

# Harvills Hawthorn Primary School



## Pupil Attendance Policy

Review Date: September 2027

**The name and contact details of the Senior Attendance Champion – the senior leader responsible for the strategic approach to attendance in our school:**

Mrs. Marsden  
[attendance@harvillshawthorn.co.uk](mailto:attendance@harvillshawthorn.co.uk)

**The name and contact details of the school staff member pupils and parent/carer(s) should contact about attendance on a day-to-day basis:**

School office  
0121 5571034

**The name and contact details of the school staff member pupils and parent/carer(s) should contact for more individual support with attendance:**

Mrs. Marsden  
[attendance@harvillshawthorn.co.uk](mailto:attendance@harvillshawthorn.co.uk)

Michelle Hellend  
(family support worker)  
[michelle.hellend@harvillshawthorn.co.uk](mailto:michelle.hellend@harvillshawthorn.co.uk)

**The name of our linked Governor with responsibility for monitoring attendance:**  
Kit Salmon

# **Harvills Hawthorn Primary School**

## **Pupil Attendance Policy**

### **Introduction and Background**

Harvills Hawthorn Primary School recognises that positive behaviour and good attendance are essential for children to gain the most from their education, including their attainment, wellbeing and wider life chances.

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude and any special educational need they may have. Parents have a legal duty to ensure their child attends school regularly and on time.

This policy reflects the Department for Education's statutory guidance *Working Together to Improve School Attendance (2024)* and the *School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024*. It outlines our expectations, procedures and responsibilities in promoting and securing high levels of attendance.

Our policy aims to:

- Promote children's welfare and safeguarding.
  - Ensure every child has access to full-time education.
  - Support children to succeed academically and socially.
  - Provide access to the widest possible range of opportunities.
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### **Our Whole-School Approach to Attendance**

Attendance is embedded within our curriculum, pastoral systems and behaviour culture. We take a whole-school approach that ensures:

- Clear routines and expectations for attendance.
- Staff training on attendance responsibilities and early identification of concerns.
- Strategic oversight by the Senior Attendance Champion and governing body.
- Attendance data informs school improvement planning.
- Attendance arrangements are published on our school website.

We recognise the strong connections between attendance, attainment, safeguarding and wellbeing. High expectations apply to all children, including those with SEND, medical needs or vulnerabilities.

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## Senior Attendance Champion and Governor Oversight

**Senior Attendance Champion:** Mrs Marsden - [attendance@harvillshawthorn.co.uk](mailto:attendance@harvillshawthorn.co.uk)

**Attendance Governor:** Kit Salmon

Governors receive regular attendance reports, scrutinise trends and challenge leaders to ensure high standards.

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## Promoting Regular Attendance

We promote good attendance by:

- Submitting daily attendance returns to the DfE.
- Maintaining accurate registers and following up absence promptly.
- Providing calm, safe and supportive environments.
- Sharing our pupil-friendly attendance policy.
- Having an Attendance Ambassador for each class in KS1 and KS2.
- Awarding weekly attendance trophies.
- Celebrating classes achieving 96%+ attendance.
- Rewarding good or improving attendance.
- Running attendance campaigns.
- Monitoring attendance weekly.
- Operating a Late Gate.
- Communicating promptly with parents.
- Sharing weekly class attendance percentages.
- Publishing attendance information on reports and discussing it at parents' evenings.

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## Understanding Types of Absence

Every half-day absence must be classified as authorised or unauthorised.

**Authorised absences** include illness, unavoidable medical appointments, emergencies or other unavoidable causes.

**Unauthorised absences** include:

- Keeping children off unnecessarily.
- Absences not properly explained.
- Arriving after registers close (U code).

- Shopping trips, birthdays, day trips.
- Holidays not authorised by the headteacher.

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### Persistent Absenteeism (PA) and Severe Absenteeism (SA)

A pupil is a **persistent absentee** when attendance falls to 90% or below. A pupil is **severely absent** when attendance falls to 50% or below. These pupils require targeted or intensive support.

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### Tiered Model of Attendance Support

#### Universal Support

- High-quality teaching.
- Clear routines.
- Attendance rewards.
- Regular communication.

#### Targeted Support

- Early conversations with parents.
- Attendance audits.
- Short-term monitoring.
- Reasonable adjustments.
- Pastoral support.
- Early Help involvement.

#### Intensive Support

- Individual attendance plans.
- Multi-agency involvement.
- Home visits.
- Reintegration plans.
- Referral to the Local Authority Attendance Support Service.

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### Absence Procedures

Parents must:

- Contact school before 9.20am on the first and each subsequent day of absence.
- Provide medical evidence if requested.
- Ensure children return to school as soon as possible.

If a child is absent without explanation:

- We will call before 9.30am.
- We will send a text message.
- We may call emergency contacts.
- We may conduct a home visit.
- We may contact external agencies.

If absence continues:

- Letters will be sent when attendance falls below 92%.
- Meetings will be arranged at 91%.
- Home visits may be carried out.
- Referrals may be made to the Local Authority.

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### Safeguarding and Children Missing Education (CME)

A child becomes CME when they are absent without explanation, leave school without a confirmed destination or have repeated unexplained absences.

We will:

- Escalate concerns to the DSL.
- Conduct home visits.
- Contact all emergency contacts.
- Inform the Local Authority CME team.
- Complete risk assessments.
- Work with external agencies.

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### Lateness

The school day starts at 8.45am. Registers close at 9.20am.

Children arriving after 9.20am receive a 'U' code, which counts as unauthorised absence.

Persistent lateness may result in meetings with the Senior Attendance Champion and referral to the Local Authority.

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### End of the School Day

School ends at 3.20pm (Nursery PM at 3.30pm). Children must be collected promptly.

If a child is not collected by 3.25pm, they will be taken to the school office. If no contact is made, emergency contacts will be called.

## Understanding Barriers to Attendance

We recognise that some children face greater barriers, including:

- Long-term medical conditions.
- SEND.
- Mental health needs.
- Social or family vulnerabilities.

We will:

- Work with health professionals.
- Consider reasonable adjustments.
- Use reintegration plans.
- Ensure reduced timetables are exceptional, temporary and reviewed.
- Support pupils with EHCPs.
- Involve external agencies.
- Listen to the pupil's voice.

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## Local Authority Attendance Support Services

Parents are expected to work with school and the Local Authority to address concerns. If difficulties cannot be resolved, formal support or legal action may be taken.

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## School Attendance and the Law

The National Framework requires penalty notices to be considered when a child has 10 unauthorised sessions within 10 school weeks.

Headteachers may not grant leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

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## Absence Data and How We Use It

We analyse attendance data to:

- Identify children needing support.
- Monitor trends across cohorts.
- Evaluate interventions.
- Inform school improvement.
- Report to governors.

Daily attendance data is submitted to the DfE.

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Publication of Attendance Arrangements

All attendance expectations and procedures are published on our school website.

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Contact for Attendance Support

For detailed support or guidance:

**Mrs Marsden** - [attendance@harvillshawthorn.co.uk](mailto:attendance@harvillshawthorn.co.uk)

Annex A: DfE guidance Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance. From 19th August 2024  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65e8ae343649a2001aed63aa/Summary\\_table\\_of\\_responsibilities\\_for\\_school\\_attendance\\_applies\\_from\\_19\\_August\\_2024.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65e8ae343649a2001aed63aa/Summary_table_of_responsibilities_for_school_attendance_applies_from_19_August_2024.pdf)

## All pupils

| Parents are expected to:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Schools are expected to:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Local authorities are expected to:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
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| <p>Ensure their child attends every day the school is open except when a statutory reason applies.</p> <p>Notify the school as soon as possible when their child has to be unexpectedly absent (e.g. sickness).</p> <p>Only request leave of absence in exceptional circumstances and do so in advance.</p> <p>Book any medical appointments around the school day where possible.</p> | <p>Have a clear school attendance policy on the school website which all staff, pupils and parents understand.</p> <p>Develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance.</p> <p>Accurately complete admission and attendance registers.</p> <p>Have robust daily processes to follow up absence.</p> <p>Regularly monitor data to identify patterns and trends and understand which pupils and pupil cohorts to focus on.</p> <p>Have a dedicated senior leader with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance.</p> | <p>Take an active role in attendance improvement, support their school(s) to prioritise attendance, and work together with leaders to set whole school cultures.</p> <p>Ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.</p> <p>Use data to understand patterns of attendance, compare with other local schools, identify areas of progress and where greater focus is needed.</p> <p>Ensure school staff receive training on attendance.</p> | <p>Have a strategic approach to improving attendance for the whole area and make it a key focus of all frontline council services.</p> <p>Have a School Attendance Support Team that works with all schools in their area to remove area-wide barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Provide each school with a named point of contact in the School Attendance Support Team who can support with queries and advice.</p> <p>Offer opportunities for all schools in the area to share effective practice.</p> |

## Pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent

| Parents are expected to:                                                                                                                                                                                      | Schools are expected to:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:                                                   | Local authorities are expected to:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
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| <p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the support offered to prevent the need for more formal support.</p> | <p>Proactively use data to identify pupils at risk of persistent absence.</p> <p>Work with each identified pupil and their parents to understand and address the reasons for absence, including any in-school barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Where out of school barriers are identified, signpost and support access to any required services in the first instance and act as lead practitioner if attendance is the only issue and/or the local threshold for formal early help is not met.</p> <p>If the issue persists, take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the local authority and other partners. If a case meets the local threshold for formal early help/family support, this includes conducting the early help assessment and acting as the lead practitioner where all partners agree that the school is the best placed lead service. Where the lead practitioner is outside of the school, continue to work with the local authority and partners.</p> | <p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p> | <p>Hold a regular conversation with every school to identify, discuss and signpost or provide access to services for pupils who are persistently or severely absent or at risk of becoming so.</p> <p>Where there are out of school barriers, provide each identified pupil and their family with access to services they need in the first instance.</p> <p>If the issue persists, and there are multiple needs consider whether the threshold for early help is met and facilitate access where it is. Regardless, take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the school and other partners. Provide the lead practitioner in cases where threshold is met and all partners agree that a local authority service is best placed to lead. Where the lead practitioner is outside of the local authority, continue to work with the school and partners.</p> |

## Persistently absent pupils

| Parents are expected to:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Schools are expected to:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:                                                   | Local authorities are expected to:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
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| <p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the formal support offered – including any parenting contract or voluntary early help plan to prevent the need for legal intervention.</p> | <p>Continue support as for pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent and:</p> <p>Where absence becomes persistent, put additional targeted support in place to remove any barriers. Where necessary this includes working with partners.</p> <p>Where there is a lack of engagement, hold more formal conversations with parents and be clear about the potential need for legal intervention in future.</p> <p>Where support is not working, being engaged with or appropriate, work with the local authority on legal intervention.</p> <p>Where there are safeguarding concerns, intensify support through a referral to statutory children's social care.</p> <p>Work with other schools in the local area, such as schools previously attended and the schools of any siblings.</p> | <p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p> | <p>Continue support as for pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent and:</p> <p>Work jointly with the school to provide formal support options including attendance contracts and education supervision orders.</p> <p>Where there are safeguarding concerns, ensure joint working between the school, children's social care services and other statutory safeguarding partners.</p> <p>Where support is not working, being engaged with or appropriate, enforce attendance through legal intervention (including prosecution as a last resort).</p> |

## Severely absent pupils

| Parents are expected to:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Schools are expected to:                                                                                                                              | Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:                                                   | Local authorities are expected to:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
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| <p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the formal support offered – including any parenting contract or voluntary early help plan to prevent the need for legal intervention.</p> | <p>Continue support as for persistently absent pupils and:</p> <p>Agree a joint approach for all severely absent pupils with the local authority.</p> | <p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p> | <p>Continue support as for persistently absent pupils and:</p> <p>All services should make this group the top priority for support. This may include a whole family plan, consideration for an education, health and care plan, or alternative form of educational provision.</p> <p>Be especially conscious of any potential safeguarding issues, ensuring joint working between the school, children's social care services and other statutory safeguarding partners. Where appropriate, this could include conducting a full children's social care assessment and building attendance into children in need and child protection plans.</p> |

## Support for cohorts of pupils with lower attendance than their peers

| Parents are expected to: | Schools are expected to:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:                                                   | Local authorities are expected to:                                                                                                     |
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| <p>Not applicable.</p>   | <p>Proactively use data to identify cohorts with, or at risk of, low attendance and develop strategies to support them.</p> <p>Work with other schools in the local area and the local authority to share effective practice where there are common barriers to attendance.</p> | <p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p> | <p>Track local attendance data to prioritise support and unblock area wide attendance barriers where they impact numerous schools.</p> |

## Support for pupils with medical conditions or SEND with poor attendance

| Parents are expected to:                                                                                                                                          | Schools are expected to:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:                                                   | Local authorities are expected to:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
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| <p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the support offered.</p> | <p>Maintain the same ambition for attendance and work with pupils and parents to maximise attendance.</p> <p>Ensure join up with pastoral support and where required, put in place additional support and adjustments, such as an individual healthcare plan and if applicable, ensuring the provision outlined in the pupil's EHCP is accessed.</p> <p>Consider additional support from wider services and external partners, making timely referrals.</p> <p>Regularly monitor data for such groups, including at board and governing body meetings and with local authorities.</p> | <p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p> | <p>Work closely with relevant services and partners, for example special educational needs, educational psychologists, and mental health services, to ensure joined up support for families.</p> <p>Ensure suitable education, such as alternative provision, is arranged for children of compulsory school age who because of health reasons would not otherwise receive a suitable education.</p> |

## Support for pupils with a social worker

| Parents are expected to:                                                                                                                                          | Schools are expected to:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:                                                   | Local authorities are expected to:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
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| <p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the support offered.</p> | <p>Know who the pupils who have, or who have had, a social worker are.</p> <p>Understand how the welfare, safeguarding, and child protection issues that they are experiencing, or have experienced, can have an impact on attendance – whilst maintaining a culture of high aspiration for the cohort.</p> <p>Provide additional academic support and make reasonable adjustments to help them, recognising that even when statutory social care intervention has ended, there can be a lasting impact on children's educational outcomes.</p> <p>Work in partnership with the local authority at a strategic and individual level, sharing data on attendance including, at an individual level, informing the pupil's social worker if there are any unexplained absences and if their name is to be deleted from the register.</p> | <p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p> | <p>Ensure that all Children's Social Care practitioners, understand the importance of good attendance for pupil's educational progress, for their welfare and their wider development – and understand their role in improving it.</p> <p>Through the work of Virtual School Heads, they should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Undertake systemic monitoring and data sharing of the attendance of children with a social worker in their area: developing and implementing targeted cohort level interventions to improve attendance.</li> <li>Provide advice, challenge and training to schools on how to promote and secure good attendance for children with a social worker.</li> <li>Develop whole system approaches, with social care, to support the attendance of children in need.</li> </ul> |

## Looked after and previously looked after children

| Parents are expected to:                                                                                                                                                                                                | Schools are expected to:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Local authorities are expected to:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
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| <p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand the child's barriers to attendance – including the development of Personal Education Plans.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the support offered.</p> | <p>Have high expectations for the cohort – with expert support and leadership provided by the designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after pupils.</p> <p>Work in partnership with the local authority Virtual School Head to develop and deliver high quality Personal Education Plans for looked-after children that support good attendance.</p> <p>Work directly with parents to develop good home-school links that support good attendance. For previously looked-after pupils this could include discussion on use of the Pupil Premium Plus funding managed by the school.</p> | <p>Designate a member of staff to have responsibility for the promotion of the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after pupils.</p> <p>Monitor and review attendance of the cohort and consider how school policies, including behaviour policies, are sensitive to their needs and support good attendance.</p> | <p>Promote the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children – doing everything possible to minimise disruption to education when a pupil enters care.</p> <p>(LA that looks after the child:) Appoint an expert Virtual School Head (VSH) – will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor, report on, and evaluate the education outcomes of looked after children, including their attendance, as if they attended a single school- whenever they live or are educated.</li> <li>• Ensure schools know when they have a pupil looked after by the authority on their role and that information is shared with the school on issues that may impact on their attendance.</li> <li>• Ensure that all looked-after pupils have high quality, up to date, effective Personal Education Plans developed in partnership with schools, social workers and carers – including, where necessary, clear interventions and use of pupil premium plus funding to support good attendance.</li> <li>• Provide expert advice and information on the education of previously looked-after pupils to schools and parents – including their attendance.</li> </ul> |

## Monitoring

| Parents:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Schools:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Academy trustees and governing bodies:                                                                                                                                               | Local authorities:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
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| <p>Schools regularly update parents on their child's attendance.</p> <p>(If parents feel the school and or local authority have not delivered what they are expected to they should discuss the case with the school and/or local authority's attendance support team.)</p> | <p>The school's Senior Attendance Champion will ensure all school based staff complete their attendance responsibilities in line with the school's policies and procedures.</p> <p>The governing board or academy trust will hold the headteacher or executive leadership to account for their delegated responsibilities and for compliance with regulatory and statutory requirements. They will review progress and provide challenge when required. The board will help school leaders focus improvement efforts on the individual pupils or cohorts who need it most and ensure that school staff receive adequate training on attendance.</p> <p>Ofsted will expect schools to do all they reasonably can to achieve the highest possible attendance as part of the behaviour and attitudes judgement. This includes, where attendance is not consistently at or above what could reasonably be expected, that schools have a strong understanding of the causes of absence (particularly for persistent and severe absence) and a clear strategy in place that takes account of those causes to improve attendance for all pupils.</p> <p>Ultimately, in cases where a school has not met expectations or statutory duties the Secretary of State can consider a complaint.</p> | <p>DfE Regions Group considers multi academy trusts' efforts on attendance as part of decision making.</p> <p>Ofsted considers governing bodies' efforts as part of inspections.</p> | <p>DfE Regions Group monitors local authority efforts as part of regular interaction.</p> <p>Ofsted may consider the local area partnership's approach to improving attendance of children and young people with SEND as part of the SEND Area Inspection, and the local authority's approach to improving attendance for children with a social worker through inspecting local authority children's services.</p> <p>Ultimately, in cases where a local authority has not met expectations or statutory duties the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman or the Secretary of State can consider a complaint.</p> |

Annex B – SANDWELL CODE OF CONDUCT

<https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/downloads/download/117/penalty-notice-code-of-conduct> – it will be issued to schools imminently.

Annex C – Illness Absence Guidance

**DfE external document template (childrenscommissioner.gov.uk)**

<https://assets.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/wpuploads/2022/12/aaa-guide-for-parents-on-school-attendance.pdf>