

New Horizons Seaside Primary

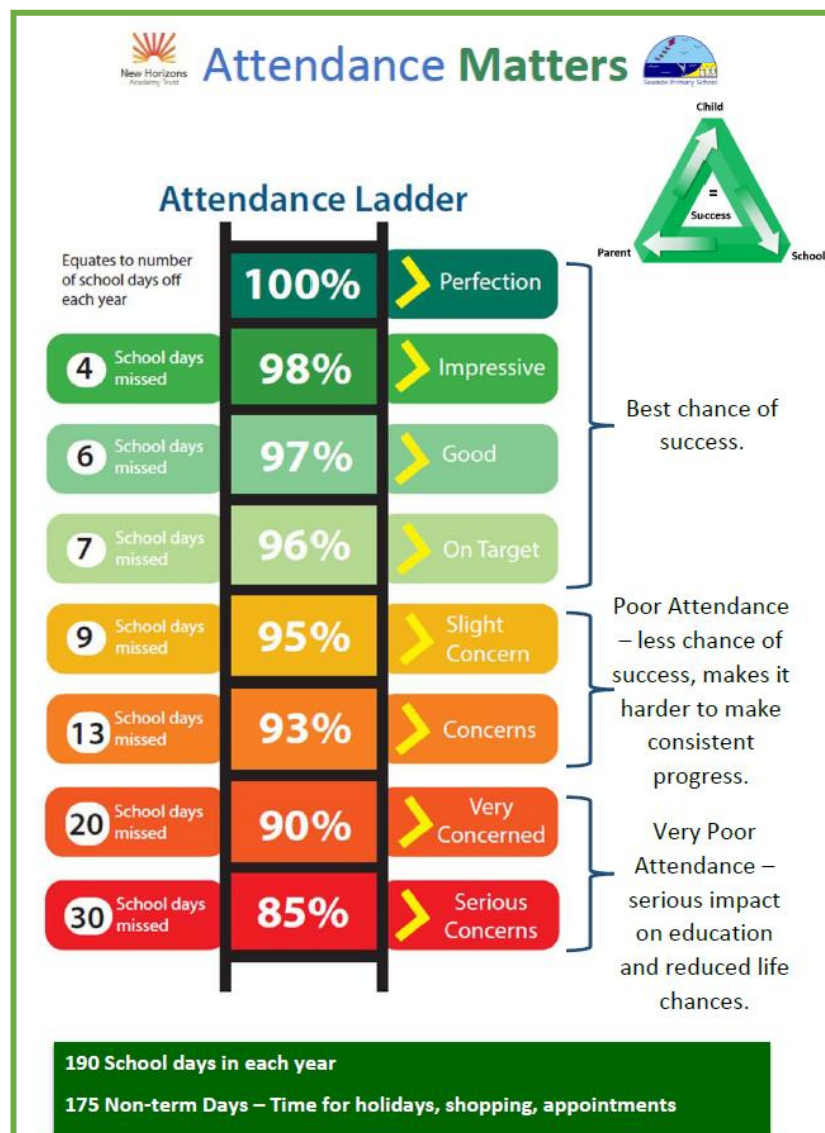
Attendance Policy

Last Review Date:	Sept 2025
Next Review Date:	Sept 2026
Reviewed By:	Mr Lee Murley (Headteacher / Chief Executive Officer)

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Introduction

1.1 The minimum National Expectation for school attendance is **96%**. As an Outstanding school, we pride ourselves on delivering the very best education to your children and we have worked hard to achieve this, so this will remain a school priority. We expect all children on roll to attend every day, when the school is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. We do all we can to encourage the children to attend, inform parents of the importance of attendance (see Attendance Ladder) and to put in place appropriate procedures. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is development of positive attitudes towards school. To this end, we strive to make our school a happy and rewarding experience for all children. In the academic year 2025 – 2026, we will continue to explore ways to reward those children whose attendance is very good. We will also make the best provision we can for those children who, for whatever reason, are prevented from coming to school.



- 1.2 Under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995, the governing body are responsible for making sure the school keeps an attendance register that records which pupils are present at the start of both the morning and the afternoon sessions of the school day. This register will also indicate whether an absence was authorised or unauthorised.

2 Definitions

2.1 Authorised absence

- An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or guardian. For example, if a child is too unwell to be in school and the parent uses the Studybugs app or online to notify the school at the start of each day of absence. If a parent is unable to use the Studybugs app, they may telephone the absence line.
- Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents do not have this authority. Consequently, not all absences supported by parents will be classified as authorised and **illness is not automatically authorised**. For example, if a parent takes a child out of school to go shopping during school hours, this will not mean it is an authorised absence.

2.2 Unauthorised absence - marked in the register as unauthorised ('O' or 'N' codes)

This includes:

- persistent late arrival at school after the register has been taken ('U' codes)
- a holiday in term time, which has not been authorised by the headteacher ('G' codes). The Government has directed that headteachers may now only grant leave for a holiday in term time where there are exceptional circumstances.
- An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of **both** the school and a parent. Therefore, the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent.
- **We need official confirmation of any medical appointments taking place during school time (appointment letter from hospital etc)**

3 If a child is absent

- 3.1 When a child is absent unexpectedly, the class teacher will record the absence in the register, and will inform the school office, which will endeavour to contact a parent or guardian.
- 3.2 If there is any doubt about the whereabouts of a child, the class teacher should take immediate action by notifying the school office. The school will then be in contact straight away with the parent or guardian, in order to check on the safety of the child.

4 Requests for leave of absence

- 4.1 We believe that children need to be in school for all sessions, so that they can make the most progress possible. However, we do understand that there are circumstances under which a parent may legitimately request leave of absence for a child to attend, e.g. a funeral. In this case, parents / guardians need to complete a 'Withdrawal From Learning' form (Appendix A) addressed to Mr Murley, Headteacher. However, requests will only be granted in **exceptional circumstances**. Family holidays will not be granted as exceptional circumstances in line with the West Sussex Attendance Policy (see link below):

5 Long-term absence

- 5.1 When children have an **illness** that means they will be away from school for over five days, if appropriate, the school will do all it can to send material home and/or make work and resources available using Google Classrooms, so that they can keep up with their school work.
- 5.2 If the absence is likely to continue for an extended period, or be a repetitive absence, the school will contact the support services, so that arrangements can be made for the child to be given some tuition outside school.

6 Repeated unauthorised absences

- 6.1 Fixed penalty notices (FPN) will be issued once a child has been absent for **10 sessions (5 school days)** across a 10-school week period. These penalties will be issued by West Sussex to **every parent/carer with a responsibility for the child**. **The cost of a FPN is £160 with the opportunity to pay this at a lower rate of £80 in the first 21 days.**

When absence is related to a holiday, a referral will be made for each child and will incur a FPN per parent, per child.

- 6.2 When a parent has received **two FPNs in a three-year period, the offer of a FPN will not be available after a third referral**. Instead, the matter will either be allocated to an Investigating Officer or referred to the Magistrates' court. **Please note if the absence related to holidays in term time, the case is likely to go before the Magistrates' court.**

7 Awareness and Rewards for good attendance

- 7.1 Each half term, the Year Group with the highest attendance percentage for each month will be given a certificate in the celebration assembly and invited to wear home clothes on a given day.
- 7.2 End of year prizes will also be awarded as follows:
- Four children with 98+% attendance (chosen using random number generator)
- These children will be given a family meal voucher for a local restaurant.

8 Punctuality and Lateness

- 8.1 All children should arrive at school between 8.30am and 8.40am each morning. Registration will be taken at 8.40am. Any child arriving after this time is to be accompanied to the school office by their parent / guardian and asked to complete the Lateness Registration Form.
- 8.2 Between 8.40am and 8.50am the child will be marked 'late'. **Persistent failure to attend school by 8.40am will carry the potential sanction of a Fixed Penalty Notice and referral to Social Services.**
- 8.2 Please note, in line with West Sussex registration requirements, that any child arriving after 8:40am will not be admitted into school until a **Lateness Registration Form** has been completed by the accompanying adult. This is a legal registration requirement.
- 8.4 **Lateness after 8.50am is unauthorised.** Persistent lateness will now be coded as an 'unauthorised absence' which may lead to a Fixed Penalty Notice and may result in a referral to Social Care (Social Services).

9 Attendance targets

- 9.1 The Attendance team reviews attendance data each year. Targets are set to reduce the percentage of children with 95% and below in each category (see Attendance Ladder). This data is shared with parents and the Local Governing Body at the end of each year.
- 10.1 It is the responsibility of the Local Governing Body to monitor overall attendance, and they will request an annual report from the Headteacher/Chief Executive Officer/Attendance Team. The Local Governing Body also has the responsibility for this policy, and for seeing that it is carried out.
- 10.2 The school will keep accurate attendance records on file for a minimum period of three years.
- 10.3 The rates of attendance will be reported to Department for Education (DfE) through the Wonde portal, parents and in the annual governors' report.
- 10.4 The Attendance Team will be responsible for monitoring attendance across the school, and for following up absences in the appropriate way. If there is a longer-term general worry about the attendance of a particular child, this will be reported to the Headteacher/Chief Executive Officer, who will contact the parents or guardians.
- 10.5 This policy will be reviewed by the Local Governing Body every two years, or earlier if considered necessary.



New Horizons Seaside Primary

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WITHDRAWAL FROM LEARNING FORM

Pupils are in school for **190 days** each year.
There are 175 days for holidays and other activities.

96% Attendance is required.

95% attendance means 50 missed lessons. This means a child has missed 9 days.

90% attendance means 100 missed lessons. This means a child has missed 20 days.

Please note the following;

- Regular school attendance (96%) is vital for children to maintain good progress.
- **Seaside Primary School does not authorise ANY holidays.**
- Absence will only be granted in very exceptional circumstances.
- Parents must state why they consider it essential for their child to take such time off school.
- All sessions missed when a child is on holiday will be unauthorised.
- The school will refer pupils with 10 sessions or more (5 or more days) unauthorised absence within a 10 week period, to the Local Authority for a Fixed Penalty Notice consideration.
- No absence will be authorised during the National Curriculum Test Week (SATS), KS1 Phonics, Year 4 Multiplication Tables Check.

Child's Name:			Class:	
Inclusive dates:	From	To	Total number of school days:	
Reason for seeking absence during term time:				
Signed Parent/Carer:			Date:	

School Office to complete this section

Current attendance %	Date received by school office	
	Headteacher Attendance log completed	
	Number of unauthorised absences	
Signed Headteacher:		Date: