



Hoole Church of England Primary School

Attendance & Punctuality Newsletter

September 2026



Our School Attendance Target

At Hoole, we aim high with attendance and punctuality!

Our whole school attendance target for this school year is 97%. Many classes have already made a flying start towards this target.

Pupils are aware of our 97% target and we track our progress towards this every Monday. We also celebrate class attendance in our Monday worship. We have invested in new trophies for this year – last year we only had two!

Each week, we will present the silver cup to the class with the highest percentage attendance for the previous week. The three classes with the next highest attendance rates will receive a trophy which they keep until the following Monday.

Attendance in most classes has been very strong since the start of this year. As at 14th September, we have 1J and 2EI on 100%, 3U on 99.76%, RM and 2C on 99.11%.

Absence during term time

We ask that forms relating to absence during term-time are submitted well in advance – **ideally four weeks before the date of the absence.**

We take absolutely no pleasure in seeing any of our families receiving fines for absence during term-time but we are bound by local and national systems. If you request five consecutive days absence during term-time, it is likely that a fine will apply unless extenuating circumstances apply.

Where fines apply, these are paid directly to the Local Authority – the school does not receive the penalty payment.

If families approach us, we seek to work with you to try to avoid a penalty applying. A conversation in advance of your booking may assist us to identify how the time out of school can be minimised.

The penalties for absence during term-time have remained the same since the August 2024 changes.

The attached leaflets provide more information about how and in what circumstances penalties are applied.

Morning Routines

We open our school gates early to allow children time to chat and engage with their friends before school starts. Our pupils report that this helps them to feel calm and settled, ready to enjoy the school day ahead. **School starts at 8.45am.**

Learning starts as soon as pupils get into the classroom at 8.45am. In many classes, children work on activities to embed basic skills like spelling, mathematical fluency or handwriting whilst the morning register is taken. Our youngest learners have phonics group lessons at the start of the day. Arriving on time and having the chance to settle into the day supports children in feeling happy and confident in school. We notice that when children arrive late, they are often anxious and take time to settle into the day.

Where children arrive after 9am, they receive a late mark (Code L) on the register. If they arrive after 9.20am, the U Code is recorded. The U code reduces the child's overall attendance percentage.

For example, if a child arrives after 9.20am every day for a school week, their attendance percentage for that week would be 50% - even though they had not been absent for all of the mornings. Low attendance due to persistent late arrival is a cause for concern.

Persistent lateness is tracked and action taken to support and improve this is taken by the school in collaboration with other agencies, such as the Education Welfare Service.

L and U Codes are reviewed on a daily and weekly basis to enable us to identify where support or intervention is required to improve punctuality.

We understand that mornings can be busy and tricky. We are always keen to work with families in any way to support children to arrive at school on time. For example, we have worked with parents/carers and children to develop bespoke morning checklists which help to ensure that pupils are engaged in getting ready for school efficiently and positively.

If you would like a chat to explore how we may help with punctuality, please speak to the school office and we will be in touch as soon as possible.

Term dates for this year

Dates for this year are available on the school website (www.hooleceprimary.co.uk).

Please note that we have INSET training days on the Friday before and Monday after the May half term break. (INSET day – Friday 28th May 2027, Holiday period – 31st May – 4th June 2027, INSET day – Monday 7th June)

This means that children finish school on Thursday 27th May and return on Tuesday 8th June (12 days break).

Holidays during term time: What the new rules mean for me



The new National Framework for issuing penalty notices has applied since September 2024.



As a school, we fully appreciate the financial difficulties that some parents face when booking holidays, particularly during school holidays.

However, school is duty bound to comply with the regulations set by the local authority and national protocols.

A Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) is a fine which may be issued for taking children out of school during term time for the purpose of leisure or recreation.



Second Offence

(Within 3 years of the first offence)

Where it is deemed appropriate to issue a second Penalty Notice to the same parent for the same pupil within 3 years of the first notice. The second Penalty Notice will be charge at:

£160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days
(Unpaid Penalty Notices after 28 days may result in a prosecution)

Example: We are a family of 2 children and 2 parents.

Child 1	child 2	Parent 1	Parent 2	
£160	£160	£320	£320	= £640

The 10 school week period may span different terms or school years (e.g. 2 sessions of unauthorised absence in the Summer Term and a further 8 within the Autumn Term).

First Offence

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for a Term Time Holiday or Irregular School Attendance, the Penalty Notice will be charged at:

£160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days.
Reduced to £80 per parents, per child if paid within 21 days

Example: I'm a single parent of 2 children and we want to go on holiday for a week in term time.

Your holiday will not be authorised and you should speak to school before booking because your child will miss 5 school days, you will be issued a penalty notice fine.

Child 1	child 2	Parent
£160	£160	£320

The initial fine is £320 but if paid within 21 days it will be reduced to £160

Third Offence

(Within 3 years of the First Offence)

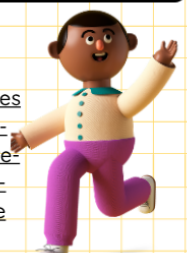
The third time that an offence is committed for either a term time holiday and/or irregular attendance, a Penalty Notice will not be issued. The case may be proceeded straight to prosecution/court.

The 3 year period can cover primary and secondary school periods eg: first offence in year 5 of primary and 2nd offence in year 7.



For more information:

www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/residents/education-and-learning/early-years-and-childcare/education-welfare-service/fixed-penalty-notice/taking-children-on-holiday-during-term-time



Fixed Penalties for Irregular School Attendance

What does irregular school attendance mean?

Irregular school attendance is where children have frequent absences from school. These absences may be one day, two days or a few days on a regular basis which mean that children do not complete full weeks of school.

Broken weeks (where a child is absent for part of the school week) mean that children's work is disrupted and they miss parts of sequences of learning.

A school week means any week where there is at least one day where school is open for pupils. