



Attendance and Registration Policy

This policy represents the agreed principles for School Attendance. This policy has been agreed by Governors and the Headteacher.

Covid-19 Update to the Attendance Policy (May 2020):

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-school-closures/guidance-for-schools-about-temporarily-closing#attendance>

- Schools closed for the majority of children on 20th March 2020. Children are learning from home, so attendance at school is not required
- Children of key workers and vulnerable children have been continuing to attend school (all other children have not been attending school). Essential workers are defined by the government in the following document: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision>
- Since Monday 23rd March, as advised by the Secretary of State for Education, we ceased completing our normal school registers – registers were marked with ‘#’ indicating partial of whole school closure
- Instead of normal registers we have instead been completing a spreadsheet of attendance just for those children attending school. A numerical summary of information from the spreadsheet is sent daily to the DfE www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-attendance-recording-for-educational-settings

When school reopens

- When school partially reopens (no earlier wc 1st June 2020), attendance at school is not compulsory. The Secretary of State wrote to Directors of Children’s Services setting out the department’s expectation that no parent is penalised for their child’s non-attendance due to Covid-19
- Children with underlying medical conditions, children who themselves are clinically extremely vulnerable or live with someone who is clinically extremely vulnerable, should continue to learn from home rather than returning to school
- Once school partially reopens, we will resume completing our normal school registers and will continue to complete the numerical summary of attendance to the DfE, daily
- Calls will be made regarding non-attendance, for any child whose parents indicated that they would be returning to school
- Children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 will be attending in two sessions – Session 1: 9.15-11.45am; Session 2: 12.45-3.15pm
- Children of key workers and vulnerable children can attend school day (i.e. 9am-315pm)
- Arrival times will be staggered, so children can arrive at school anytime within the 15 minute window: 9-9.15am or 12.30-12.45pm
- Registration will take place in class and registers will be closed 15 minutes after the formal start time of school, i.e. registers will close at 9.30am and 1pm
- The following registration codes will be used from 1st June 2020:

- Children who attend school with their class/year group, or with the key worker/vulnerable group of children, will be marked as present, as usual
- 'X' will be entered in the register for each child where school is not open for their particular class/year group (except if they are a key worker/vulnerable child who is attending school, in which case they should be marked as present in school)
- Children that attend school (either with their class, or in the key worker/vulnerable group) will be marked in as usual for the session they attend. For the session they don't need to attend, they will be marked as 'X'
- Children who do not attend school despite their class/year groups being open, will be marked as 'C' .

Fixed Penalty Notices

- The Secretary of State wrote to Directors of Children's Services setting out the department's expectation that Hertfordshire County Council suspends any penalty notice action or prosecutions for Covid-19 related absence with immediate effect. HCC will also not issue new Penalty Notice applications and any cases from 16th March 2020 will be withdrawn

School Aims:

Our school community (children, staff, parents and governors) aims to:

- Learn and grow together within the safe, caring and happy environment;
- Encourage achievement in all aspects of school life;
- Motivate all children with a broad and challenging curriculum;
- Treat everyone with honesty, respect and tolerance;

At Shepherd Primary School, we want the whole school community – governors, staff, parents and pupils to be committed to high standards of attendance and punctuality.

Good attendance helps the children in this school community to maximise their learning. This policy will support us all to achieve high levels of attendance and punctuality.

Shepherd Primary School aims to encourage and assist all pupils to achieve excellent levels of attendance and punctuality to enable all pupils to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them and to assist all pupils to achieve.

Shepherd Primary School aims to reduce Persistent Absence in order that all pupils are assisted in reaching their potential.

Section 7 of Education Act 1996 states

Duty of parents to secure education of children of compulsory school age.

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 educational needs he may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise

Expectations

The responsibility for good attendance is shared between school, parents and pupils. All these groups need to understand the expectations which the policy makes of them.

Expectations for School

- to provide a safe learning environment for all children.
- to ensure that records of attendance are maintained according to Government legislation and guidance on a daily basis
- to encourage good attendance and will investigate all unexplained and unjustified absence
- to set a good example in matters of attendance and punctuality
- to follow up all instances of poor attendance and punctuality
- to keep parents informed of their child's attendance/punctuality record As a minimum this will be shared on mid-year and end of year school reports.
- to work closely with parents should attendance or punctuality give cause for concern

Expectations for **Parents:**

- Parents are legally responsible for ensuring their child's regular and punctual attendance
- to ensure that their child attends school regularly, punctually, properly dressed and equipped and in a fit condition to learn
- to instil in their child an appreciation of the importance of attending school regularly
- to inform school on the first day of absence, of the reason for their child's absence from school
- to call the school office by 9am and leave a message on the school absence line to explain their child's absence.
- to avoid arranging family holidays during term time
- to maintain regular communication with school staff where necessary
- to ensure that school are informed promptly of any changes of contact details
- to work in partnership with the school to resolve any issues which may lead to a child's absence

Expectations for **Pupils:**

- to attend school and all of their lessons regularly and punctually
- to hand any note giving reasons for absence to their class teacher
- to be ready to learn
- to not leave the school without permission

Doors open

- School doors open at 8:50am for pupils in years 1-6 and 8:55 for pupils in Reception and Nursery. Pupils may enter the building at that time. Pupils should not arrive at school before 8:30am. Pupils in Nursery, Reception and Years 1 and 2 should be accompanied by a parent/carer until the doors open and they go in to school.

Registration

- Registers are taken at 8:50/8:55am and 1:15pm. Registers close at 9:10am and 1:20. Registers are marked consistently by staff.
- Any pupil arriving after closure of the register will be marked absent for the whole of the session
- Pupils should be called by name and respond in the prescribed formal manner – 'here', 'present' etc.
- Registers will be marked in accordance with DfE guidance

Lateness

- Any pupil arriving after 8:50/8:55am should report to the school office where they will need to be signed in to school by their parent/carer.

- Parents/carers will need to complete a record of lateness statement.
- 'Record of Lateness Statements' will be monitored by the Headteacher and INCO.
- The names of pupils who arrive late will be given to the Headteacher and INCO.
- Parents whose children are regularly late for school, will be contacted by the Headteacher or INCO who will work with the parent(s) to bring about an improvement in punctuality.

Absences

- Parents must provide an explanation for all absences from school by calling each day of absence and following up in writing upon the child's return.
- The Headteacher will decide whether to accept the reason given and to authorise the absence. It is the school and not the parent who authorise absence
- Absence from school may be authorised if it is for the following reasons:
 - Sickness
 - Unavoidable medical/ dental appointments (though these should be made, whenever possible, outside school hours)
 - Days of religious observance
 - Exceptional family circumstances such as bereavement

Following up Absences

- Shepherd Primary School follows up all absences from school
- If no reason has been provided for a pupil's absence by 9am on the first day of absence, a parent of the pupil will be contacted
- If no reason has been provided for a pupil's absence after 3 consecutive days, a letter will be sent to the parent of the pupil
- Parents whose children have more than 5% absence from school in a period of 1 term will be contacted by the Headteacher or INCO who will work with the parent(s) to bring about an improvement in attendance.
- Pupils whose attendance is less than 90% will be referred to the Attendance Improvement Officer as a persistent absentee.

Leaving and returning to School during School Day

- Pupils/parents must notify school staff if the pupil leaves the school site during the school day
- Parents should sign pupils out of school at the school office
- Parents must sign pupils back into school on their return at the school office
- The signing in and out record will be the responsibility of the school secretary in the event of fire

Term Time Holidays — [Appendix 3](#)

- Shepherd Primary School will not authorise family holidays during term time except in exceptional circumstances
- Parents must request [absence](#) for exceptional circumstances in writing to the Headteacher ~~family~~
- A retrospective request for authorisation of a family holiday in term time will not be granted
- ~~Shepherd Primary School treats all requests in the same way, using the Holiday Authorisation Calculation Chart~~
- Shepherd Primary School may interview parents requesting absence in term time

Penalty Notices

At Shepherd Primary School we expect parents to work with us to address attendance problems. If a pupil has at least 15 sessions (half day= 1 session) unauthorised absence in a term (including unauthorised holidays), the Head Teacher may ask the LA to issue a Penalty Notice. The penalty is £60 (per parent, per child) if paid within 28 days of receipt of the notice, rising to £120 (per parent, per child) if paid after 28 days but within 42 days. If the penalty is not paid the LA may prosecute the parents for their child's irregular attendance.

Rewards for good attendance

At Shepherd Primary School, we will reward good attendance by using the 'Herts County Council Award Scheme', weekly class rewards for attendance and punctuality during Celebration assemblies, bi-~~termly~~ [annual](#) trophy awards for good and improved attendance and awarding 'Attendance Ambassadors' in Celebration assemblies.

Integrated Working

Shepherd Primary School works with other agencies and professionals to ensure that our pupils receive all the support available to achieve good attendance.

Shepherd Primary School will demonstrate full commitment to integrated working by:

- using the Common Assessment Framework
- sharing information
- encouraging staff to take on the role of Lead Professional
- working with other agencies and being part of 'teams around the family'.

Working with the Attendance Improvement Officer (AIO)

- Shepherd Primary School works in partnership with the allocated AIO to improve attendance for individual pupils and the whole school
- Information to enable the AIO to carry out an effective consultation visit and/or home visit will be provided by the Headteacher or INCO.
- Shepherd Primary School will endeavour to ensure that any information which could assist the AIO to keep safe is given to them
- Shepherd Primary meets the AIO on an agreed schedule
- Shepherd Primary School works with individual pupils and their parents to improve poor attendance. When attendance does not improve sufficiently, and after discussion with the AIO the school will make a referral to Children, Schools and Families for the AIO to work with the family on a formal basis
- ~~See [Appendix 4](#) for further details of working with the AIO~~

Publication of Information

- Shepherd Primary School shares information on individual pupils' attendance as necessary with parents, pupils and staff
- Shepherd Primary School may provide current attendance statistics on the school website
- Shepherd Primary School may provide attendance information and statistics in newsletters
- Attendance is a standing item on the agenda of school Governors' meetings
- Pupils will be informed about the importance of school attendance through assemblies, displays in school
- The Headteacher will be responsible for ensuring that data collected by DfE is accurate