfortable and learn well at Hanover.

Getting into good habits and routines in the morning so you get here on time will be really useful for you all as you move up through the school.

We monitor attendance closely. Please make every effort to get your child into school, and on time, every day. Please do contact me if you wish to discuss this.

Regards,

Polly Shields  
Deputy Headteacher (Attendance Lead)



Appendix 9: AL 4, No improvement in attendance, call to a meeting, not including under 5s

# HANOVER PRIMARY SCHOOL



Noel Road NI 8BD • 020 7689 8949 • admin@hanover.islington.sch.uk

Headteacher: Jack Sloan

DATE

Dear

Despite writing to you on \_\_\_\_\_ we have not seen a sufficient improvement in \_\_\_\_\_'s attendance. His / her attendance remains low at \_\_\_\_\_ %, with him/her missing \_\_\_\_\_ days of school since \_\_\_\_\_.

		<i>this means</i>	<i>outcome</i>
<i>Good attendance</i>	96 – 100%	0 – 8 days absence over the school year	<i>best chance of success</i>
<i>Poor attendance</i>	80 – 90%	19 – 29 days absence over the school year	<i>reduced chance of success at school</i>
<i>Very poor attendance</i>	75 – 80%	38 – 47 days absence over the school year	<i>serious impact on education and reduced life chances</i>
<i>Extremely poor attendance</i>	below 75%	more than 47 days absence over the school year	

We are writing to you to invite you to a meeting at school to discuss our significant concerns about your child's attendance. The meeting is scheduled for \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_.

During this meeting, we will discuss the reasons why your child has been absent, and will put a plan together to ensure that this improves.

The law states that it is parents' responsibility to ensure that their children of compulsory school age receive a suitable full-time education. If a child of compulsory school age fails to attend regularly at a school at which they are registered, the parents may be guilty of an offence and can be prosecuted by the local authority. This may result in a penalty notice (a fine).

We want to support you to improve attendance. If you are unable to come on the date or the time suggested, you should call the school within the next two days to arrange a new time.

Regards,

Polly Shields  
Deputy Headteacher (Attendance Lead)