Parent Attendance Policy

2026–2027 • Be Present. Be Punctual. Succeed. • Success for All

What informs this policy

This policy has been developed in accordance with the Department for Education's statutory guidance, ***Working Together to Improve School Attendance*** (July 2026). It also reflects the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 (in force from 1 September 2026), Children Missing Education statutory guidance, the Education Acts 1996 and 2002, the Equality Act 2010, the SEND Code of Practice, guidance on supporting pupils with medical conditions and the local authority's current Penalty Notice Code of Conduct.

Our Vision and Commitment

At Hales Valley Trust, we believe that every child deserves the best start in life. Our core philosophy is clear: **"Be present, be punctual and succeed."** Excellent attendance and punctuality are not just administrative requirements; they are the foundations of academic achievement, personal wellbeing and a child's sense of belonging within our school community.

We are committed to a supportive, partnership-based approach. Our goal is to work collaboratively with families to identify and remove any barriers to attendance. By fostering a culture where every child feels they belong, we ensure they are ready to engage with their learning and thrive.

This policy is designed to be read alongside each school's full attendance procedures, safeguarding policy, SEND policy, medical conditions policy and local authority attendance processes. It sets out our Trust-wide expectations while allowing schools to personalise named contacts, timings and local arrangements where appropriate.

Roles, Responsibilities and Governance

Attendance is everyone's responsibility. Parents are responsible for ensuring their child attends school regularly and on time. School leaders ensure that attendance is prioritised, barriers are identified early and support is offered promptly. Class teachers and school staff promote a culture of belonging, notice changes in attendance patterns and escalate concerns through agreed school procedures. The Senior Attendance Champion provides strategic oversight of attendance and works with pastoral, safeguarding, SEND and external partners where additional support is needed.

The Trust Board, senior Trust leaders and school leaders will receive and review attendance information regularly. This includes overall attendance, persistent absence, severe absence, punctuality, vulnerable groups and the impact of interventions. Governance will challenge trends, assure statutory compliance, ensure staff receive appropriate attendance training and promote effective practice across schools.

Why Attendance Matters

Regular attendance is a vital component of a child's development. Consistency in school attendance:

- **Ensures Academic Success:** There is a direct link between attendance and achievement. Evidence shows that children with 96–100% attendance are significantly more likely to achieve or exceed expected standards, allowing them to truly succeed.
- **Supports Mental Wellbeing:** Reliable routines and regular social interaction with peers and staff support emotional health and stability.
- **Develops Social Skills:** Daily attendance helps children build lasting friendships, confidence and the interpersonal skills necessary for life.
- **Eliminates Learning Gaps:** Even occasional absences create gaps in a child's education that can be difficult to close, leading to frustration and disengagement.

Attendance Monitoring, Data and Early Identification

Schools will monitor attendance daily and analyse attendance information regularly to identify pupils, families, groups or cohorts who may require support. This includes pupils whose attendance is declining, pupils at risk of persistent absence, pupils who are persistently absent, pupils who are severely absent and pupils who are regularly late. Attendance information will be used to identify patterns, agree proportionate support, evaluate the impact of intervention and report key trends to leaders and governance.

Persistent absence means attendance at or below 90%. **Severe absence** means attendance at or below 50%. Pupils approaching these thresholds will be identified early so that support can be offered before absence becomes entrenched.


Hales Valley Trust
BE PRESENT.
BE PUNCTUAL.
SUCCEED.
ATTENDANCE • BELONGING
WHAT DOES ATTENDANCE MEAN?
Every day adds up
OUR TARGET: 96% OR ABOVE
Based on a 190-day school year
ATTENDANCE
DAYS MISSED
WHAT IT CAN MEAN
100% 0 Every school day attended
99% 2 About one day each term
98% 4 About one day each half-term
97% 6 About two days each term
96% 8 Our attendance target TARGET
95% about 10 About one day every four weeks
94% about 11 More than two school weeks
93% about 13 About one day every three weeks
92% about 15 About three school weeks
91% about 17 Approaching one school month
90% 19 Persistent absence threshold
85% about 29 About six school weeks
80% 38 About two school months
50% 95 Absent as often as present: severe absence
GREEN: on target • AMBER: attendance concern • RED: urgent improvement needed
HALES VALLEY TRUST • BE PRESENT. BE PUNCTUAL. SUCCEED.

