



HOMEFIELD PREPARATORY SCHOOL

Attendance Policy

This policy also applies to the EYFS

Updated	Review Date	Version
September 2024	September 2026	2024.04

Signed: Ms M Gardiner Boiling (Chair of Governors)

This policy is written in conjunction with *Working Together to Improve School Attendance (2024)*. Attendance is the essential foundation to positive outcomes for all pupils, including their safeguarding and welfare, and should therefore be seen as everyone's responsibility in school. That starts with the Assistant Head Pastoral and Senior Attendance Champion but includes all school staff and the Board of Governors.

Working with families

At Homefield Preparatory School we see education as a partnership between the family and the school. The school is committed to providing the highest quality of education for boys and we look to parents to support this objective. We recognise that securing good attendance cannot be seen in isolation, and that our robust policies and practice will support our efforts here. This includes curriculum, behaviour, bullying, special educational needs support, pastoral and mental health and wellbeing, and effective use of resources.

The school understands that some boys may find it more difficult than others to come to school. Through our curriculum, mental health and wellbeing provision, Special Educational Needs support, pastoral care, rigorous safeguarding procedures and a zero-tolerance stance on bullying and unacceptable behaviour, we aim to create an environment where boys want to attend school. Although we expect high standards of attendance and monitor this, we also want to listen and understand the reasons for any absence and provide support to families where necessary.

Working with the local authority

We work in liaison with the local authority and children's services (Sutton Children's Services and Cognus, for example) as appropriate, reporting both general attendance data and that related to specific cases where it is of benefit to the boy. This includes, our termly Targeted Support Meeting with Cognus. We also provide the local authority with the names and addresses of all pupils of compulsory school age who fail to attend school regularly or have been absent for a continuous period of ten school days, where their absence has been classified as unauthorised on at least a monthly basis, and also provide the local authority with the full name and address of all pupils of compulsory school age who have been absent from school due to illness when the school has reasonable grounds to believe will miss 15 days consecutively or cumulatively because of sickness.

Times of the school day

All boys are required to be in school by 8.20am, when the school day begins. To support with this, we open our gates at 8:00am each day, and then have a 20-minute window for boys to arrive. Before 8:00am, the school provides free wraparound care from 7:30am in the form of our Morning Sports & Activities Club. For wraparound care from 7:15am onwards, the school provides a Breakfast Club, where boys eat breakfast and then join in the sports and activities afterwards. The charge for our 7:15am Breakfast Club is £6. The school day ends at 3.45pm for the Lower School (Full-Time Nursery, Reception, Years 1 and 2), and at 4.00pm for the Upper School (Years 3 to 8), although many pupils remain later to take part in extra-curricular activities under the supervision of a member of school staff or peripatetic staff. After-school wraparound care is provided by Orchard Childcare for a fee and finishes at 6:00pm.

Pupils are not allowed to leave the site during the school day, unless accompanied by a member of staff, for a trip, fixture or event, the dates of which will have been sent to parents in advance. Trips departing from school or arriving back at school outside normal school hours require parents to complete and sign a permission form. Trips taking place during normal school hours do not require a signed permission form, but parents will be notified in writing by the school in advance.

Reporting absence

If a boy is ill, parents should email absence@homefieldprep.school or telephone the school before 8.30am on each day of absence, unless the illness requires a specified period off school, in which case parents can notify staff of this on the first day of absence. The school will always telephone parents on each day of unexplained absence to make sure that the boy has not suffered an accident.

The school always sends parents the term dates well in advance so that parents can arrange their holidays without disrupting their son's education. Requests for absence must be made in writing and reach the school at least seven days in advance (except in an emergency, when parents are asked to telephone the school before 8:30am). Requests for exceptional absence (i.e. for days other than religious festivals, medical or dental appointments or illness) should be sent at least two weeks in advance. Forms for requesting a leave of absence are available from the Front Office and are on the school website: <https://www.homefield.sutton.sch.uk/images/uploads/general/New-Form-Leave-of-Absence-during-Term-Time.pdf>

Please note that it is school policy not to allow holiday to be taken during term time. If there are exceptional circumstances, an absence form must be completed, and the Head will consider whether to authorise the absence.

From the Autumn Term 2024, boys' reports will present their absence and lateness record.

It is essential for boys to get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, wellbeing, and wider life chances. The pupils with the highest attainment at the end of key stage 2 have higher rates of attendance over the key stage compared to those with the lowest attainment (please see *Working Together to Improve School Attendance (2024)* for detailed statistics). For the most vulnerable pupils, regular attendance is also an important protective factor and the best opportunity for needs to be identified and support provided.

Registration

All pupils are registered twice a day. In the morning they are registered by their Form Tutor, and in the afternoon, after lunch, they are registered by the subject teacher who is teaching the lesson after lunch break. Attendance data is stored in our electronic database, so that absences can be followed up and that attendance can be monitored and analysed by school staff, led by the Assistant Head Pastoral and Senior Attendance Champion, SLT and any other relevant staff.

All pupils are expected to attend school, on time, on every term date unless they are unwell or special permission for absence has been granted. Communication will be sent to parents whose children are frequently late for registration, informing them of the importance of punctual attendance.

Process for dealing with repeated absence

The school records whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised and takes this into account when applying the following process. Although we analyse boys' attendance record on a case-by-case basis and may escalate a case at any stage in our process, it is likely that support will be sought from the local authority (Sutton Children's Services or Cognus), and other partners, where a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe. Please see "working with the local authority" for further information.

Stage 1

Student with attendance below 95% for the academic year to date.

- Action - Contact by email, telephone or letter from Administration Office to advise that the student's attendance is becoming a cause for concern.

Stage 2

Student with attendance below 90% for the academic year to date.

- Action - Contact by email, telephone or letter from Head of Year to advise that the student's attendance is becoming a cause for concern.
- Support - Discussion of student's circumstances and an agreement to improve attendance.

Stage 3

Student with attendance below 85% for the academic year to date.

- Action - Meeting between parents/carers and Assistant Head Pastoral to discuss student/family circumstances including possible consideration of amendments to the student's academic and co-curricular programme. School to report/seek advice from the local authority. Actions agreed documented.
- Support - Monitoring and attendance targets put in place. Additional support applied as necessary.

Stage 4

Student with attendance below 80% for the academic year to date.

- Action - Head to carry out a review of the student's place in the school, in accordance with the school's Terms and Conditions.
- Support - Pastoral support, Education Welfare Officer, GP or counsellor.
- Support - Agreement of a high-priority attendance improvement plan/pastoral support/counselling.