

Hallcroft Infant & Nursery School



Attendance & Registration Policy

January 2026

1 Introduction

Hallcroft Infant and Nursery School is committed to providing a full and effective education to all pupils and embraces the concept of equal opportunities for all.

We will endeavor to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome.

For a child to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance is essential. We will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents and carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

School attendance is subject to various Education laws and our school attendance policy is written to reflect; the law, the guidance produced by the Department for Education and the Local Authority. The Education Act 1996 Part 1, Section 7 states: *The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable [a] To his age, ability and aptitude and [b] To any special needs he may have either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.*

For educational purposes the term 'parent' is used to include those that have parental responsibility and/or those that have the day-to-day care of the child. The legislation that applies to children who are of *compulsory school age* **and** *are registered at school* is contained within this Act.

This policy will contain within it the procedures that the school will use to meet its attendance targets.

2 Roles and responsibilities

2.1 Headteacher

In this school, the Headteacher is responsible for the strategic approach to attendance. The Headteacher can be contacted via the school office during term time.

Ultimately, it is the responsibility of the Headteacher to be aware of and bring attention to, any emerging attendance concerns. In cases where a pupil begins to develop a pattern of absences, the school will try to resolve the problem with the parent/s. If this is unsuccessful the school will refer to the Health Families Team if the problem appears to be a medical one. In other cases, the school will seek advice from the school's Attendance Improvement Officer (AIO).

2.2 Parents

Ideally, where parents have an initial concern relating to attendance, they should speak to their child's class teacher first. If they require further support, they are encouraged to contact the Headteacher.

2.3 Governors

Governors are required to make robust governance arrangements to ensure that attendance is high. This includes:

- ✓ taking an active role in attendance improvement,
- ✓ supporting their school to prioritise attendance,
- ✓ working together with school leaders to develop a whole-school attendance culture

In order to do this, Governors will consider attendance matters in their meetings, through:

- ✓ Determining the school's attendance policies and procedures,
- ✓ Thorough examination of recent and historic trends and patterns,
- ✓ Benchmarking against comparator schools within the local authority, region and nationwide,
- ✓ Paying particular attention to pupil cohorts and to groups that face entrenched barriers to attendance (e.g. pupils who have a social worker, are from a background or ethnicity where attendance has historically been low, have a long-term medical condition, have special educational needs or disabilities or are eligible for free school meals),
- ✓ Working with school leaders to set goals and outline areas for support and challenge.

The school will review its systems for improving attendance at regular intervals to ensure that it is achieving its set goals.

3 School Procedures

Any child who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity [attendance out of school]. Only the headteacher or a member of staff acting on their behalf can authorise absence.

3.1 Lateness

The gates to school open at 8.40am and children are welcomed into the playground. The school bell rings at 8:50am at which point all children should be lined up on the playground ready to go into school. This is the official start to the school day. Once children are in class and the register has been taken, children arriving after this time will receive a late mark. The registers will remain open for thirty minutes, closing at 9.20am. Any pupil arriving after this time will be marked as having an unauthorised absence unless there is an acceptable explanation e.g. feeder school bus is delayed. In cases for example, where the absence at registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate authorised absence code will be entered.

The afternoon registration will be at 1:00pm (12:30pm for afternoon nursery pupils). The registers will close immediately after that.

The school day ends at 3.20pm

Pupils arriving after the start of school but before the end of the registration period will be treated for statistical purposes as present, but will be coded as late before registers close.

3.2 First Day Absence

Parents/carers are asked to inform the school by telephone or via the Arbor app on their child's first day of absence. Where a child is still absent when the morning registers have closed and the school has not received a telephone call or app message, then the head teacher or office staff will telephone the child's parents/carers to find out the reason for the absence. If there is no response to this call the school office will send a safe and well text and will then try other emergency contacts. If there is still no communication and therefore pupil safety is a concern the Head Teacher will carry out a home visit to check that the pupil and their family are safe and well.

3.3 A Welcome Back

It is important that on return from an absence that all pupils are made to feel welcome. This includes, where possible, ensuring that the pupil is helped to catch up on missed work and brought up to date on any information that has been passed to the other pupils.

