



HARROGATE LADIES' COLLEGE & HIGHFIELD

Independent School for Girls Aged 2 to 18
and Boys Aged 2 to 11

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Harrogate Ladies' College family of Schools:

Highfield Pre School, Highfield and College

SLT Responsibility: Joanna Fox and James Savile

Governor Committee Review: Pupil Welfare

Review Cycle: Triennial

Last reviewed: August 2024

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Since 1893



Attendance Policy

1. Introduction

This policy applies to the Harrogate Ladies' College Family of Schools – Highfield Pre School, Highfield and College – hereafter referred to as “the School”.

2. Aims

HLC aims to work with parents to achieve high attendance as it is the essential foundation to positive outcomes for all pupils, including their safeguarding and welfare and should, therefore, be seen as everyone's responsibility. The school recognises that effective teaching and learning requires pupils to attend regularly and punctually: these expectations are an integral part of the school's ethos and culture. Regular attendance means pupils gain maximum benefit from the teaching and learning that takes place at school. Irregular attendance leads to educational disadvantage.

3. School Attendance and the Law

This Policy complies with the requirements in:

- The Education Act 1996
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2011
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016
- School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024

4. The register is a legal document. Schools must take a register at the start of the morning session and again at the start of the afternoon session. The registers are kept for six years from the date of the entries. The School uses the statutory registration codes. Only the School (and not parents/carers) may authorise an absence. Where the reason for a pupil's absence cannot be established at the time the register is taken, that absence shall be recorded as unauthorised. If a reason for the absence is provided by the parent/carer, the school may decide to grant leave of absence which must be recorded using the appropriate national code.

The School follows the statutory guidance for improving school attendance:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66bf300da44f1c4c23e5bd1b/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance_-_August_2024.pdf

Advice to parents from the Government

<https://www.gov.uk/school-attendance-absence>

The School also follows guidance published by the Independent Schools' Inspectorate (ISI) regarding school attendance.

This policy applies to all members of our school community, including boarders and those in our EYFS setting.



5. Registration

Only authorised staff may complete registers and they must be taken at the same time twice a day. The registers remain open for 15 minutes.

Electronic registers are used via iSAMS and use the national absence and attendance codes. If an absence is recorded as unexplained in the attendance register, the correct code will be inputted as soon as the reason is ascertained, but no later than five working days after the session. In College, teachers monitor attendance to lessons via registers in markbooks and follow the Missing Pupil Policy if a pupil does not turn up to a lesson. If the electronic register is unable to be taken, the School Office staff will provide a paper register and will then input the information on the electronic register in the office.

6. Monitoring attendance

All pupils' attendance is monitored daily and weekly using the absence report from iSAMS. The reception staff in Highfield and College follow up any absence on a daily basis; where reasonably possible, the School holds more than one emergency contact number for each pupil.

The Senior Deputy and Heads of School (College) and the Head of Highfield (Highfield) monitor pupils whose attendance falls below 95% and make contact with parents as required, agreeing effective strategies to improve attendance. Attendance in College is discussed at pastoral meetings between the Senior Deputy and Heads of School.

Staff are particularly mindful of pupils who are absent from school due to mental or physical ill health or their special educational needs and/or disabilities and provide additional support.

7. Punctuality

Good punctuality is essential to maximise learning and also develop positive behaviours which are transferable to higher education or the workplace. The school, therefore, expects all pupils to arrive punctually in good time for registration. Pupils are expected to be punctual to all lessons as well as afternoon registration. Pupils who are late should sign in at reception. If a pupil is regularly late, the tutor/Head of School will contact his/her parents. This will usually be by telephone to see if there is a problem with which we can assist. Persistent lateness to school will be addressed by a letter from the Head of School and then the Senior Deputy in College, or the Head of Highfield if the situation does not improve.

Registration times for the School:

Highfield Pre School	09:00	12:00	13:00
Highfield	08:45		13:00 (KS1) 13:35 (KS2)
College	08:30		14:00



Punctuality shows respect for others and we therefore expect pupils to be punctual to school and to lessons. Pupils who arrive late to a lesson will be warned that this is unacceptable. In College, repeated lateness will trigger a misdemeanour which can lead to a detention. (See Behaviour Policy)

If pupils are expected to be in school and fail to register, once initial checks have been completed and if the pupil is not found, staff should refer to the Missing Pupil Policy.

8. Types of absence

The School appreciates there may be times when a pupil has to miss school, because he or she is ill.

Authorised Absence

Authorised absence is where the School has either given approval for the child to be away in advance, or where an explanation, offered afterwards, has been accepted as a justification for absence. Should the School staff have reason to doubt the explanation offered about a particular absence is genuine or acceptable, the absence will be treated as unauthorised.

