



HOMEFIELD PREPARATORY SCHOOL

Attendance Policy

This policy also applies to the EYFS

Updated	Review Date	Version
January 2025	September 2026	2025.03

Signed: Ms M Gardiner Boiling (Chair of Governors)

This policy is written in conjunction with [Working Together to Improve School Attendance \(2024\)](#), our [Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy](#) and our [Whole School Behaviour Policy](#). Attendance is the essential foundation to positive outcomes for all pupils, including their safeguarding and welfare, and should therefore be seen as everyone's responsibility in school. That starts with the Senior Attendance Champion, who works closely with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, but includes all school staff and the Board of Governors. In developing and implementing this policy, the school is aware of its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Senior Attendance Champion: Mr E Smith (Assistant Head Pastoral)
Contact: esmith@homefieldprep.school

Working with families

At Homefield Preparatory School, we see education as a partnership between the family and the school. The school is committed to providing the highest quality of education for boys and we look to parents to support this objective. We recognise that securing good attendance cannot be seen in isolation, and that our robust policies and practice will provide boys with the best opportunities while at school, to support our high attendance aspirations. This includes curriculum, pastoral care, mental health and wellbeing support, behaviour, anti-bullying, special educational needs support, co-curricular clubs, school representation and performance opportunities, external events, day trips, residential trips and effective use of school resources.

The school understands that some boys may find it more difficult than others to come to school. Through our curriculum, mental health and wellbeing provision, Special Educational Needs support, pastoral care, rigorous safeguarding procedures and a zero-tolerance stance on bullying and unacceptable behaviour, we aim to create an environment where boys want to attend school. Although we expect high standards of attendance and monitor this, we also want to listen and understand the reasons for any absence and provide support to families where necessary. The school will ensure that those missing school because of mental or physical ill health, or those with SEND, will be given extra support, by considering the individual needs of pupils. The school will comply with DfE and the Sutton LSCP Policy Guidance for Safeguarding Children Missing Education. Further details about children missing education are found in our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

When this policy is due for review and update, the views of parents and pupils will be sought. In addition, the families of all new boys to the school are sent a copy of the policy when they join the school.

Working with the local authority

We work in liaison with the local authority and children's services (Sutton Children's Services and Cognus, for example) as appropriate, reporting both general attendance data and that related to specific cases where it is of benefit to the boy. This includes, our termly Targeted Support Meeting with Cognus. We also provide the local authority with the names and addresses of all pupils of compulsory school age who fail to attend school regularly or have been absent for a continuous period of ten school days, where their absence has been classified as unauthorised on at least a monthly basis, and also provide the local authority with the full name and address of all pupils of compulsory school age who have been absent from school due to illness when the school has reasonable grounds to believe will miss 15 days consecutively or cumulatively because of sickness. The Local Authority have the right to examine and take extracts of attendance registers from the school at any time.

Times of the school day

All boys are required to be in school by 8:20am, when the school day begins. Registration is open from 8:20am to 8:30am. Boys who arrive between 8:30am and 9:00am will be marked as late, but present. Boys who arrive after 9:00am are counted as absent for statistical purposes.

To support with our attendance expectations, we open our gates at 8:00am each day, and then have a 20-minute window for boys to arrive. Before 8:00am, the school provides free wraparound care from 7:30am in the form of our Morning Sports & Activities Club. For wraparound care from 7:15am onwards, the school provides a Breakfast Club, where boys eat breakfast and then join in the sports and activities afterwards. The charge for our 7:15am Breakfast Club is £6. The school day ends at 3:45pm for the Lower School (Full-Time Nursery, Reception, Years 1 and 2), and at 4:00pm for the Upper School (Years 3 to 8), although many pupils remain later to take part in extra-curricular activities under the supervision of a member of school staff or peripatetic staff. After-school wraparound care is provided by Orchard Childcare for a fee and finishes at 6:00pm.

Pupils are not allowed to leave the site during the school day, unless accompanied by a member of staff, for a trip, fixture or event, the dates of which will have been sent to parents in advance. Trips departing from school or arriving back at school outside normal school hours require parents to complete and sign a permission form. Trips taking place during normal school hours do not require a signed permission form, but parents will be notified in writing by the school in advance.

Registration

All pupils are registered twice a day. In the morning they are registered by their Form Tutor, and in the afternoon, after lunch, they are registered by the subject teacher who is teaching the lesson after lunch break. Attendance data is stored in our Management Information System, so that absences can be followed up and that attendance can be monitored on a weekly basis and analysed by school staff, led by the Assistant Head Pastoral and Senior Attendance Champion, DSL, SLT and any other relevant staff.

All pupils are expected to attend school, on time, on every term date unless they are unwell or special permission for absence has been granted. Communication will be sent to parents whose children are frequently late for registration, informing them of the importance of punctual attendance. Admissions and attendance registers will be stored electronically and preserved for six years. Please see Appendix I for the National Codes for Absence used when registering students.

Reporting absence

If a boy is ill, parents should email absence@homefieldprep.school or telephone the school before 8.30am on each day of absence, unless the illness requires a specified period off school, in which case parents can notify staff of this on the first day of absence. The school will always telephone parents on each day of unexplained absence to make sure that the boy has not suffered an accident. Despite our high attendance expectations, the school recognises that in some cases of injury or illness it is best for boys to rest and recover at home, rather than attend school which could worsen their condition or spread their illness to others.

Requests for absence

The school always sends parents the term dates well in advance so that parents can arrange their holidays without disrupting their son's education. Requests for a scheduled absence must be made in writing to the Head and reach the school at least seven days in advance (except in an emergency, when parents are asked to telephone the school before 8:30am). Requests for exceptional absence (i.e. for days other than religious festivals, medical or dental appointments or illness) should be sent at least two weeks in advance.

Requesting a leave of absence should be done by filling in the form on our school website: <https://www.homefield.sutton.sch.uk/contact-us/absences>

Please note that it is school policy not to allow holiday to be taken during term time. If there are exceptional circumstances, an absence form must be completed, and the Head will consider whether to authorise the absence.

From the Autumn Term 2024, boys' reports will present their absence and lateness record.

It is essential for boys to get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, wellbeing, and wider life chances. The pupils with the highest attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 have higher rates of attendance over the key stage compared to those with the lowest attainment (please see *Working Together to Improve School Attendance (2024)* for detailed statistics). For the most vulnerable pupils, regular attendance is also an important protective factor and the best opportunity for needs to be identified and support provided.

For day-to-day attendance queries, parents can contact the following school staff:

<u>Lower School</u>	<u>Upper School</u>
Class Teacher	Form Tutor
Mrs Field, Assistant Head (Head of Lower School)	Head of Year
Mr E Smith, Senior Attendance Champion, Assistant Head Pastoral	

Process for dealing with repeated absence

The school uses attendance data to target attendance improvements using the following process, taking into account whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised. Although we analyse boys' attendance record on a case-by-case basis and may escalate a case at any stage in our process, it is likely that support will be sought from the local authority (Sutton Children's Services or Cognus), and other partners, where a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe. Please see 'Working with the local authority' for further information. While the national average for attendance is 92.9%, the expected attendance at Homefield is at least 95%. A pupil with a 10% absence means they miss the equivalent of one day or more per fortnight across a full school year.

Stage 1

Student with attendance below 95% for the academic year to date.

- Action - Contact by email, telephone or letter from Administration Office to advise that the student's attendance is becoming a cause for concern.

Stage 2

Student with attendance below 90% for the academic year to date.

- Action - Contact by email, telephone or letter from Head of Year to advise that the student's attendance is becoming a cause for concern. School to report/seek advice from the local authority. Actions agreed documented.
- Support - Discussion of student's circumstances and an agreement to improve attendance.

Stage 3

Student with attendance below 85% for the academic year to date.

- Action - Meeting between parents/carers and Assistant Head Pastoral to discuss student/family circumstances including possible consideration of amendments to the student's academic and co-curricular programme. School to report/seek advice from the local authority. Actions agreed documented.
- Support - Monitoring and attendance targets put in place. Additional support applied as necessary.

Stage 4

Student with attendance below 80% for the academic year to date.

- Action - Head to carry out a review of the student's place in the school, in accordance with the school's Terms and Conditions.
- Support - Pastoral support, Education Welfare Officer, GP or counsellor.
- Support - Agreement of a high-priority attendance improvement plan/pastoral support/counselling.

Appendix I: National Codes for Absence

As stated in The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, the following codes are used by the school to record attendance:

/ - present for morning session.

\ - present for afternoon session.

The following are classified as authorised absence:

I – Illness.

M – Attending medical/dental appointment.

C – Leave of absence for exceptional circumstances.

R – Religious observance.

E – Suspended or permanently excluded.

T – Parent travelling for occupational purposes.

S – Study leave.

C1 – Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.

J1 – Attending an interview for employment or admission to another educational institution.

C2 – Pupil is absent from school for part of the week (on a part-time timetable) – then also use the code for the reason why absent.

The following are NOT classified as absences:

B – An offsite educational activity.

K – Alternative provision arranged by the LA.

L – Late arrival before the register is closed (during the 30 mins 'grace' period).

P – Approved sporting activity.

V – Attending an educational visit or trip.

W – Work experience.

The following are classified as unauthorised absence:

G – Holiday not granted by the school.

N – Reason for absence not yet established.

O – Absent in other or unknown circumstances.

U – Arrived in school after the register closed (after 30 minutes 'grace' period).

The following are classified as 'not a possible attendance':

D – Dual registration, so attending another school where registered.

X – Pupils of non-compulsory school age absent when they are not timetabled to attend (e.g. EYFS).

Q – Lack of access arrangements by LA.

Y1 – Transport normally provided not being available.

Y2 – Widespread disruption to travel.

Y3 – Part of school premises being closed.

Y4 – Whole school site being unexpectedly closed.

Y5 – Pupil is in criminal justice detention.

Y6 – Public health guidance or law not to attend.

Y7 – Any other unavoidable cause [this includes absence due to non-payment of fees (reason stated in accompanying field)].

The following codes are not collected for statistical purposes:

Z – Prospective pupil not on admission register.

- Planned whole school closure (holidays).