Daily Routines and Punctuality

To be punctual is to be prepared. Arriving on time ensures that children settle into their environment without stress and do not miss critical morning instruction or social time with their peers.

Time	Event	Attendance Coding
8:45am	School doors open	Children arrive and prepare for the day.
9:00am	Registers are taken	Formal start of the school day.
9:01am – 9:30am	Late	Marked as 'L' code (Present but late).
9:30am	Registers close	Absences after this are recorded as 'U' code (Unauthorised absence).
3:30pm	End of school day	Children collected/dismissed.
Please note: A 'U' code (arriving after 9:30am) counts as a full session of unauthorised absence and can lead to legal intervention if it becomes a pattern.		

Reporting Absence and Medical Appointments

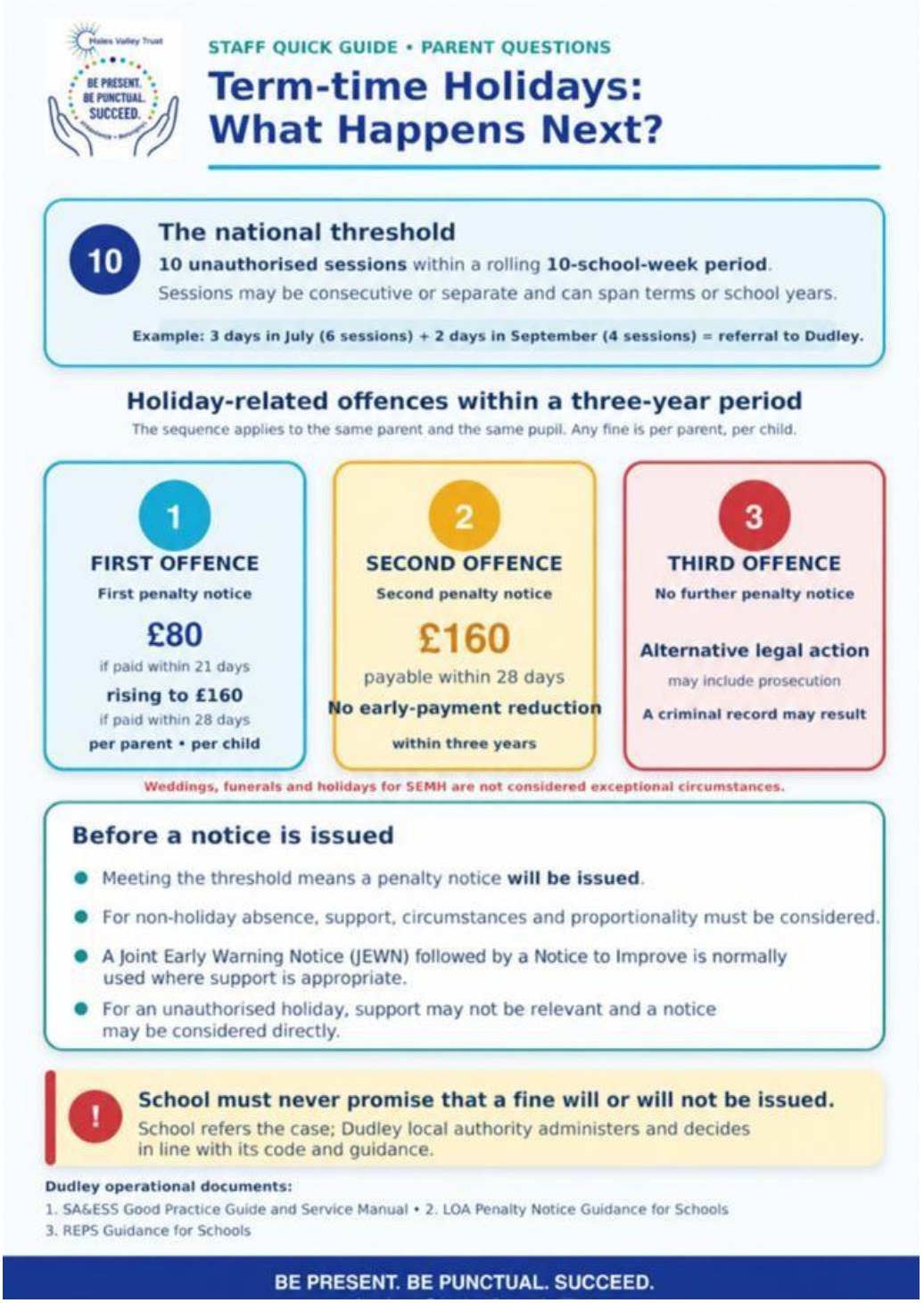
When a child is unable to attend, parents must adhere to the following procedures:

- **Daily Notification:** You must call the school office before 9:15am every day your child is absent to provide a reason.
- **Medical Appointments:** To minimise disruption, medical and dental appointments should be booked outside of school hours. If an appointment during the school day is unavoidable, proof of the appointment (such as a card or letter) may be requested.
- **Safeguarding:** If a child is absent and no reason is provided, the school will contact the family immediately and may perform safeguarding home visits to ensure the child's safety.

Term-Time Holidays

The school year consists of 190 days of teaching, leaving 13 weeks of school holidays available for family travel. Hales Valley Trust will not authorise holidays during term time. Any such absences will be recorded as unauthorised and referred to the Education Support Service. Leave of absence will only be granted in truly exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the Headteacher.

All requests must be submitted two weeks prior to absence and evidence of booking will be required.



The 5-Step Support Approach

Hales Valley Trust uses a support-first approach which is adapted to the child and family's circumstances. The stages below are not an automatic ladder to sanctions. At every stage, school will listen to families, consider barriers, make reasonable adjustments where needed and work with the most appropriate professionals to secure sustainable improvement.

1. **Step 1: Identify and Prevent:** We monitor attendance daily, celebrate good habits and contact families early to encourage the "Be present" mindset before patterns emerge.

2. **Step 2: Early Conversation and Support:** If attendance begins to decline, the school will contact parents to understand what may be affecting attendance and agree practical support. This may include pastoral support, adjustments to routines, signposting or Early Help.
3. **Step 3: Formal Support Plan:** Where concerns continue, a meeting will be arranged with parents and relevant staff to agree a Personalised Attendance Support Plan. This may include an Early Help Assessment, SEND or medical review, reasonable adjustments, external agency involvement and clear review dates.
4. **Step 4: Review and Multi-Agency Support:** Progress will be reviewed within an agreed timescale. If barriers remain complex or attendance does not improve, the school will work with the local authority and relevant partners to identify the most appropriate lead professional and support route. For severe absence, safeguarding, social care or multi-agency involvement may be considered where there is evidence of risk or educational neglect.
5. **Step 5: Legal Intervention Where Appropriate:** Legal intervention may be considered where support is not appropriate, is not engaged with, or has been offered and has not worked. Any request for a penalty notice, Notice to Improve, Education Supervision Order, prosecution or other legal measure will follow the local authority's current code of conduct and statutory guidance.

Additional Support for SEND, Disability, Medical and Mental Health Needs

Where absence may be linked to special educational needs, disability, physical health, mental health or medical conditions, school will work with parents and relevant professionals to understand the reasons for absence and agree appropriate support. This may include reasonable adjustments, an individual support plan, pastoral support, advice from health professionals, SEND review, risk assessment or reintegration planning.

Absence linked to health, disability or SEND will be considered carefully and sensitively. Legal intervention will not be used as a default response where barriers require assessment, adjustment or additional support.

Vulnerable Pupils and Multi-Agency Working

Schools will pay particular attention to attendance patterns for pupils who may be more vulnerable, including pupils with a social worker, pupils known to youth offending services, young carers, looked-after children, previously looked-after children, pupils with SEND, pupils with medical needs and any group whose attendance is lower than their peers. Where appropriate, school will work with parents, the local authority, Early Help, social care, health services, the Virtual School Head and other partners to remove barriers and agree joined-up support.

Safeguarding, Unexplained Absence and Children Missing Education

Unexplained absence will always be followed up promptly. If no reason is received, school will attempt to contact parents and emergency contacts, consider whether a home visit or welfare check is required and escalate concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead in line with safeguarding procedures. Where a child's whereabouts cannot be established, or where absence raises safeguarding concerns, school will follow local Children Missing Education and safeguarding procedures.