Examples of reasons for authorised absence:

- Illness, medical or dental appointments (although we do request that parents/carers organise routine appointments outside of the school day, we recognise that this is not always possible)
- Days of religious observance
- Study leave
- Exclusion
- Family bereavement
- Involvement in a public performance
- Attending an interview
- Where leave is recommended as part of a parents' or child's rehabilitation from medical or emotional matters
- When a family needs to spend time together to support one another during or after a crisis
- 'Special occasions' at the school's discretion
- Lateness (when the pupil arrives after the register has closed)

Any absence is damaging to the continuity of learning we therefore only authorise absence after careful consideration, where pupils have a history of regular attendance.

When a child is unable to attend, or is expected to be unable to attend, for 15 days because of sickness, the School informs the local authority.

9. Persistent and Severe Absence

When absence escalates, the School will work with parents and outside agencies to put together targeted support to help remove any barriers to attendance. The School will sensitively consider some of the

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reasons for absence and understand the importance of school as a place of safety and support for children who might be facing difficulties. Particular focus will be given to pupils who are absent from school more than they are present.

Pupils absent from school due to mental or physical health or SEND

Many children will experience normal, but difficult, emotions that make them nervous about attending school, such as worries about friendships, schoolwork, examinations or variable moods. These pupils are still expected to attend school regularly, not least because, in many cases, attendance may serve to help with the underlying issue as being away from school might exacerbate it. Staff play a critical role in communicating this expectation to parents.

Some pupils with either long-term physical or mental ill health face more complex barriers to attendance. In cases such as these, the School will work together with families and other agencies with the aim of ensuring regular attendance for every pupil, which might include consideration of adjustments of practice and policies to help meet the needs of pupils who are struggling to attend school, for example, a time-limited phased return to school might be appropriate.

For pupils with SEND, the School will work in partnership with families and other agencies to develop specific support approaches for attendance and will consider adjustments to practice to help meet their needs. If the pupil has an education health and care plan, the School will communicate with the local authority if a pupil's attendance falls or if they become aware of barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs.

10.

Role of Parents

Parents have a legal responsibility to ensure their children receive efficient full-time education by regular school attendance. Full attendance is essential to the all-round development of a child and they should be allowed to take full advantage of educational opportunities available to them. It is the responsibility of parents to ensure pupils arrive at school on time (this includes on scheduled Travel Days for boarding pupils and each day for day pupils) Parents also have a responsibility to inform the school of the reason for a pupil's absence and when he/she may be expected to return and resume his/her studies. If a parent does not contact the School, reception staff will contact parents to ascertain the reason for absence and likely date or time of return. In cases of unavoidable prolonged absence due to illness or other circumstances, the school will support the pupil and family by sending appropriate work home.

Parents of day pupils are asked to:

1. Notify the school if their son/daughter is absent due to illness via a phone call to the school office or e-mail to absence@hlc.org.uk (for College) or a phone call/email to the Prep School or Pre-School (for Highfield and Pre-School) on the morning of absence.



2. Arrange medical appointments during the holidays or outside of the school day, wherever possible.
3. Request absence of any length from the Head of Highfield (for all Highfield pupils). Request absence of half-days or shorter from the Heads of School (College) and for periods of a day or longer, from the Senior Deputy (College).

11. Working together to improve attendance

Good attendance starts with close and productive relationships with parents and pupils. The School will work collaboratively with parents to remove any barriers to attendance by building strong and trusting relationships, including working together to put the right support in place. The School will follow the guidance about working together using the 'Expect, Monitor, Listen and Understand, Facilitate Support, Formalise Support and Enforce' model in the government's 'Working together to improve attendance' document. Where barriers are outside of the School's control, all partners will work together and, where required, the School will refer to services and organisations that can provide support.

12. Holidays

Parents are expected to use school holidays for family holidays etc. In particular, we ask that parents and guardians adhere to the school term dates which are published a year in advance.

Holidays - International Boarders

We recognise it can be difficult to book appropriate flights so, in the case of boarders where it has not been possible for a flight to be booked for the last day of term/half-term, we would expect them to stay with their guardians overnight and to fly home the next day. Boarders are also given a travel day to assist with travel plans.

Parents should be mindful of any quarantine requirements which are in place.

Requests for unavoidable early departure or late return for any pupil, should be directed to the Heads of School if less than half a school day or to the Senior Deputy if a longer absence is requested

Requests for absence due to religious festivals will be considered favourably.

13. Children at risk of Missing/Absence from Education

The School will report to the Local Authority if it has a serious concern over a child's attendance or the child has been absent, without the School's permission, for a continuous period of ten days or more. Where reasonably possible, the School holds more than one emergency contact for each pupil, which are provided and updated by the parent with whom the pupil normally resides.

The School notifies CME officer at North Yorkshire when a pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register.

See also Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy for further information.



Attendance Policy

14. Monitoring and Review

This policy is reviewed and updated triennially by the Senior Deputy and Head of Highfield. Government guidance is updated from time to time, to reviews and updates will take into account any updated government guidance. The Governors also review this policy according to the review cycle.

Version control

Date of last review of this policy	August 2024
Date for next review of this policy	August 2027
Policy owner (SLT)	Senior Deputy
Policy owner (Proprietor)	Dame Francine Holroyd