

# Cherrywood Federation Attendance policy



**Approved by:**

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Governors

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## 1. Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Promoting good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

## 2. Legislation and guidance

### 1. Legislation and Guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE). Legislation sets out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- [The Education Acts 1996 and 2002](#)
  - [The Children Act 1989](#)
  - [The Crime and Disorder Act 1998](#)
  - [The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003](#)
  - [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
  - [The Sentencing Act 2020](#)
  - [The School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)
  - [The Education \(Parenting Contracts and Parenting Orders\) \(England\) Regulations 2007](#)
  - The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024 [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2024 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)
  - [The Education \(Information about Individual Pupils\) \(England\) Regulations 2013](#)
  - [The Children and Young Persons Acts 1933](#) and [1963](#)
  - [The Equality Act 2010](#)
- Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that "The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient full-time education either by regular attendance at school or otherwise".
  - Section 444 (1) of the Education Act 1996 states that "if a child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at a school fails to attend regularly at the school his parent is guilty of an offence".

**Therefore, regular and punctual attendance at school is a legal requirement.** Additionally, regular attendance is essential to enable children to maximise their educational attainment, social development, future opportunities and further development.

- Under Section 576 of the Education Act 1996, for the purposes of Education Law, the definition of a 'parent' and who is responsible for ensuring regular attendance to school is:

- all biological parents, whether they are married or not - any person who, although not a biological parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person - this could be an adoptive parent, a step-parent, guardian or other relative - any person who, although not a biological parent and does not have parental responsibility, has care of a child or young person. This could be one parent, both parents and/or carer/s.

This policy also refers to:

- [School census guidance](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

### **3. Roles and responsibilities**

#### **3.1 The governing board**

The governing board is responsible for:

- › Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- › Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- › Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- › Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- › Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- › Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

#### **3.2 The headteacher**

The headteacher is responsible for:

- › Implementation of this policy at the school
- › Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- › Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- › Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- › Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

#### **3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance**

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- › Leading attendance across the school
- › Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- › Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- › Having an oversight of data analysis
- › Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- › Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- › Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The designated senior leaders responsible for attendance are Anita Saville and Libby Wright at Joseph Hood Primary School, who can be contacted on 0208 542 2471 and Anita Saville and Leanne Newman and Alice Waterman at Hatfeild Primary School who can be contacted on 0208 337 1332.

### **3.4 The attendance officer in school**

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- › Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- › Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- › Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher
- › Working with the education welfare officer to tackle persistent absence
- › Working with the headteacher and the School Education Welfare office to issue penalty notices.

The attendance officer at Joseph Hood is Sabina Lockwood who can be contacted via the school office-0208 5422471. The attendance officer at Hatfeild Primary School is Lorraine Jenkins who can be contacted via the school office-0208 337 1332.

### **3.5 Class teachers**

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a twice daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office immediately after registration on a daily basis-by 9.05am in the morning and immediately after children return to class from lunch time.

### **3.6 School office staff**

School office staff will:

- › Take calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- › Inform teachers and senior leaders where needed, in order to provide them with more detailed information and support on attendance
- › Organise first day calling/texts and record on registers.

### **3.7 Parents/carers**

Parents/carers are expected to:

- › Make sure their child attends every day.
- › Call the school to report their child's absence before 9.00am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence and advise when they are expected to return.
- › Provide up to date contact numbers and changes of address.
- › Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child.
- › Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day.
- › Provide medical evidence indicating attendance at the dentist, doctor or optician before the arranged appointment unless an emergency situation has arisen. Whenever possible all appointments should be made outside of school hours.

- › Ensure that their child arrives at school on time each day.
- › Let the School know if their child is going to be late, e.g. if a car breaks down; if an urgent appointment has been made.
- › Understand the importance of good attendance and punctuality and promote this with their child, aiming for 100% attendance each year.
- › Provide written explanations of any absence and medical evidence for whole day appointments as well as medical evidence for persistent absence from school due to alleged illness.
- › Only request leave of absence if it is for an exceptional circumstance.

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is a parent/carer's legal responsibility (Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act) and permitting absence from school that is not authorised by the Head Teacher creates an offence in law.

### **3.8 Pupils**

Pupils are expected to:

- › Attend school every day, unless they are ill or have an essential medical appointment
- › Arrive on time and be appropriately prepared for the school day

## **4. Recording attendance**

### **4.1 Attendance register**

We will keep an attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and immediately after lunch for the pm session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- › Present
- › Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- › Absent
- › Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- › The original entry
- › The amended entry
- › The reason for the amendment
- › The date on which the amendment was made
- › The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- › Whether the absence is authorised or not
- › The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- › The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

At Joseph Hood Primary School-

Pupils should arrive at 8.45am for the start of the school day (8.45 or 12.15 for Nursery). The school gates are opened at 8.45am and children go directly to class to do an early morning task.

The register for the first session will be taken at 9.00am and will be kept open until 9.15. The register for the second session will be taken immediately after children return from lunch, 12.45 for Reception and Yr 1 children, 1.00 for Yr 2 and Yr 3 children and 1.20 for Yrs 4, 5 and 6, and will be kept open for 5 minutes.

At Hatfeild Primary School-

Pupils should arrive at 8.40am for the start of the school day (8.45 or 12.15 for Nursery). The school gates are opened at 8.40am and children go directly to class to do an early morning task.

The register for the first session will be taken at 9.00am and will be kept open until 9.15. The register for the second session will be taken immediately after children return from lunch, 12.45 for Reception, 1.00 for Yr 1 and Yr 2 children and 1.20 for Yrs 3, 4, 5 and 6, and will be kept open for 5 minutes.

#### **4.2 Unplanned absence**

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9.00am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school office. Parents can report an absence on the school absence line by pressing extension 1 or by speaking directly to a member of staff.

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance. School may also request medical evidence be provided for any subsequent illness to enable that absence to be recorded as authorised. The request will be in writing and will detail what could be acceptable as medical evidence, for example, an appointment card, a stamp in the Home /School contact book by the receptionist, copy of a prescription or sight of the finished prescribed medicine bottle/container with the child's name on it.

#### **4.3 Planned absence**

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment. Parents should telephone or come into the school office to give details in advance of the appointment and will be advised that usually only a half day absence will be authorised and pupils should be in school before or after the appointment.

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

#### 4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed (9.00-9.15am) will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed (9.15am) will be marked as an **unauthorised absence**, using the appropriate code (U)
- Any child who arrives after the gates are closed at 8.55am must enter the school by the main gate entrance and report to the school office for parents to sign in. If pupils are not in class when the register is taken, they will be coded as 'L'. Any late arrivals after 9.15am will be coded as 'U' which is an unauthorised absence for that session.
  
- In accordance with the 'Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006', if your child arrives after the registers close, they will receive a mark, code U, that shows them to be on site, but this will **not count** as a present mark and it **will mean they have an unauthorised absence**. This may mean that you could face the possibility of a Penalty Notice or other legal action if the problem persists.

Persistent lateness: We believe that a pupil arriving late will not receive the best outcomes. Arriving late can be unsettling for the pupil and may cause classroom disruption.

Ongoing punctuality issues will be identified by the school attendance officer who will liaise with parents, senior staff in school and the Education Welfare Officer. Parents will be invited to attend a School Attendance meeting.

#### 4.5 Late Collection of children after school

School ends at 3.15pm for Children at Joseph Hood Primary School

School ends at 3.15pm for EYFS and KS1 children at Hatfeild and 3.20pm for KS2 children

Please see the following information which has been taken from Merton's "LBM Children not collected from school policy."

<https://www.merton.gov.uk/education-and-learning/schools/school-attendance-welfare-and-support/overview>

If contact has not been made 30 minutes after the end of the school day, police will be alerted via 101 and the Children and Families Hub 020-8545-4226 or 020- 8545-4227 will be phoned if the child is a Merton resident, or the children's social care department for their home Local Authority.

