

Hinchingbrooke School

Hard Work High Standards Kindness



Attendance at HBK

A Parents and Carers Guide



Edition 4 – September 2023

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Introduction

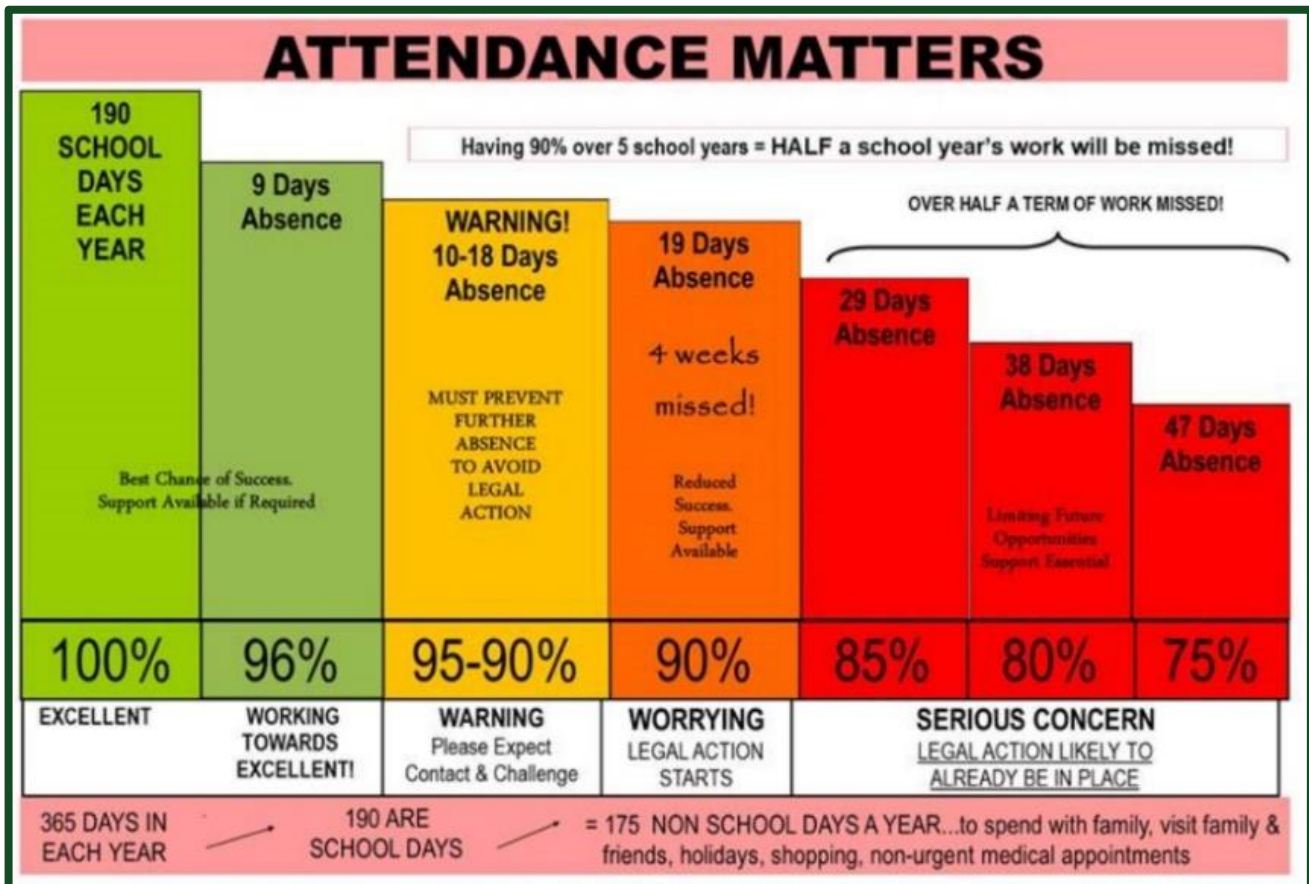
‘Attendance is the single most influential factor, in respect of a student’s learning outcomes and achievement’

Regular attendance at school is essential to ensure uninterrupted progress and enable children to fulfil their academic potential. In line with this, parents and carers are legally responsible for making sure that their child attends school regularly and punctually, and this obligation forms part of our home school agreement.



	<i>Student Pledge</i>	<i>Parent/Carer Pledge</i>	<i>Hinchingbrooke Pledge</i>
Attendance	I will attend school regularly and punctually.	I will ensure that my child attends school regularly and punctually, updating the school of any changes in contact information and changes in personal circumstances.	We will track attendance and punctuality offering support and informing students and parents/carers of standards which fall below expectations.

The Facts and Figures



Who is Responsible for Attendance?