Registers, Coding and Leave of Absence

Schools will maintain accurate admission and attendance registers in line with statutory requirements. Attendance codes will be applied accurately, registers will be amended only where permitted, and absence will be followed up through agreed daily processes. Decisions about leave of absence, education off site, approved educational activity, dual registration and unauthorised absence will be made in accordance with statutory guidance and local procedures.

Part-Time Timetables and Reduced Provision

A part-time timetable will only be used in exceptional circumstances, where it is in the pupil's best interests and forms part of a time-limited plan to return to full-time education. It must not be used as a long-term solution to absence or

behaviour concerns. Any reduced timetable will require senior leader oversight, parental agreement, safeguarding consideration, clear review dates and a reintegration plan.

Late Collection Charges

The school monitors late collections for safety and auditing purposes. While we recognise that emergencies occur, frequent late collection is detrimental to the child and requires additional staff supervision.

After 3 recorded incidents of late collection after 3:30pm, charges may be applied in line with the school's local late collection and charging arrangements. Late collection is managed separately from statutory attendance escalation, although repeated late collection may trigger a supportive conversation or safeguarding consideration with social care where appropriate.

How We Can Help

Our priority is to listen and support you. If you are experiencing difficulties in ensuring your child is in school, please contact our dedicated Attendance Team immediately:

- **Mrs N Powell** Senior Attendance Champion / DSL
- **Mrs J Garratt/Mrs M James** Attendance Officer

We can provide pastoral support, Early Help referrals and access to external agency advice to ensure your child has every opportunity to be present, be punctual and succeed.

> **Full Attendance Policy & Appendices** For more detailed information, a comprehensive copy of our full attendance policy, along with all appendices and legislation, is available to view and download on the school website.

Attendance at Hales Valley Trust: Be Present, Be Punctual and Succeed

Daily Routines & Expectations



8:45am: Doors Open

School doors open to welcome children for a prompt start to the day.



9:00am: Registers Taken

Official registration begins; punctuality is essential to ensure children are ready to learn.



9:05am – 9:30am: Late Arrival

Children arriving during this window are marked as late. Late collection charges apply after 3 incidents.



9:30am: Registers Close

Any arrivals after this time are recorded as an unauthorised absence for the morning session.

Why Attendance Matters



13 Weeks of Holiday

With 13 weeks of school holidays available, parents must not book additional travel during term time.

96%

ATTENDANCE THRESHOLD

Attendance is a concern if it drops below 96%. Pupils at or above this level are significantly more likely to achieve expected standards.



Medical Appointments

To minimise disruption, all medical and dental appointments should be booked outside of school hours whenever possible.

Our 5-Step Approach

1 Identify and Prevent



Staff monitor attendance daily for all pupils, celebrating good habits and contacting families early if patterns emerge.

2 Early Support



For declining attendance, the school will contact you to discuss concerns and work together to remove barriers.

3 Formal Support



A meeting is held to implement a Personalised attendance support plan, set targets, and complete an Early Help Assessment.

4 Formal Review



Progress is reviewed within 4 weeks. Failure to improve may lead to a Notice to improve or referral to social care for neglect of education.

5 Legal Action



If support is not engaged with or is inappropriate (e.g., term-time holidays), the Local Authority will pursue legal proceedings.

Legal Sanctions & Consequences



10 Sessions of Absence

Legal action and penalty notices can be triggered by as few as 10 sessions (5 days) of unauthorised absence.



£2500 Maximum Fine

Prosecution under the Education Act can lead to fines of up to £2,500 per parent, per child.

50%

SEVERE ABSENCE

Attendance falling to 50% or below is classified as severe absence and requires immediate, high-level intervention.

Quick Guide for Parents - Is my child too ill?

Is My Child Too Ill for School? A Quick Guide for Parents

To help parents distinguish between minor ailments where attendance is encouraged and more serious illnesses requiring exclusion periods, following NHS guidelines.

Ready for School: Attendance Encouraged



Yes, Come to School!



Minor Illnesses: Head lice, cold sores, conjunctivitis, threadworm, slapped cheek, and athlete's foot don't require time off.



The 24-Hour Rule: Children can return 24 hours after starting antibiotics for Scarlet Fever or Strep A.



Medication at School: We are here to help; school staff will administer prescribed medication to support your child's attendance.

Quick Return Windows:



Scabies (Under 5s): 24 hours after the first treatment.



Ringworm: Once treatment has started.



Respiratory (Mild): Attend if symptoms are just a runny nose or mild cough.

Staying Home: Recovery & Hygiene



Stay at Home and Recover

VOMITING & RUNNY STOOLS

If unsure, use the 48-hour rule

48 — SUSPECTED SICKNESS BUG
Repeated vomiting or repeated watery/runny stools, especially with fever or tummy cramps: return 48 hours after the last episode.

24 — ONE ISOLATED EPISODE
Vomiting or a loose/runny stool may follow exercise after eating or a food intolerance.

Where there is no fever or repeated symptoms, return after 24 hours - or sooner if the child feels well enough - as long as the episode is clearly not infectious.

SOAP — HELP STOP BUGS SPREADING
Wash hands with soap and water. Use 'Catch it, Bin it, Kill it' and do not share towels, cups or cutlery.

Stay at Home Until...



Chickenpox: All spots have crusted/scabbed over (usually 5 days).



Measles: At least 4 days after the rash first appears.





Mumps: At least 5 days after the swelling starts.



Impetigo: 48 hours after treatment starts or when sores have crusted.

Leave of Absence Request Form

Please complete the below and return to the school office at least 2 weeks prior to the first day of absence.

The school year consists of 190 days of teaching, leaving 13 weeks of school holidays available for family travel. Hales Valley Trust will not authorise holidays during term time. Any such absences will be recorded as unauthorised and referred to the Education Support Service. Leave of absence will only be granted in truly exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the Headteacher. All holiday requests will need to be accompanied with booking evidence. This may be in the form of a receipt or email confirmation.

	Holiday Booking confirmation attached **Requests cannot be considered without confirmation.**				**YES/NO**
Section 1	**Leave period request**				
	Date from: *First date of absence from school*		Total number of school days to be missed:		
	Date to: *Last date of absence from school*				
	Child/ren's details				
	Surname		Year group		
	Forename/s		Date of birth		
	Surname		Year group		
	Forename/s		Date of birth		
	Surname		Year group		
	Forename/s		Date of birth		
	Address				
			Postcode		

Section 2	**Parent details –** *You must list the names of all adults who live with the child or have parental responsibility.*				
	List the names & addresses of every parent/carer **AND** tick the boxes that apply to each person		Lives with child/ren	Travelling with child/ren	Has PR of child/ren
	Name		☐	☐	☐
	Address				
	Name		☐	☐	☐
	Address				
	Name		☐	☐	☐
	Address				

Section 3

Reason for leave request – *The Executive Headteacher/ Headteacher/Head of School may only grant a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances; absence for holidays, weddings, milestone birthdays, recreation or leisure purposes are not normally considered exceptional.*
Please attach any supporting evidence and booking confirmation.

Section 4

Parent signature/s

By signing this form, I/we understand the following:

- School's attendance policy states that absences during term time will not be authorised unless the Executive Headteacher/ Headteacher/Head of School agrees there are exceptional circumstances and any absence will be recorded as unauthorised on the school's register.
- That the Executive Headteacher/ Headteacher/Head of School must be given a reasonable amount of time to review the application before the leave starts. An application needs to be made before the leave of absence (at least two weeks prior).
- Any unauthorised absence of 5 or more consecutive days (10 sessions) will be referred to the local authority as per the school's attendance policy.
- If a referral is made to the local authority, in line with the National Framework for Penalty Notices I/we may be issued with a Penalty Notice and/or be subject to alternative action which may include prosecution (starting at £160 per parent, per child).
- It is the duty of the school to refer unauthorised absence to the local authority. All proceeding actions, including penalty notices are managed by the local authority.
- If there is any change of circumstances or an extension to this leave is required, I/we will contact school as soon as possible. Any continued absences will be followed up by the school, which may include a home visit or safe and well checks from the police.
- I understand that this absence will result in a loss of learning which may have a negative impact on my child's academic and personal development.
- I understand that on my child's return to school, there may be a meeting with school to discuss the learning they may have lost as a result of this request.

Parent/s name:	**Parent/s signature:**	**Date:**

Section 5

For school use only

Date leave request received:	