



**HURLINGHAM  
SCHOOL  
AND NURSERY**  
EST. 1947

## **Attendance Policy**

## 1. Introduction

At Hurlingham School, we believe that regular and punctual attendance is essential for pupils' academic success, well-being and overall development. Following the Department for Education's (DfE) statutory guidance, *Working Together to Improve School Attendance* (August 2024), this policy reinforces the school's commitment to improving attendance through a whole-school approach. It reflects our expectations for attendance, our support structures, and legal responsibilities to intervene when attendance is at risk.

This policy applies to all students, including Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Nursery and Reception pupils. We aim to ensure that every pupil has the opportunity to succeed by attending school regularly.

## 2. A Whole-School Approach to Attendance

Hurlingham School is dedicated to fostering a culture in which attendance is everyone's responsibility. All members of the school community—including pupils, parents, staff, and the governing board—are expected to prioritise attendance.

- **Staff Responsibility:** All staff at Hurlingham School, including teachers, support staff, and leadership, are responsible for promoting and ensuring regular attendance.
- **Communication:** The importance of attendance is communicated and promoted regularly to parents and pupils, with a focus on ensuring that every child attends school consistently and punctually.

## 3. Attendance Expectations

- Pupils are expected to attend school every day during term time, arriving on time and staying for the full school day. For the absence of doubt, the start of the day is listed in the Parent Portal, with specific dismissal times for each year group. Registration takes place in the morning, and in the afternoon.
- We expect all pupils to have a minimum of 95% attendance
- Nursery pupils, although not of compulsory school age, are encouraged to attend their scheduled sessions consistently.
- Parents/guardians are strongly discouraged from planning holidays during term time and should ensure that their children attend school unless there are valid reasons for absence.

## 4. Absence Reporting

- **Illness or Unforeseen Absence:** If your child is unable to attend school due to illness or another unforeseen reason, please notify the school by telephone or through the Parent Portal before the start of the school day. If we do not hear from you, we will contact you to ensure your child's safety.
- **Planned Absence:** For medical appointments or other planned absences, please notify the school in writing at least five days in advance. Requests for exceptional absences (for reasons other than illness, medical appointments, or religious observances) must be made to the Head at least two weeks in advance.
- **Authorised Absence:** Includes illness, medical/dental appointments (where unavoidable during school hours), religious observances, and exceptional circumstances. Medical evidence may be required for absences of more than 5 consecutive days.
- **Unauthorised Absence:** Includes holidays during term time or absences without a valid reason.

Fixed Penalty Notices may be issued for unauthorised absences, following consultation with the local authority.

## **5. Early Intervention and Support**

In line with DfE statutory guidance, we are committed to identifying and addressing attendance issues early.

- **Response to unexplained absence:** Should a child be absent from school without explanation, a first day call will take place from the school office to ascertain the nature of the absence. This will then be recorded against the school register.
- **Regular Monitoring:** Attendance data is monitored half termly to identify any emerging patterns of absenteeism. The school will reach out to parents as soon as an issue is detected.
- **Support for Families:** Where a pupil's attendance drops below 90%, the school will engage with families to offer support, working with local authorities where necessary. Our goal is to remove barriers to attendance and improve punctuality and regular attendance for every child.

## **6. Leave of Absence**

We discourage any leave of absence during term time, as outlined in the *Working Together to Improve School Attendance* guidance, unless absolutely necessary. Absences for holidays will not be authorised during the school term.

- **Requests for exceptional leave** must be submitted in writing to the Head for review and approval. Such leave will only be granted in very rare circumstances.

## **7. Legal Intervention and Persistent Absenteeism**

Hurlingham School will follow the latest DfE guidance on persistent absenteeism, defined as attendance falling below 90%. When early intervention efforts do not result in improved attendance, the following actions will be taken:

- **Legal Interventions:** In cases of persistent absenteeism, and where support available is not appropriate, not successful, or not engaged with, Hurlingham School may collaborate with local authorities to initiate legal interventions, including penalty notices and prosecution, as per statutory requirements.
- **Unauthorised Absence Reporting:** The school is required to report unauthorised absences of 10 consecutive days or more to the local authority. Additionally, failure to attend regularly will also be reported.

## **8. Monitoring and Responsibilities of Leadership**

The school's leadership team, including the governing board, is accountable for maintaining high attendance standards, and the nominated Senior Attendance Champion is the Deputy Head Pastoral and Operations (Amelia Shore: [amelia.shore@hurlinghamschool.co.uk](mailto:amelia.shore@hurlinghamschool.co.uk))

- **Data Review:** School leaders review attendance data on a termly basis and set specific attendance targets for the school. These targets are shared with staff, parents, and pupils.
- **Staff Accountability:** Staff are held accountable for maintaining and improving attendance levels, with regular performance reviews incorporating attendance outcomes.

## **9. Partnership with Local Authorities**

In compliance with the DfE's *Working Together to Improve School Attendance* guidelines, Hurlingham School works closely with local authorities to improve attendance.

- **Sharing Information:** We share attendance information with local authorities, particularly when pupils are at risk of persistent absenteeism or when they move to a different area or school.
- **Collaborative Approach:** In cases where persistent absenteeism or educational neglect is suspected, the school will work collaboratively with local authorities and other agencies to support the family, remove any barriers to attendance and ensure the child's right to education.

## **10. Children Missing Education**

Hurlingham School follows statutory requirements for notifying local authorities when a child of compulsory school age is absent for 10 consecutive school days without authorization or has left the school without providing information about their next educational placement.

- The school will also follow legal guidelines for removing a child's name from the school register when they are believed to be missing education or when they are permanently excluded.

Hurlingham School is required to make a return to the local authority (a 'sickness return') where a pupil of compulsory school age has been recorded in the attendance register as absent using code I (illness) and the school have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil will be, or will have been unable to attend school because of illness for at least 15 school days during the school year, whether consecutive or not.

## **11. Punctuality**

Punctuality is critical for learning. Parents are expected to ensure that their children arrive at school on time every day.

- **Recording Lateness:** Late arrivals will be recorded and reviewed weekly, and persistent lateness will be addressed with parents.

## **12. Monitoring and Review**

Attendance will be monitored half termly by the Pastoral team. This policy will be reviewed annually, taking into account any changes to statutory requirements or best practices.

Hurlingham School's Attendance Policy takes account of the specific needs of certain pupils and pupil cohorts. This policy will be applied fairly and consistently, but in doing so the school will always consider the individual needs of pupils and their families who have specific barriers to attendance. The School has clear regard to their obligations under the Equality Act 2010.

## **13. Roles and Responsibilities**

- **Parents/Guardians:** Ensure their child attends regularly and punctually and inform the school of absences.
- **Pupils:** Attend school regularly, arrive on time, and participate fully in the school day.
- **School:** Monitor attendance, communicate with parents about attendance issues, and provide support.
- **Local Authority:** Provide support and resources to address persistent absenteeism, including enforcement actions where necessary.

## **14. Conclusion**

Hurlingham School places great value on every pupil's education and recognises that regular attendance is key to achieving their full potential. Through collaboration between parents, pupils, staff, and external partners, we aim to maintain high standards of attendance, ensuring every child benefits from the opportunities we offer.