All pupils - who usually attend after school childcare provision – Staff will attempt to contact the parent/carer/emergency contact up to 30 minutes after the official closing time of the provision (i.e. 6.30pm), After 30 minutes, following alerting police on 101, if the child is a Merton resident the Children and Families Hub 020-8545-4226 or 020-8545-4227 will be called. If the child is not a Merton resident staff will contact the children's social care department for their home Local Authority.

## **4.6 Understanding types of absence coding**

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the School as AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED and it is the Executive Headteacher/Head of School who decides whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required, preferably in writing. Medical evidence may also be required in the form of a copy of a prescription, medication label etc. Types of absence that are likely to be authorised are illness, medical or dental appointments that unavoidably fall in school time, emergency medical appointments and time for exams.

Examples of types of absence that are **not** considered reasonable and which will not usually be authorised under any circumstances are:

- Going shopping with parents
- Birthdays
- Minding other younger children in the family
- Sibling unwell
- Staying at home because other members in the family are unwell
- Day trips and holidays in term time unless there are exceptional circumstances that have been approved by the Head Teacher/Principal
- Arriving at school too late to get a present mark (After the close of registration)
- Truancy
- Death of a pet

A school can, if needed, change an authorised absence to an unauthorised absence and vice versa, if new information is presented. Any changes will be communicated to parents/carers. An example of this would be where a parent states a child is unwell but on return to school, there is evidence they have been on holiday.

## **4.7 Suspension from School**

With effect from the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2022, any pupil who has been suspended from school, and provision arranged, if the student does not attend the provision this shall be recorded as an unauthorised absence. This may result in further action taken by the school, please see also penalty notice section.

## **4.8 Following up unexplained absence**

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

Call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school will make all reasonable enquiries to establish contact with parents/carers and the child, including

making enquiries to known friends and wider family. In the event of no contact from the family/friend, school may make a home visit or seek advice from the School Education Welfare Officer or the Merton Early Help Hub to ascertain the safety and well-being of the child. If contact cannot be made by the end of the first day, the police may be called.

Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will involve the Education Welfare Officer

Once contact has been made, school will identify whether the absence is approved or not

Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session.

We have a legal duty to report the absence of any pupil who is absent without an explanation for ten consecutive days unauthorised absence and fifteen days attributed to illness. If the child is not seen and contact has not been established with the named parent/carer then the local authority is notified that the child is at risk of missing education (CME). The Education Welfare Officer will visit the last known address and alert key services to locate the child; so help us to help you and your child by making sure we always have an up-to-date contact number. There will be regular checks on telephone numbers throughout the year.

### **Children Missing from Education (CME)**

If a pupil moves too far from either school in the Federation to attend the school or moves out of the area/abroad the parents must complete a school leavers form, available from the school office. This will provide Joseph Hood/Hatfeild Primary School with the pupil's new home address, potentially their new school name and contact details and contact information for their parents/carers. If no/insufficient detail is provided to the school, the pupil will be referred to the Local Authority as a Child Missing from Education and the Local Authority will need to make appropriate checks.

### **Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs**

The school attendance officer will work together with the local authority and other relevant professionals to ensure any child who is going to be absent for longer than 15 days due to medical reasons either consecutively or accumulatively, will have access to relevant and appropriate education. This includes Public Exam provision and the education of siblings where the family have had to travel and stay away from the home for medical reasons. Please see Supporting Children with Medical Needs policy for further information.

### **4.9 Part-time Timetables**

All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a pupil's best interests, there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet their individual needs. For example, where a medical condition prevents a pupil from attending full-time education and a part-time timetable is considered as part of a re-integration package. ([Working Together to Improve School Attendance](#)).

A part-time timetable must only be in place for the shortest time necessary and not be treated as a long-term solution. Any pastoral support programme or other agreement should have a

time limit by which point the pupil is expected to attend fulltime, either at school or alternative provision.

There should also be formal arrangements in place for regularly reviewing it with the pupil and their parents. In agreeing to a part-time timetable, a school has agreed to a pupil being absent from school for part of the week or day and therefore must treat absence as authorised and code in the register as a C, which is an authorised absence.

#### **4.10 Reporting to parents/carers**

The school will regularly inform parents annually about their child's attendance and absence levels by sending out an attendance sheet with annual reports in the summer term. Where attendance is identified as an issue, parents will be informed by letter and may be invited into a meeting with the Attendance Officer, Headteacher and Education Welfare.

### **5. Authorised and unauthorised absence**

#### **5.1 Approval for Leave of Absence in Exceptional Circumstances**

The School Attendance (Pupil Regulations) (England) Regulations 2024 state that head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are 'exceptional circumstances'. Head teachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

All requests for leave of absence in term time will be considered on their individual merits taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and context of the request.

Reasons not deemed Exceptional include-

- Availability of cheap flights and/or holidays
- Availability of desired accommodation
- Parent/carer work commitments unless there is clear evidence that the leave cannot be taken in school holiday times.
- Poor weather experienced during school holiday periods
- Overlap with the beginning or end of term, half term.
- Holiday pre-booked by another family member
- Study leave for grammar school exams

Any request should be submitted in writing as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 4 weeks before the absence, using the leave of absence request form, accessible via the school office. The headteacher requires evidence to support any request for leave of absence. All requests must be put in writing and any verbal requests will be recorded in writing by school staff.

Valid reasons for authorised absence include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- Funeral of a parent, grandparent or sibling-the headteacher will take into account the location of the funeral and distance to be travelled. The headteacher will use

discretion having discussed with the parents the funeral and travel arrangements.

- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision
- Sudden loss of housing through eviction or domestic violence
- Wedding of an immediate family member-parent, grandparents, sibling
- Attendance at secondary school tests, open days and induction days

Authorisation for absence will not be granted retrospectively. The Department for Children Life Long Learning and Families make it clear that:

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

### **The School Attendance (Pupil Regulations) (England) Regulations 2024**

On receipt of an application for leave on the appropriate form together with any supporting documentation, consideration will be given to the circumstance. A letter outlining the decision of the school will be sent to parents/carers within 7 days.

#### **5.2 Legal sanctions**

Parents/carers should be aware that either Joseph Hood or Hatfeild may contact the London Borough of Merton if a pupil has 10 or more unauthorised absences in a rolling 10 week period with a view to issuing a Penalty Notice or other legal action. The Penalty Notice is issued individually to each parent/carer who fails to ensure their child's regular attendance at school. The 1<sup>st</sup> Penalty fine is £160 per parent/carer per child payable in 28 days reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days. Non-payment of the Penalty Notice may result in prosecution in the Magistrates court under s4441 or 4441A Education Act 1966. Any second fine will automatically be charged at higher rate of £160 with no option to make a reduced payment. Further enforcement action will be via prosecution under s4441 or 4441A Education Act 1996.

Any leave of absence that is not authorised is very likely to result in the issuing of Penalty Notice Fine by the London Borough of Merton, where the child is of compulsory school age.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice will take into account:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling 10-week period
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where a pupil is suspended or excluded and is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

#### **6. Attendance monitoring**

The school will

- Monitor attendance and absence data half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing board.

## **6.2 Analysing attendance**

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

## **6.3 Using data to improve attendance**

The school will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers, and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies
- The headteacher, attendance officer and Education Welfare Officer meet every 3-4 weeks to monitor the attendance of all pupils and the reasons for absence are investigated and followed up.
- If a child's attendance has fallen below 95% and there is no clear, valid explanation for the fall in attendance (eg a single illness/ necessary medical appointments where evidence has been provided), school will write a letter to parents/carers explaining that attendance has dropped below 95% and that school is monitoring attendance.
- If a child's attendance has fallen below 90%, parents and carers will be written to again to make them aware that their child's attendance has fallen below 90%; the local authority will be alerted. Parents/carers may be asked to meet with the Headteacher and or EWO to discuss the support that can be offered and what the next steps are in ensuring the attendance improves. An attendance contract meeting will be offered.
- Questions that will need to be considered-
  - What are the barriers to good attendance?
  - What actions will be put in place to support attendance?
  - Is there anything school can do to support attendance?
- An attendance target will be set for the next three weeks.

## **6.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence**

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school and local authority considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance
- Monitor the pupil's attendance closely and work in partnership with parents/local services to increase attendance

## **7. Working with Parents/Carers**

It is by home and school working together that we can ensure the best outcomes for children. We ask that parents work in partnership with us to promote good attendance, punctuality and pupil well-being. If parents/carers have concerns about their child's attendance we would encourage them to make contact with school at the earliest opportunity.

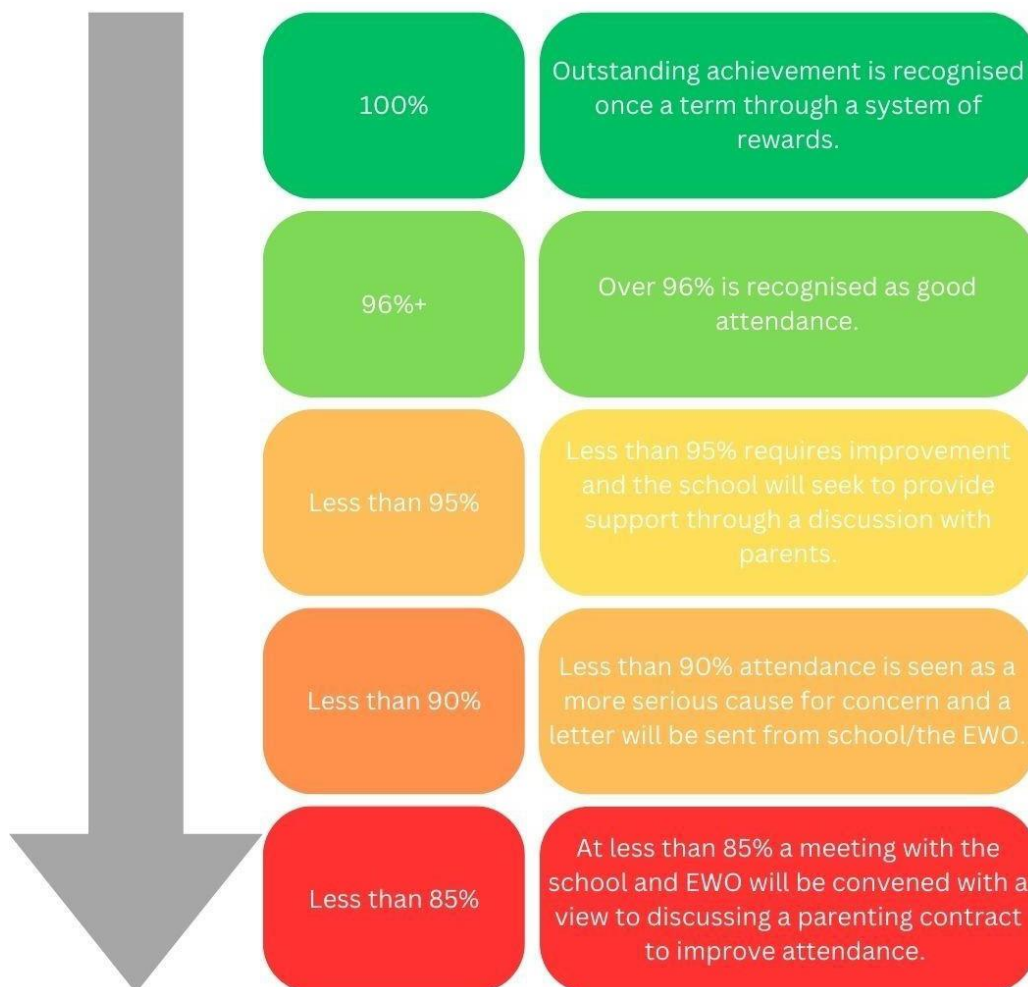
If despite persistent attempts to work with parents/carers, there continues to be a lack of engagement, then a referral to the Merton Children's Family Hub or legal procedures may be followed to secure engagement and improved school attendance.

### **Attendance Contracts**

An attendance contract may be offered to support an improvement in attendance, and is a written agreement between the relevant parties, that may include the School, Parent(s), Pupil(s), and School's Education Welfare Officer (EWO).

Parenting Contracts should be in place for a minimum of 3 months and a maximum of 12 months. The aim is to offer support by listening to the reasons for absence and difficulties that prevent regular school attendance during a meeting with the Parents, Child, School staff and EWO where realistic achievable targets can be set. If there is no improvement against the targets set after 4 weeks the Parenting Contract can close.

The table below sets out the attendance targets and at what stage parents/carers will be contacted about their child's attendance.



Parents/carers should be advised that from September 2015 the Government have categorised those pupils who have attendance of 90% and below as 'Persistent Absence' pupils (P.A.).

The Cherrywood Federation will be specifically targeting this cohort of pupils, in an effort to improve their attendance in the future. The table below shows the learning time lost against percentage attendance figures.

Attendance during one school year	Equivalent days	Equivalent sessions	Equivalent Weeks	Equivalent lessons missed
95%	9 days	18 sessions	1.4 weeks	45 lessons
90%	19 days	38 sessions	3.4 weeks	95 lessons
85%	29 days	58 sessions	5.4 weeks	145 lessons
80%	36 days	72 sessions	7.1 weeks	180 lessons
75%	48 days	96 sessions	9.3 weeks	240 lessons

## 8. Strategies for Improving Attendance

### Supporting Pupils

We recognise that some pupils may have attendance problems that could be caused by a variety of factors which may include chronic illness; anxiety; family issues etc. We do not want any of our pupils becoming EBSA (Emotionally based school avoidance) and so we aim to support pupils in a variety of ways including:

- Interviews with parents or carers
- Talking to children and supporting them to come into school in the mornings with 1:1 transitional support
- Pastoral Support Programmes
- Individual Support Programmes.
- Referral to a range of external agencies

### We promote good attendance across the school by

- Putting class attendance on the newsletter every week
- Celebrating termly attendance with awards in assembly
- End of year attendance awards

## 9. Policy Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum every two years by the Headteacher. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

## 10. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- › Safeguarding policy
- › Behaviour policy
- › Supporting Children with Medical Needs

## **Appendix 1**

## **DfE Attendance Codes**

DfE guidance states the following codes are to be used on the register. Further information relating to the application of codes can be found here:

Registration Code	Description	Physical meaning
Code /\	Present in attendance	Present at the school / = morning session \ = afternoon session
Code B	Attending any other approved educational activity	
Code D	Dual Registered	This code will be used if a pupil is registered at two schools.
Code G	Holiday not granted by the school	The school has not granted a leave of absence and the pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday. A school cannot grant a leave of absence retrospectively. <i>If the parent did not apply in advance, leave of absence should not be granted.</i>
Code K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	
Code L	Late arrival before the register is closed	
Code N	Reason for absence not yet provided	
Code O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	
Code P	Approved sporting activity	This code will be used in times of approved sporting activities in school times, i.e. — training sessions, trials and sporting events.
Code U	Arrived late to school after register closed. <i>(This is 9.10am for both Hatfeild and Joseph Hood Primary Schools)</i>	
Code V	Educational visits and trips	
Code W	Work Experience	
Code Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel	
Code Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed	
Code Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed	
Code Y5	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention	
Code Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law	
Code Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	
Code #	Planned whole school closure	
Authorised Absences		
Code C	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstance	This code will be used for any authorised non-medical reasons for a child's absence from school, i.e. — family funeral. Generally, a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation would not constitute an exceptional circumstance.
Code C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.	
Code C2	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable	
Code E	Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made	
Code I	Illness	Schools can request medical evidence from parents/carers if they feel the authenticity of an illness is in doubt.
Code J1	Interview	This code will be used when it has been agreed that the pupil can miss school to

		attend an interview or entrance exam
Code M	Medical or dental appointments	Parents/Carers are encouraged to arrange appointments out of school hours but the school will authorise if confirmation of the appointment is provided.
Code R	Religious Observation	This code is used to cover major religious festivals during term-time. The school will only authorise one day absence for religious events.
Code S	Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination	
Code X	Not required to be in school (not compulsory school age)	



## APPENDIX 2

# Cherrywood Federation Hatfeild and Joseph Hood Primary School

## ABSENCE AND EXCEPTIONAL LEAVE POLICY

The Governors of the Cherrywood Federation believe that leave of absence during term time should be avoided as it can have a damaging effect on a student's education and overall achievement. However, it is recognised that on occasions there may be extenuating or compassionate reasons that justify such leave.

**The School Attendance (Pupil Regulations) (England) Regulations 2024** state that head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Head teachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

With regard to the regulation outlined above the school policy is as follows:

1. Parents must request leave for exceptional circumstances as far in advance as possible.
2. The request should be made in writing using the leave of absence form. (Available from the school office) Verbal requests will be recorded in writing.
3. This must include the reason why you feel that it is necessary to take a leave of absence. This may include any extenuating or compassionate reasons, including evidence of circumstances such as medical certificate or letter from employers.

On receipt of an application for leave on the appropriate form together with any supporting documentation, consideration will be given to the circumstance. A letter outlining the decision of the school will be sent to you within 7 days.

Any leave of absence that is not authorised is very likely to result in a Penalty Notice being issued and/or prosecution under s4441 Education Act 1996, by the London Borough of Merton. The Penalty Notice carries a fine of £160.



**LONDON BOROUGH OF MERTON**

**Request for Leave of Absence for exceptional circumstances during Term Time**

It is not advisable to take your child/ren on a leave of absence during term time as this causes disruption to their education. Schools must follow the law in this regard and may only grant leave in exceptional circumstances if certain criteria are fulfilled.

**School Attendance (Pupil Regulations) (England) Regulations 2024**

- **Leave of Absence in exceptional circumstances is authorised at the discretion of the Head teacher.** (This is **not an automatic right** of parents/guardians)
- You should not normally take your child(ren) on a leave of absence during the school term.
- **Please do not book your leave of absence until authority is given.**
- Each request for leave of absence will be considered individually, taking into account the circumstances of the request and any supporting evidence provided.
- If the absence is approved by the Head Teacher you will be advised as to how many days the Head teacher has approved for your child’s absence.
- If the school does not agree the absence and you take the leave without permission or your child is absent for more than the agreed number of days the absence will be unauthorised.
- Leave of absence taken without the authorisation of the school may lead to your child(ren) being referred to the Education Welfare Service and the possibility of statutory action and a fine/prosecution

**In order for your application for absence to be considered, please complete below:**

Name(s) of Child(ren).....

Form/Year-----

Home address:

.....  
.....

Dates of absence: From..... To:.....

Reason for request (**additional evidence may be required**)/Who is travelling?

.....  
.....

Signed: Parent/Guardian .....

Email address:..... Mobile phone number:.....

Date form submitted:.....

The above request for leave of absence in term time for .....  
has/has not been authorised. If authorised, your child/ren should return to school  
on:.....

Signed..... Headteacher.....

School Data Checklist:

For School Office Use Only

<b>Pupil's name</b>	
<b>Previous leave of absence requested/taken (last 2 years)</b>	
<b>Nature of exceptional circumstances and evidence provided</b>	
<b>No of days granted (if any)</b>	



### Appendix 3: Attendance contract

Name of Pupil			Class	
Parent's names				
Attendance this academic year			Attendance in the last four weeks	
<b>AREAS OF CONCERN</b>				
Please tick as appropriate	Y	N	Please tick as appropriate	N
Alleged bullying			Peer/staff relationships	
Medical			Academic	
Home issues			Behaviour/Attitude	
Transport			Community/others	
Other agency involvement			Please detail	
<b>DETAIL OF AREAS OF CONCERN &amp; ANY RELEVANT INFORMATION</b>				
Early Help offered ? (If so, give details)				

<b>AGREED ACTIONS</b>			
<b>Attendance Target start date:</b>		<b>Minimum of 90% over two weeks</b>	
Medical evidence to authorise absences ( appointment cards / hospital letters etc)			
Review Date		School	
Parent's signature		Other agency	
Headteacher signature		Date	