4 Authorised absences

4.1 Authorised absence

This is where the school has either given approval in advance for a pupil to be away or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as a satisfactory reason for absence. All other absences are regarded as unauthorised, which could lead to a fixed penalty notice.

4.2 Reasons for authorising absences

The following may be reasons for authorising absences:

- ✓ Illness
- ✓ Family bereavements
- ✓ Medical and dental appointments where proof is available
- ✓ Days of religious observance
- ✓ Fixed term exclusion
- ✓ Permanent exclusion until removed from roll or re-instated
- ✓ Absence that the school deems exceptional circumstance
- ✓ A family holiday deemed to be exceptional (see next paragraph)

4.3 Holidays deemed exceptional

The school will only consider authorising holidays in term time under the following exceptional circumstances:

- ✓ A parent/carer is a member of the armed forces or a police officer with directed leave
- ✓ A terminal illness to a close family member
- ✓ Religious observance (up to 3 days per year at the discretion of the school)
- ✓ Other circumstances deemed to be totally out of the control of the parents

Requests for exceptional holiday authorisation must be received no later than 4 weeks in advance so that they can be considered. Failure to do so will result in the loss of right to appeal if authorisation is not given.

4.4 Reasons that are not authorised

In addition to holidays in term time, the following reasons are not accepted as a satisfactory explanation for absence, and therefore will not be authorised:

- ✓ Shopping trips
- ✓ Holidays in term time unless under exceptional circumstances
- ✓ Minding the house or looking after siblings
- ✓ Lateness if registration is missed without explanation
- ✓ Medical appointments that cannot be verified
- ✓ No reason given
- ✓ School staff have cause to believe that the note is not genuine or not valid

Where the school suspects a child may be on holiday and parents have not notified us, a home visit may be conducted as part of our safe and well checks.

Parents/carers are asked to complete a Leave of Absence Form (Appendix 1) when they would like to request a leave of absence. Completion of this form also helps with safeguarding.

5 Fixed Penalty Notices and Enforcement

5.1 Fixed Penalty Notice

In Nottinghamshire, parents can be fined if their child has 5 days or more (10 sessions) unauthorised absence over a 10-week period.

The national framework for considering penalty notices from August 2024 is:

- ✓ A fine of £80 per parent/carer, per pupil if paid within 21 days or £160 if paid within 28 days.
- ✓ A national limit of 2 penalty notices within a 3-year rolling period.
- ✓ If a parent/carer receives a second fine for the same pupil within the 3-year period, this will be charged at the higher rate of £160 per parent, per pupil.

NB - The amount of a fixed penalty notice is set by the Department for Education National Framework and are therefore subject to change without amendment of the policy. All monies are paid to Nottinghamshire County Council and the school does not benefit from this.

5.2 Enforcement

Should a 3rd penalty notice be issued within the 3 year period, the matter would be referred to the enforcement team at the Local Authority for possible court action.

If a Leave of Absence request is determined as unauthorised and the leave of absence will meet or exceed the threshold for a fixed penalty notice, an Attendance Penalty Notice Warning letter will be sent to parents (Appendix 2). If the parents decide to go ahead with the Leave of Absence then an Attendance Penalty Notice Requested letter will be sent (Appendix 3).

6 Removal from the school roll

6.1 Local Authority liaison

Any pupil who is absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive days will be notified to the Local Authority, because this is the legal requirement. If a child is absent without an explanation for 20 consecutive days, the school will work with the Children Missing in Education Team at the Local Authority to conduct further enquiries. If these are exhausted, with the agreement of the Local Authority, the child may be removed from the attendance register.

6.2 Other reasons for removing a child from the school roll

There are strict guidelines on the circumstances under which a pupil may be removed from the school roll. Removal from the school roll under circumstances other than those detailed below is illegal.

- ✓ Where a school has been notified that the pupil has been registered as a pupil at another school.
- ✓ Where a pupil has ceased to attend the school, and the parent(s)/carer(s) have satisfied the County Council that the pupil is receiving education otherwise than by attendance at the school. (Elective Home Education).
- ✓ Where the school has been notified by a Health Care Professional that the pupil is unlikely to be in a fit state to attend school before becoming legally exempt from the obligation to attend school.
- ✓ Where the pupil has been absent without reasonable cause for four academic weeks and the

Headteacher of the school has failed, after reasonable enquiry and consultation with the Education Welfare Service to obtain information on the cause of the absence.

- ✓ Where the Headteacher has been notified that the student has died.
- ✓ Where a pupil has failed to return from an extended family holiday after both the school and the local authority have tried to locate the pupil.
- ✓ Where the pupil has been permanently excluded and this decision has been confirmed by the Pupil Discipline Committee.

7 Attendance Awards

The school will use half termly attendance awards to reward pupils who have good or improving attendance. This is measured on a half termly basis. These take the form of a gold box treat and certificate each half term.

8 Monitoring Attendance

Each week the school will review registers to determine if any pupils of statutory school age have met the unauthorised absence threshold for a fixed penalty notice or enforcement using the Attendance Fines Report on Arbor. Where the threshold for referral has been met, this is made to the Local Authority and parents are informed (see section 5).

Where attendance is close to the threshold but not yet over, a letter will be sent home advising parents/carers that further unauthorised absences may put them over the threshold and result in a referral and possible fixed penalty notice (Appendix 4).

Weekly attendance monitoring to support parent/carer awareness:

Parents can view their child's overall attendance percentage for the academic year and also their child's attendance percentage for the last 4 weeks on the Arbor app.

Each week the school monitors attendance for statutory school age children and categorises pupils into the following groups:

- 99-100% - excellent.
- 96-98% –good.
- 95-95.99% - in line with national. The following app message is sent to parents: We have a duty to inform you that your child's attendance has dropped below 96% for the academic year, which is just in line with the national average. Please be aware if attendance drops below 95% it will fall into our attendance monitoring processes. We monitor attendance on a weekly basis with the children's best interests at heart. Please note, our attendance target is 97%. Thank you for your support with this.
If attendance rises the following week, a further text is not needed.
- 90-94.99% –below national. The following app message is sent to parents: We have a duty to inform you that your child's attendance is below 95% for the academic year. This is below the national average and falls into our attendance monitoring processes. We monitor attendance on a weekly basis with the children's best interests at heart. Please note that our attendance target is 97%. Thank you for your support with this.
If attendance rises the following week and continues to rise, an attendance improvement message is sent until it reaches 95%.

- Below 90% - persistent absence. The following app message is sent to parents: We have a duty to inform you that your child's attendance is below 90% for the academic year. This is identified by the Government as persistent absence. We monitor attendance on a weekly basis with the children's best interests at heart. Please note that our attendance target is 97%. Thank you for your support with this. If attendance rises the following week and continues to rise, an attendance improvement message is sent until it reaches 95%.

Half-termly attendance monitoring to formalise parent/carer awareness see below:

- 90% - 95% - get an attendance monitoring letter (Appendix 5) which states that attendance is a cause for concern unless the % attendance is improving or there are known acceptable circumstances e.g. hospital stay etc.
- Below 90% where attendance continues to be a concern and no discernable improvement is being made parents/carers are invited to come to an Attendance Action Planning Meeting with the Headteacher (Appendix 6). During this meeting any barriers to attendance are discussed, solutions agreed and consequences of continued poor attendance are explained.

The data monitoring is undertaken by admin staff and then shared with the Headteacher who may use discretion where appropriate.

The Headteacher shares attendance data in a termly report to Governors.

9 Reasonable Intervention

9.1 Reasonable support

Schools are expected to:

- ✓ Proactively use data to identify pupils at risk of poor attendance.
- ✓ Work with each identified pupil and their parents to understand and address the reasons for absence, including any in-school barriers to attendance.
- ✓ Where out of school barriers are identified, signpost and support access to any required services in the first instance.
- ✓ If the issue persists, take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the local authority and other partners. Act 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.

