

Ickniel School

Attendance policy

***‘Children with special needs have the right to special care.’
Article 23 UNCRRC***

‘Children have the right to an education.’ Article 28 UNCRRC

Ickniel School... “your journey matters”

Ickniel School Values Statement

Ickniel School is passionate about providing an inclusive education. We value all students as unique and nurture their talents. We enable students to achieve to their best ability in a safe environment and to grow into the finest individuals they can be.

Our inclusive practice can be defined as attitudes, approaches and strategies taken to ensure that all our pupils are included in the learning environment. We ensure that all pupils are listened to, openly valued, safe and have the confidence to participate in all activities.

Ickniel School strives to remove barriers to learning, to celebrate diversity and through this we encourage and support a society of equality, acceptance and mutual respect.

By valuing and respecting human diversity, Ickniel School fosters a sense of community and belonging, enabling all: children, teenagers and adults, to participate in every area of life possible.

Policy approved and adopted: September 2020

Person(s) responsible for implementing and monitoring the policy:

Headteacher :- Sean Cannon

Due for review: September 2026

National guidance

School attendance is subject to various education laws and this school attendance policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by the

Department for Education and Hampshire County Council. This Attendance policy is also consistent with the following school policies:

- admissions
- anti-bullying
- child protection
- exclusion
- safeguarding
- special educational needs
- Teaching & Learning
- Behaviour

The level of attendance & punctuality expected from all our pupils is included in our school's home-school agreement which parents must sign following their child's admission to a school. It is very important therefore that you make sure that your child attends regularly and this Policy sets out how together we will achieve this. This policy will be annually publicised in writing for all staff, parents and pupils via the school website.

Rationale / Statement of Intent:

For a child to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance is essential and expected from our pupils. However, at Icknield School the special and individual needs of our children are taken into account when authorising absence for medical appointments and respite.

We are committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all our pupils/ students and endeavour to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome. Parents and pupils play a part in making our school so successful. Every child has a right to access the education to which he/she is entitled. Parents and teachers share the responsibility for supporting and promoting school attendance and punctuality for all.

Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance. For our children to take full advantage of the educational opportunities offered it is important your child is at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. The routines children develop around attendance and punctuality support the development of their understanding of time. Regular attendance at school also provides a sense of security, reducing anxiety and promoting positive behaviour.

Every child has a right to access the education to which they are entitled. Parents and teachers share the responsibility for supporting and promoting excellent school attendance and punctuality for all. It is our duty to aim to achieve 100% attendance for all children.

Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

Good attendance is important because:

- Statistics show a direct link between under-achievement and attendance below 95%
- Regular attenders make better progress, both socially and academically
- Regular attenders find school routines, school work and friendships easier to cope with
- Regular attenders find learning more satisfying
- Regular attenders are more successful in transferring between primary, secondary school, higher education and employment or training
- Regular attendance of SEN and vulnerable pupils is an important protective factor and gives the best opportunity for the appropriate support and needs to be met

Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the following Department for Education's (DFE's) statutory guidance on [Working together to improve school attendance and school attendance parental responsibility measures](#) . The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance.

Part 6 of the [Education Act 1996](#)
Part 3 of the [Education Act 2002](#)
Part 7 of the [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
[The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)
[The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

It also refers to:

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

Promoting Good Attendance & Punctuality

The foundation for good attendance is a strong partnership between the school, parents and the child. It is important that home and school work together to achieve this as set out in the Home/School agreement. Aims

This policy aims to show our commitment to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance, including those laid out in the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#), through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils
- Promoting good attendance and the benefits of 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
- Build strong relationships and work jointly with families, listening to and understanding barriers to attendance and working in partnership with families to remove them
- Develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance
- Have a clear school attendance policy which all staff, pupils and parents understand

- Accurately complete admission and attendance registers and have effective day to day processes in place to follow-up absence
- Regularly monitor and analyse attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require support with their attendance and put strategies in place
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities, and other partners when absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe
- Be particularly mindful of pupils absent from school due to mental or physical ill health or their special needs and/or disabilities, and provide them with the support that is offered within their Educational Health Care Plan

Roles and Responsibilities:

Headteacher :

At Icknield the headteacher will lead on School Attendance and will direct and co-ordinate the school's work in promoting regular attendance across the school with the staff. The headteacher will;

- Ensure this policy is consistently applied throughout the school
- Set a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Work with staff to ensure effective strategies are put in place to support barriers to attendance
- Work with the Local Authorities SEND (special education needs and/or disabilities) provision to ensure appropriate support is being offered and identified
- Communicate with the local authority SEND when a pupil's attendance has fallen and where their barriers to attendance relate to the pupil's needs
- Build strong relationships with families, parents/carers, listen to and understand any barriers to attendance they may face
- Provide data and reports on attendance to the Governing Body

Admin team:

- Deal with the day-to-day monitoring of the attendance of pupils and follow up on absences where appropriate
- Follow the school's attendance process for tackling absence and poor attendance
- Regularly monitor and analyse attendance and absence data to ensure any issues are identified at an early stage to prevent persistent and severe absenteeism
- Work with the appropriate staff to ensure effective strategies are put in place to support barriers to attendance
- Make referrals to the local authority's Legal Intervention Team for pupil's whose attendance is a concern

Responsibilities of Classroom Staff:

Ensure that all students are registered accurately

- Communicate any concerns or underlying problems that may account for a child's absence.