We understand that our students will fall ill from time to time and there may be occasions where there are exceptional circumstances that prevent a student from attending. However, **all students should be striving to be above 97%** with their attendance.



All schools, in conjunction with Local Authorities, are required to be rigorous in terms of attendance monitoring and are required to take action when overall attendance drops below **95%**. Student's whose attendance drops to **90%** are considered by the Department for Education, to be 'persistent absentees', and it is at this stage that fixed penalty notices and legal proceedings can be considered.

Attendance is everyone's responsibility – Parents and carers, the student themselves, Form Tutors, subject teachers, Heads of Year, the Attendance, Pastoral, Safeguarding, SEND and Senior Leadership Teams.

This is why we operate an escalating, 'whole school approach' to attendance, with specific interventions from Form Tutors, Heads of Year and the above teams, as appropriate.

The decision as to whether an absence is authorised rests solely with the school.

The Law and Definition of Regular Attendance

All parents and carers have a legal duty to ensure that their child receives an education suitable to his/her age, ability, aptitude and any special needs. Most parents fulfil their legal obligation by registering their child in a school. Parents and carers are required to ensure their child's regular attendance at that school.

The definition of 'regular' school attendance, as outlined in Section 444 Education Act 1996, is defined as:

'100%, unless there are exceptional or unavoidable reasons for absence'.



Failure to ensure a child's regular attendance at school is a criminal offence. Where a child's attendance fails to improve, with support from the school and Local Authority, the following action is considered:

- Penalty Notice – Each parent/carer can be fined **£60**, which rises to **£120**, if not paid within 21 days. Failure to pay the penalty notice, may lead to prosecution, with a fine of up to **£1000** on conviction
- Prosecution in the Magistrate’s Court – **Both parents and carers can receive a fine of up to £2,500, a community order or a prison sentence up to 3 months each. The court may also issue a Parenting Order**

The offence will apply to each child individually. Both parents are liable for the offence. The Education Act considers each ‘responsible adult’ as a ‘parent’. This includes step-parents, family friends or relatives, if the child lives with them and they provide day-to-day care.

Reporting Absence

Parents and carers should report absence by 8.00am using the following:

Lower School - Years 7 & 8

Direct Dial 01480 420522

Email: LowerSchool@hbk.acesmat.uk

Middle School - Years 9, 10 & 11

Direct Dial 01480 420506

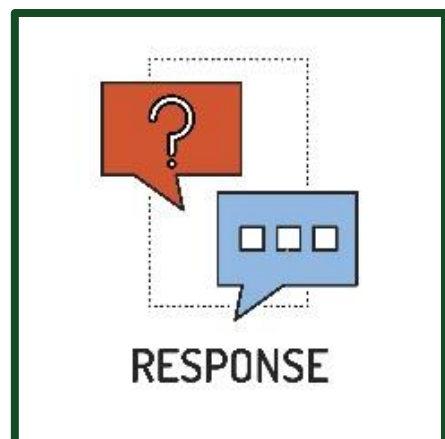
Email: MiddleSchool@hbk.acesmat.uk



Alternatively, the main school switchboard number can be used, following the instructions provided - 01480 375700

Parents and Carers should not be reporting absence via direct email to teachers/Form Tutors/Heads of Year.

First Day Response



A first day response procedure operates, whereby we make contact with parents and carers on the first day (and subsequent days, where applicable) of an absence, if there is no known reason for the student to not be in school.

It is crucial that our records are as up to date as possible. Please update us with any changes to contact details/information.

Safe and Well Checks

Where school is unable to make contact with an absent student's parents and carers after 3 days, the Pastoral, Safeguarding and Attendance Team will make arrangements for a home visit. This will take place earlier, where the need arises. In certain circumstances, we will enlist the assistance of Cambridgeshire Police.



Routine Tutor Check-Ins (RTC)

Routine Tutor Check-Ins (RTCs) play a key role, both in our general pastoral care provision, and the attendance process as a whole.

They can be used at any time to document a tutor/head of year discussion/intervention with a student and provide written evidence of such. They are also a requirement at Stage 1 of the attendance process.

An RTC is simply a documented 5 to 10 minute conversation with a student. These are carried out in registration or tutorial time, while the rest of the tutor group are undertaking activities. They incorporate a series of areas for discussion intended to gain feedback on the student's social, emotional and physical wellbeing, in order to help support students more effectively.

From an attendance perspective, it is the opportunity for the student to highlight and discuss any areas that may be a barrier to attending school more regularly, and for the school to put the relevant support in place to assist the individual and enable them to potentially be in school more and increase their potential.

Punctuality

Lates are logged on Arbor and an after school detention is issued.

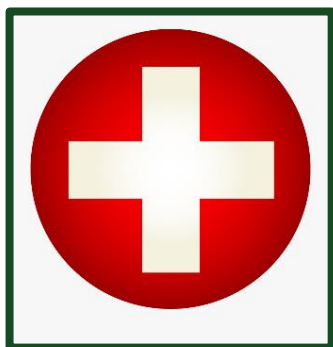
Where students arrive for school so late, that they miss the close of morning registers and one of their legal marks, it will count as an unauthorised absence on the school registers and affect their overall attendance percentage.

ROUTINE TUTOR CHECK-IN

Please remember that RTCs are not about ascertaining why the student has been off school - we will already know this from the absence notifications from parents/carers. It is an opportunity to check in on a student's general physical and mental well-being and ascertaining if there are any issues for the student, in or out of school, and what we can do to support/address them.

Student Name	Form Group	
Member of Staff	Date	
Attendance %		
Areas to discuss	Outcomes/actions	
• Any new medical conditions/investigations at present		
• School (issues with specific subjects/teachers)		
• Transport to and from school		
• Community (anything affecting the family in the area in which they live)		
• Home life		
• Bullying		
• Any other areas impacting on regular and punctual attendance		
Summary of Discussion:		
Student Signature	Member of Staff Signature	
Brampton Road, Huntingdon PE29 3BN Tel: 01480 375700 www.hinchingsbrookeschool.net communications@hinchbk.cambs.sch.uk ACS Academies Trust is a company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales with registered number 07722233 Registered Office: Hinchingsbrooke School, Brampton Road, Huntingdon Cambridgeshire PE29 3BN VAT Number: 32217500 ACS Academies are exempt for the purpose		

Medical, Dental and Hospital Appointments



Appointments should be taken out of school time, where possible. However, we understand that this can sometimes prove difficult, particularly with orthodontic treatment.

Students are expected to attend school prior to, and following their appointments, where the timing allows. **A maximum of half a day** is authorised on the registers, unless medical paperwork supports the need for an entire day. Parents and carers should provide copies of appointment letters/cards/texts to authorise absence on the school registers.

Parent/Carers should also make a note in their child's planner to show the relevant staff member and Reception for signing in/out purposes.

Leave of Absence During Term Time

As attendance at school is now expected to be 100%, as defined by legislation, leave of absence during term time will only be granted under the most exceptional of circumstances. Such circumstances would be rare and for a very short period of time only. Holidays, weddings abroad etc. do not fall into the exceptional category.

Where parents and carers feel they have suitable circumstances to meet the exceptional criteria, they can apply for leave of absence on the relevant form. This is available on the school website (with associated guidelines) and in both School Offices.

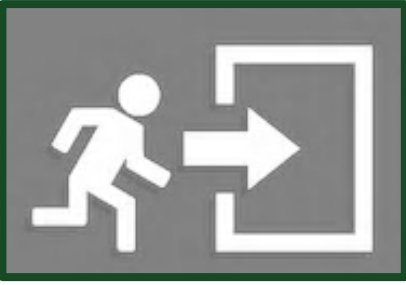
Parents and carers should complete the form and return to the Attendance Officer 10 days in advance of any leave that is required, where possible. The form should be accompanied by any supporting paperwork.

Where leave is taken after an application has not been authorised, an unauthorised absence will be recorded on the school register, and parents and carers will be served with a Penalty Notice by the Local Authority, or face legal proceedings, where the fine remains unpaid.

Again, the offence will apply to each child individually. Both parents are liable for the offence. The Education Act considers each 'responsible adult' as a 'parent'. This includes step-parents, family friends or relatives, if the child lives with them and they provide day-to-day care.

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APPLICATION FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE DURING TERM TIME		
<small>Amendments have been made to the 2006 regulations in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013. Attendance at school is expected to be 100% and principals/head teachers may not grant any leave during term time unless there are exceptional or unavoidable reasons for absence. Such circumstances are defined as rare, significant and short.</small>		
<small>If you believe that there are exceptional or unavoidable circumstances that warrant the need to take your child out of school during term time, please complete this form and return it to the School Attendance Officer, with supporting paperwork, providing at least 10 school days notice, where circumstances allow.</small>		
<small>Please note that leave taken after an application has not been authorised, will be recorded as unauthorised absence on the school register and is highly likely to result in the serving of a Penalty Notice by the Local Authority, to each parent/carer, for each child, or possible legal proceedings.</small>		
I request that the following student(s) (please include siblings at Hinchingbrooke School)		
NAME OF STUDENT(S) _____		
YEAR/TUTOR GROUP(S) _____		
be granted leave of absence from Hinchingbrooke School from _____ to _____		
Total number of school days absent (excluding weekends etc.) _____ day(s)		
Supporting paperwork attached?	Y/N	
Are there siblings at another school?	Y/N	
Sibling name(s) _____	Sibling school(s) _____	
I need to take my child(ren) out of school during term time because (please give as much details as possible): _____ _____ _____		
Signature of parent/carer _____	Date _____	
E-mail address of parent/carer for response to be sent to _____		
Signature of Attendance Officer _____	Date _____	
Permission granted: Yes/No	Registers noted: Yes/No	Reply letter sent: Yes/No
<small>Brampton Road, Huntingdon PE29 3BN Tel: 01480 375700 www.hinchingbrookeschool.net communications@hinchbk.cambs.sch.uk ACS Academies Trust is a company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales with registered number 0712330 Registered Office: Hinchingbrooke School, Brampton Road, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire PE29 3BN VAT Number: 112275388 ACS Academies has exempt charity status.</small>		

Leaving/Arriving During School Hours



Students should not leave site without permission from a member of staff during school hours. Where they have been permitted to do so, they must sign in/out, as applicable, at Main Reception.

Students Taken Unwell at School

Where a student feels unwell during school hours, they must seek permission from the relevant staff member and attend the Medical Room.

Students should not be calling their parents and carers directly to request being picked up from school.

Such absence will not be authorised on the school register.



Absence for Dance, Music Exams, Post 16 and Work Experience Interviews etc

Parents and carers are required to complete the same Leave of Absence application form above, and return to school, in advance, with supporting paperwork to confirm the date, time and location of the exam/interview.

Rewards

We recognise and reward students who achieve outstanding attendance and write home to parents and carers. Those students who achieve over 97% attendance in a school year will be awarded with an attendance tick pin to proudly display on their lapel.

There are 5 to collect as students proceed through the year groups.

Individual year groups also reward outstanding attendance and there are 2 House Attendance Trophies for Lower and Middle School.



KEY CONTACTS

Attendance Officer – Mrs M Benjafield
01480 375700 - mbenjafield@hbk.acesmat.uk
Attendance Assistant– Mrs K Simms
01480 375700 – ksimms@hbk.acesmat.uk



KS3 Pastoral Office

Head of Year 7 – Mr Milner	dmilner@hbk.acesmat.uk
Assistant Head of Year 7 – Mr Wheeley	twheelley@hbk.acesmat.uk
Year 7 Student Support Officer - Mrs Redmond	jredmond@hbk.acesmat.uk
Head of Year 8 – Mr Hobley	ahobley@hbk.acesmat.uk
Assistant Head of Year 8 – Mrs Searle	ssearle@hbk.acesmat.uk
Year 8 Student Support Officer – Mrs Standen	lstanden@hbk.acesmat.uk
KS3 Pastoral Office Administrator – Mrs Pittock	cpittock@hbk.acesmat.uk

01480 420522

If parents and carers need to communicate with the school urgently, please contact **Mrs Pittock**

KS4 Pastoral Office

Head of Year 9 – Miss Sheldon	csheldon@hbk.acesmat.uk
Assistant Head of Year 9 –Mrs Field	nfield@hbk.acesmat.uk
Year 9 Student Support Officer – Mrs Taylor	vtaylor@hbk.acesmat.uk
Head of Year 10 – Mrs Nichols	hnichols@hbk.acesmat.uk
Assistant Head of Year 10 – Miss Wells	mwells@hbk.acesmat.uk
Year 10 Student Support Officer – Ms Dickinson	adickinson@hbk.acesmat.uk
Head of Year 11 – Miss King	cking@hbk.acesmat.uk
Assistant Head of Year 11 – Miss Sparrow	lsparrow@hbk.acesmat.uk
Year 11 Student Support Officer – Miss Erskine	eerskin@hbk.acesmat.uk
KS4 Pastoral Office Administrator - Mrs J Connor	jconnor@hbk.acesmat.uk

01480 420506

If parents and carers need to communicate with the school urgently, please contact **Mrs Connor**

Assistant Principal – Student Progress - Mr C Pape	cpape@hbk.acesmat.uk
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Building our Community



We are consistently searching for ways to help all of our learners gain the most from their time at Hinchingsbrooke. While we seek that all students Inspire excellence, fulfil their potential and develop character, it is paramount that when our students leave Hinchingsbrooke they do so with a clear understanding of the world around them and the power that they have to make positive change.

The Hinchingsbrooke Community (HBK.com) seeks to empower all of our students to be that power for change, that our students will go on to fantastic things in their future, making our community and the communities that those students move to all the greater for having them as part of it.

If you have any feedback, suggestions, help, guidance, advice or ideas please share them, with any of the pastoral team and let us make change happen.

HBK Community

As members of a community, we trust and rely on each other.

Whist everyone in our community brings different strengths we all strive to work together to fulfil our potential and intern to motivate and inspire others to fulfil theirs.

We endeavour to learn, work, laugh, celebrate and develop together.



We are Hinchingsbrooke

**High Standards
Hard Work
Kindness**