In order to do this, the school will use the Support First Principle. This includes:

- ✓ Report emerging attendance patterns of concern to parents immediately by letter
- ✓ Offering structured conversations with parents to establish any issues or challenges leading to poor attendance
- ✓ Referring families for additional support to help manage attendance issues
- ✓ Agreeing a school attendance contract with parents

9.2 Beyond reasonable support

Once the school is sure that it has offer all reasonable support, a decision will be made with the Local Authority as to whether legal action is required. The school will keep records relating to all activity around attendance, such as:

- ✓ Record of Home Visits
- ✓ Evidence of referrals for support to other agencies,
- ✓ Letters to parents,
- ✓ In school meetings with parents,
- ✓ Evidence of Reasonable Adjustments,
- ✓ Attendance panel meeting notes
- ✓ Chronology of contact with the family,
- ✓ Copy of a Parenting or Improving Attendance Contract or multi-agency support plan.

Approved by full Governing Body on	02/02/2026
To be reviewed	As required

Appendix 1

APPLICATION BY PARENT/CARER FOR CHILD'S LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL DURING TERM TIME

Pupil's Name Class

Home Address

Parent 1 emailParent 2 email

I wish to apply for my child to be absent from school:

First day of absence Last day of absence

Total number of school days missed

Reasons for absence from school:

.....

I apply for my child named above to have authorised absence from school for the reasons stated. I understand that if this is not agreed then any absence will be treated as unauthorised and may lead to the issue of a Penalty Notice.

Name of Parent/Carer making application

Signed

Date

PLEASE RETURN COMPLETED APPLICATION FORM TO YOUR CHILD'S SCHOOL GIVING AT LEAST 28 days' NOTICE OF INTENDED ABSENCE

Your application for leave of absence from school during term time for has been approved as they are not statutory school age and still in nursery.

Your application for leave of absence from school during term time for has been approved due to the circumstances you describe.

Your application for leave of absence from school during term time for has not been approved and will be recorded as unauthorised.

10 or more unauthorised absences (5 days) within a 10 week period will result in a penalty notice being issued.

Signed..... Date.....

You will be informed via email the outcome of your application.

Appendix 2



Hallcroft Infant and Nursery School
Whitaker Close
Retford, Nottinghamshire
DN22 7QH
Headteacher: Mrs J Cook
Tel: 01777
702728

Email: office@hallcroft.notts.sch.uk
Website: www.hallcroft.notts.sch.uk

Date

Full legal name of individual parent/carer
Full address of individual parent/carer

Dear full legal name of individual parent/carer,

Attendance Penalty Notice Warning

Child full name (DOB XX/XX/XXXX)

I note your application to take **name of student** out of education for **number of** days to go on holiday. Schools are only allowed to agree a leave of absence during term time in exceptional circumstances.

I have considered your application and do not feel it meets the exceptional circumstances criteria and therefore your request has been declined. Should you decide to remove your child from school on the dates indicated in your application then their absence will be marked in the register as unauthorised.

An unauthorised leave of absence of 5 days/10 sessions (over a 10-week rolling period) for the purpose of a family holiday can lead to you being issued with a penalty notice fine of up to £160 for each child who is absent. The fines can be issued to both parents for each child.

In some circumstances the Local Authority may decide a prosecution via Magistrates Court is more suitable, for instance lengthy or repeated leave of absence periods. This would include circumstances where a parent/carer has already had two fines for **name of student** over a 3-year rolling period.

If you do remove **name of student** from school for the period stated in your application I will request that the local authority issues a penalty notice.

Please be assured that we monitor attendance with the children's best interests at heart. There is significant evidence that children who attend well do well and we aim for all the children at Hallcroft to do their very best.

Thank you for your co-operation and support.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Cook
Head Teacher

Appendix 3



Hallcroft Infant and Nursery School
Whitaker Close
Retford, Nottinghamshire
DN22 7QH
Headteacher: Mrs J Cook
Tel: 01777
702728
Email: office@hallcroft.notts.sch.uk
Website: www.hallcroft.notts.sch.uk

Date

Full legal name of individual parent/carer
Full address of individual parent/carer

Dear full legal name of individual parent/carer,

Attendance Penalty Notice Requested

Child full name (DOB XX/XX/XXXX)

On date we wrote to you to explain that we would not authorise name of student's absence from school for number of days for a holiday. We also informed you that this could lead to a Penalty Notice being issued to you.

I am now writing to advise you that a request has been made to the Local Authority to issue a Penalty Notice to you for failing to ensure that your child attends school regularly.

In some circumstances the Local Authority may decide a prosecution via Magistrates Court is more suitable, for instance a lengthy or repeated leave of absence periods. This would include circumstances where a parent/carer has already had two fines for name of student over a 3-year rolling period.

Should you wish to discuss any of the above, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Cook
Head Teacher

Appendix 4



Hallcroft Infant and Nursery School
Whitaker Close
Retford, Nottinghamshire
DN22 7QH
Headteacher: Mrs J Cook
Tel: 01777
702728
Email: office@hallcroft.notts.sch.uk
Website: www.hallcroft.notts.sch.uk

Date

Dear parent/carer of **name of student**,

Attendance Penalty Notice Warning

The Government now expect schools to issue fixed penalty notices for unauthorised absences which are 5 days (10 sessions) or more.

Please be aware that as **name of student** has had **number of sessions** (**number of days**) of unauthorised absence, any further unauthorised (holidays or single unauthorised days) absences within the next 10 weeks may trigger a fine from the Local Authority.

We will continue to monitor **name of student** attendance on a regular basis. If there are any issues or difficulties regarding attendance then please do not hesitate to contact me.

Please be assured that we monitor attendance with the children's best interests at heart. There is significant evidence that children who attend well do well and we aim for all the children at Hallcroft to do their very best.

Thank you for your co-operation and support.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Cook
Head Teacher

Appendix 5



Hallcroft Infant and Nursery School
Whitaker Close
Retford, Nottinghamshire
DN22 7QH
Headteacher: Mrs J Cook
Tel: 01777
702728
Email: office@hallcroft.notts.sch.uk
Website: www.hallcroft.notts.sch.uk

Date

Dear parent/carer of **name of student**,

Attendance Concern

At our recent attendance monitoring **name of student** attendance was noted as giving cause for concern. Please find enclosed a copy of your child's registration certificate which shows they have been absent for **number of sessions (number of days)**. This is a cause for concern as their attendance is % against a school attendance target, for this year, of 97%.

We will continue to monitor **name of student** attendance on a regular basis. If there are any issues or difficulties regarding attendance then please do not hesitate to contact me.

Please be assured that we monitor attendance with the children's best interests at heart. There is significant evidence that children who attend well do well and we aim for all the children at Hallcroft to do their very best.

Thank you for your co-operation and support.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Cook
Head Teacher

Appendix 6



Hallcroft Infant and Nursery School
Whitaker Close
Retford, Nottinghamshire
DN22 7QH
Headteacher: Mrs J Cook
Tel: 01777
702728

Email: office@hallcroft.notts.sch.uk
Website: www.hallcroft.notts.sch.uk
Date

Dear parent/carer of **name of student**,

Notification of School Attendance Action Plan Meeting

At our recent attendance monitoring **name of student** attendance was noted as giving cause for concern. Please find enclosed a copy of your child's registration certificate which shows they have been absent for **number of sessions (number of days)**. This is a cause for concern as their attendance is % against a school attendance target, for this year, of 97%. **This counts as persistent absence and I am required to hold an Attendance Action Plan Meeting with you.**

At the meeting an Action Plan will be produced to support the improvement of **name of student** attendance. It is crucial that you have an input into the Action Plan so that we can best support your child.

The meeting is scheduled for:

Date:

Time:

Venue:

If you are not able to attend on this date please let the office know and we will arrange an alternative day.

Please be assured that we monitor attendance with the children's best interests at heart. There is significant evidence that children who attend well do well and we aim for all the children at Hallcroft to do their very best.

Thank you for your co-operation and support.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Cook
Head Teacher