Responsibilities of Parents and Carers:

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

Parents will:

- Inform the school on the first day of absence and each subsequent day
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Avoid taking their child out of school for non-urgent medical or dental appointments
- Only request leave of absence from school if it is for an exceptional circumstance
- Discuss with the class teacher any planned absences well in advance.
- Support the school with their child in aiming for 100% attendance each year.
- Make sure that any absence is clearly accounted for by phone, dojo or text on the first and subsequent days of absence, or by letter if a phone is unavailable.
- Give reasons which would benefit the individual pupil when requesting a leave of absence

The governing board:

- Is responsible for ensuring school leaders fulfil expectations and meet their statutory duties;
- Recognise and promote the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos;
- Regularly review and challenge attendance data and monitor attendance figures for the whole school.;
- Ensure staff receive adequate training on attendance and will hold the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

3.1. Lateness /Punctuality

- The school day begins at **9.15 am** and all **pupils are expected to be in school as soon as possible after that time**. The register officially closes at 10.00 a.m. and after this time will be recorded as (L)
- Any pupil arriving after the close of registration (10.00 am) will be given a unauthorised late mark (U) in line with County and Department for Education (DFE) guidance. This mark shows them to be onsite, but is legally recorded as an absence
- All lateness is recorded daily. This information will be required by the courts, should a prosecution for non-attendance or lateness be necessary. We recognise that many of our pupils are transported to school by taxi's and mini-buses and that lateness may sometimes be outside of the pupil's control.
- If a pupil is late due to a medical appointment, they will receive an authorised absence coded 'M'.
- Pupils who are consistently late are disrupting not only their own education but also that of the other pupils. On-going and repeated lateness is considered as unauthorised absence and will be subject to legal action (see section 6 for further detail).

Parents, guardians or carers of pupils who have patterns of lateness will be contacted to discuss the importance of good time keeping and how this might be achieved. If lateness persists, parents, guardians or carers will be invited to attend the school and discuss the problem and support offered. If support is not appropriate or is declined and a child has 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence due to lateness recorded in any 10 week period the school or the Hampshire County Council will be required to issue parents with a penalty notice in accordance with Hampshire's Code of Conduct for issuing penalty notices for non-attendance (See section 6 of this policy for further detail).

Please collect your child promptly at the end of the school day. Where late collection is persistent and/or significantly late, the school is obliged to take any uncollected pupil to a place of safety and share concerns as necessary with other agencies. If one is available, the school will place a child into the after school club and provide the parent/Carer with the bill

- If a pupil is late after the close of registration due to a medical appointment, they will receive an authorised absence code 'M'. Please be advised that where possible doctors and dentists appointments should be made outside of school hours or during school holidays

3.2 Recording Attendance:

Legally the register must be marked twice daily. This is once at the start of the school day by 9:30am and again for the afternoon session by 13:30 pm.

3.3 What to do if my child is absent?

First Day Absence

Parents should contact the school on the morning of a child's first absence by telephone if possible or by note given to transport escort. Office staff will telephone parents by midday on the first day of absence if there has been no communication from the home.

Third Day Absence

If a child is not seen and contact has not been established with Icknield School by any of the named parent/carers after three days of absence the school is required to start a child missing in education procedures as set down by Hampshire County Council Guidance. We will make all reasonable enquires to establish contact with parents and the child including making enquires to known friends, wider family

Ten Day's Absence

We have a legal duty to report the absence of any pupils who is absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive days. 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'. Children's Services Staff 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.

Continued or Ongoing Absence

If a pupil misses 10% (3 weeks / 21 sessions) or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason they are defined as **persistent absentees**. Where this absence is authorised the school will regard each case on an individual basis taking into account health and medical needs of the pupil.

Request for Leave of Absence:

Amendments to school attendance regulations were updated and enforced from September 2013: (Pupil registration) (England) regulations state that

Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Headteachers can determine the length of the authorised absence as well as whether absence is authorised at all. The fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional' are rare, significant, or unavoidable which means the event could not reasonably be scheduled at another time. There are no rules on this as circumstances vary from school to school and family to family. There is no legal entitlement for time off in school time to go on holiday, however at Icknield School we would consider each request on an individual basis taking into account the needs of each child and their family. Parents/Carers wishing to apply for leave of absence need to fill in an application form (available from Icknield School office) in advance and before making any travel arrangements.

If term time leave is taken without prior permission from the school, the absence will be unauthorised and if the number of sessions absent hits the thresholds set down action in accordance the code (see the relevant section for detail).

Understanding types of absence – Authorised & Unauthorised:

Pupils are expected to attend school every day for the entire duration of the academic year, unless there is an ***exceptional reason*** for the absence. There are two main categories of absences:

- Authorised Absence: is when the school has accepted the explanation offered as satisfactory justification for the absence, or given approval in advance for such an absence. If no explanation is received, absences cannot be authorised.
- Unauthorised Absence: is when the school has not received a reason for absence or has not approved a child's leave absence from school after a parent's request. This includes:
 - parents giving their children permission to be off school unnecessarily such as for shopping, birthdays, to look after siblings
 - truancy before or during the school day
 - absences which have not been explained

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.

Penalty Notices for Non Attendance and other Legal Measures:

In Education law, parents/carers are committing an offence if they fail to ensure the regular attendance of their child of compulsory school age at the school at which the child is registered, unless the absence has been authorised by the school.

Legal Measures for tackling persistent absence or lateness

Hampshire Schools and Hampshire County Council will use the full range of legal measures to secure good attendance. Legal measures will only be considered through a referral to Hampshire's Attendance Legal Panels where:

- 1. The child or family do not require the support from any agency to improve the attendance**
- 2. The child has 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence in any continuous 100 session period, and parents are complicit in the child's absence.**

The following legal measures are for pupils of compulsory school age who are registered at a school:

- Parenting contracts set at Education Planning Meetings
- Parenting orders
- Penalty notices
- Education Supervision Orders
- Prosecution

Where a child has **unauthorised absence** the school must enforce Hampshire's Code of Conduct for issuing Penalty Notices or follow its guidance on other Legal Measures for Non-Attendance. The Code of Conduct is a statutory document that ensures that powers for legal sanctions are applied consistently and fairly across all schools and their families within the authority. A copy is available from <http://www3.hants.gov.uk/education/hias/learning-behaviour-attendance/attendance-guidance-for-parents/possible-penalties.htm>

7.1 If a child is reluctant to come to school

If a child is reluctant to come to school we will recommend a visit from the family support worker in the first instance to plan for successful school attendance.

7.2 Absence through child participation in Public Performances, including theatre, film or TV work & Modelling.

Parents of a child performer can seek leave of absence from school for their child to take part in a performance. They must contact the Headteacher to discuss the nature and frequency of the work, whether the child has a valid performance licence and whether education will be provided by the employer during any future leave of absence. Any absence recorded as part of a child's participation in a public performance is recorded as C an authorised absence.

7.3 Gypsy Roma Traveller Showman and Showman families

Absence of a child from a traveller family that has left the area may be authorised if the absence is for **work purposes only** and it is believed that the family intends to return. To ensure the continuity of learning for Traveller children, dual registration is allowed. That means that a school cannot remove a Traveller child from the school roll while they are travelling. When the Traveller is away the home school holds the place open and records the absence as authorised through the T code. Distance Learning packs for traveller children are not an alternative to attendance at school

For further advice and guidance on Attendance & GRT and Showman see County Guidance at: <http://documents.hants.gov.uk/childrens-services/HIAS/Promotingpupilattendanceandrecordingabsence-Section6.pdf>

Further support & Guidance is available from Hampshire's EMTAS Service

Record preservation

School registers are legal documents. We will ensure compliance with attendance regulations by keeping attendance records for at least 3 years. Computer registers will be preserved as electronic back-ups or microfiche copies.

Appendices

The Law

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 appertains to children who are of compulsory school age and are registered at school is contained within this Act.

Part V1 Section 444 contains the details of when an offence is committed if a child fails to attend school.

Register and Admission Roll keeping.

The legal requirements are found in: The Education [Pupil Registration] (England) Regulations 2006

Guidance documents on attendance.

The following DfE documents are used to guide attendance recording.

Absence and Attendance codes (Guidance for Schools and Local Authorities)

Keeping Pupil Registers (Guidance on applying the Education Pupil Registration Regulations)

These and other guidance documents are available on the DfE website

Hampshire County Council Guidance is available on Hantsweb at

<http://www3.hants.gov.uk/education/hias/learning-behaviour-attendance/lba-resources-for-schools/atten-guidance/attendance-guidance-for-schools.htm>

Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's [guidance on school attendance](#).

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
Attending a place other than the school		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority

V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
Absent – leave of absence		
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
S	Study leave	Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
C2	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
C	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
Absent – other authorised reasons		
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a 'mobile child' who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
E	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause		
Q	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school

Y1	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
Y3	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open
Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
Y5	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In police detention • Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or • Detained under a sentence of detention
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
Y7	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
Absent – unauthorised absence		
G	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
Administrative codes		
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered
#	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays