

## **ATTENDANCE AND PUPIL WELFARE POLICY**

### **Introduction**

This policy applies to all pupils at Heath House, including the EYFS. It sets out our procedures for managing attendance and identifying children missing education. This policy has regard for:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) September 2025.
- Working Together to Improve School Attendance (2024/25).
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations.

This policy should be read alongside the school's Safeguarding and Inclusion policies.

### **Statement of Intent**

Heath House believes that good attendance is the foundation of a calm, orderly, and supportive environment. We recognise that poor attendance or a child going missing from education are significant safeguarding indicators. Our "support-first" model aims to identify barriers to attendance early and work in partnership with families and the Local Authority (LA) to ensure every child is safe and learning.

### **Daily Attendance and Registration**

#### **Senior Attendance Champion**

The school has appointed a Senior Attendance Champion (SAC) to oversee attendance data and strategy. At Heath House, this is **Mrs Anna Rokakis**, who can be contacted at **[anna.rokakis@heathhouseprepschool.com](mailto:anna.rokakis@heathhouseprepschool.com)**. The SAC is responsible for championing the importance of attendance across the school community and identifying trends that require intervention.

#### **Twice-Daily Registration**

The school has a legal duty to take a register twice daily: once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session.

- **Punctuality:** Pupils are expected to arrive by 8.35am. Arrivals after the register has closed will be marked as an unauthorised absence unless a valid reason is provided.
- **Accuracy:** Class teachers are responsible for the 100% accuracy of their registers, using correct DfE national attendance and absence codes.

## Notification of Absence

Parents must notify the school office by 9.00am on the first day of an unplanned absence (e.g. illness). For planned absences, a formal request must be made to the Head Teacher in advance.

## Children Missing Education (CME)

Heath House recognises that a child missing education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. We are committed to robust data sharing with the Local Authority to ensure no child "slips through the net."

## Mandatory Reporting and the "10-Day Rule"

The school will notify the Local Authority in the following circumstances:

- **Unexplained Absence:** When a pupil has been absent for 10 consecutive school days without explanation.
- **Non-Standard Transitions:** When a pupil is removed from the admission register mid-year.
- **Failure to Attend:** When a pupil fails to attend on the first day of a new term without notification.

## Joint Reasonable Enquiries

Before declaring a child "Missing in Education" and removing them from the roll, the school will conduct "Reasonable Enquiries" in coordination with the Local Authority:

- **Direct Contact:** Attempting to reach parents and all emergency contacts via phone and email.
- **Home Visits:** A member of the SLT or DSL may conduct a home visit to verify the family's whereabouts.
- **Sibling/Professional Checks:** Contacting schools attended by siblings or other agencies involved with the family.
- **Joint Search Period:** The school and LA will act jointly for a period of no less than 20 school days before the child is officially removed from the school roll.

## Support and Intervention

We adopt a graduated approach to managing attendance:

- 96% - 100% (Green): Good attendance. Celebrate and maintain.
- 90% - 95% (Amber): At risk. Informal contact with parents to identify barriers.
- Below 90% (Red): Persistent Absence. Formal "support-first" meeting with the Head Teacher and potential referral to the Lewisham Attendance Service.

While Heath House prioritizes a "support-first" model, the school adheres to the 2024 National Framework for Penalty Notices. The school will consider a referral for legal intervention if a pupil reaches the national

threshold of 10 sessions (5 days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10-week period.

## **Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA)**

Heath House recognises that for some pupils, non-attendance is not an act of deliberate defiance but is driven by emotional factors such as anxiety, school-related stress, or unmet sensory needs. This is known as **Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA)**.

In cases where EBSA is suspected, the school will:

- **Adopt a Support-First Approach:** Work non-punitively with the child and parents to identify the specific "push" factors (at school) and "pull" factors (at home) contributing to the avoidance.
- **Create a Reintegration Plan:** Where appropriate, we will implement a phased return to school or temporary "soft start" to the school day to reduce transition anxiety.
- **Collaborate with Professionals:** The DSL will, with parental consent, seek advice from external professionals such as Educational Psychologists or CAMHS to ensure the child's mental health is supported alongside their education.
- **Designated Safe Space:** Provide an identified "safe adult" and a quiet space within the school that the pupil can access if they feel overwhelmed during the day.

## **Data Sharing and Local Authority Liaison**

In accordance with the 2024/25 regulations, the school shares attendance data with the Department for Education (DfE) and the Local Authority (LA) on a daily basis via automated digital systems. This ensures real-time oversight of pupil safety and attendance trends. We work closely with the Lewisham Attendance, Inclusion and Participation Service:

- Tel: 020 8314 6272
- Email: [aws@lewisham.gov.uk](mailto:aws@lewisham.gov.uk)

## **Deletion from the Admission Register**

A pupil will only be deleted from the register on the grounds prescribed by law. No pupil will be removed from the roll until "Reasonable Enquiries" are exhausted and the LA has been formally notified.

Heath House will notify the Local Authority of any pupil's name being deleted from the admission register as soon as the ground for deletion is met, and no later than the time at which the deletion is made. This is a mandatory safeguarding requirement to prevent Children Missing Education (CME).

## **Monitoring and Review**

The Head Teacher and SLT review attendance data weekly. This policy is reviewed annually to ensure alignment with the latest DfE guidance.

Attendance, Inclusion and Participation Service

Third Floor

Laurence House

1 Catford Road

SE6 4RU

Tel: 020 8314 6272

Email: [aws@lewisham.gov.uk](mailto:aws@lewisham.gov.uk)

The school has a legal duty to publish absence figures to parents and to promote good attendance. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend school. School staff are committed to working with parents to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible.

Heath House has a number of other relevant policies which operate in conjunction with this policy. Policies are available on the school website, the internal Shared Drive, or by request from the school office. Hard copies of all school policies are available on request.

This policy has been written using the appropriate guidance from the Department for Education and the Independent School Bursar Association (ISBA).

Internal use only

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| <b>Last reviewed</b>   | May 2026 |
| <b>Date for review</b> | May 2027 |