Heath House Prep School

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) 2026;
- Working Together to Improve School Attendance (DfE statutory guidance, updated July 2026);
- Children Missing Education: statutory guidance for local authorities and schools (September 2025);
- School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.

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**. 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 an attendance register twice daily: once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session. At Heath House, the morning attendance register is taken at 8.35am and closes at 9.00am.

- **Punctuality**: The school doors open at 8.00am. From 8.00am to 8.35am, pupils take part in morning activities in their classrooms. The morning attendance register is taken at 8.35am. From 8.35am to

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8.40am, pupils transition and prepare for Lesson 1.

Pupils arriving after 8.35am but before 9.00am will be recorded as late (L). The morning register closes at 9.00am. A pupil arriving after 9.00am will be recorded as an unauthorised absence (U) where no other authorised reason for absence applies. The appropriate attendance code will be updated where the school subsequently receives information that establishes an authorised reason for the absence.

- **Accuracy:** Class teachers must complete registers promptly and accurately using the prescribed national attendance and absence codes. The school will ensure that attendance and admission registers are maintained electronically in accordance with statutory requirements.

Monitoring Punctuality
The school monitors pupil punctuality as part of its regular attendance monitoring. Late marks, including both arrivals before and after the close of the register, are reviewed to identify individual pupils and any emerging or persistent patterns of lateness.

Where a pattern of lateness is identified, the school will contact parents or carers to discuss the reasons for the lateness, identify any barriers to punctual attendance and, where appropriate, agree appropriate support or actions to improve punctuality. Persistent lateness will be monitored by the Senior Attendance Champion and may be considered alongside the pupil's wider attendance and any relevant pastoral or safeguarding information.

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."

Local Authority Notifications and Attendance Concerns

The school will notify the Local Authority and make statutory returns in accordance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 and Children Missing Education statutory guidance. This includes required notifications when pupils are added to or deleted from the admission register outside standard transition points and required attendance-related returns. Where a pupil fails to attend as expected, has unexplained or prolonged absence, or there are concerns about the pupil's whereabouts or welfare, the school will make prompt enquiries and liaise with the Local Authority and other agencies as appropriate. The school will not wait for a fixed period before taking safeguarding action where there is reason for concern.

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Reasonable Enquiries and Children Missing Education

Where a pupil's whereabouts or circumstances are unknown, the school will make reasonable enquiries promptly and, where required, jointly with the Local Authority. Enquiries may include contacting parents and emergency contacts, checking information held by the school and liaising appropriately with other schools, agencies or professionals. Any home visit will be undertaken only where appropriate and in accordance with the school's safeguarding and lone-working arrangements. Where a statutory ground for deletion requires joint reasonable enquiries by the school and Local Authority, the pupil will remain on the admission register until those enquiries have been completed and all relevant statutory conditions for deletion have been satisfied.

Support and Intervention

We adopt a graduated approach to managing attendance:

- 96%–100% (Green): Attendance is generally satisfactory. Continue to monitor and promote good attendance.
- Below 96% (Amber): School monitoring threshold. Attendance will be reviewed and, where appropriate, parents will be contacted to identify any emerging barriers and offer support.
- Persistent Absence: Where a pupil misses 10% or more of their possible sessions, the school will provide additional targeted support and work with the family and Local Authority as appropriate. Pupils missing 50% or more of possible sessions will be treated as severely absent and will be prioritised for intensive support.

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.
- **Reintegration and Support Plan:** Where appropriate, the school will agree an individual plan with the pupil and parents to support improved attendance. Any temporary part-time timetable will be used only in exceptional circumstances, will be regularly reviewed and will have a clear plan and timescale for returning the pupil to full-time education.
- **Collaborate with Professionals:** Where appropriate, the school will work with relevant professionals and services to support the pupil's wellbeing and attendance. Parents will normally be involved in this process, unless doing so would be inconsistent with the pupil's safeguarding needs.
- **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.

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Data Sharing and Local Authority Liaison

The school shares attendance and admission information with the Local Authority and Department for Education where required by law or statutory guidance. As an independent school, Heath House is not required to submit daily attendance data to the Department for Education, although it may participate in voluntary data-sharing arrangements where appropriate. The school works closely with the Lewisham Attendance, Inclusion and Participation Service in relation to attendance concerns and statutory notifications.

- Tel: 020 8314 6272
- Email: aws@lewisham.gov.uk

Deletion from the Admission Register

A pupil's name will only be deleted from the admission register where a statutory ground for deletion under the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 is met. The school will ensure that all conditions attached to the relevant ground have been satisfied before deletion. Where the relevant ground requires joint reasonable enquiries with the Local Authority, the pupil will remain on roll until those enquiries and the other statutory requirements have been completed.

The school will make all required notifications to the Local Authority in connection with deletion from the admission register, within the timescales prescribed by the Regulations.

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

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Email: aws@lewisham.gov.uk

Internal use only

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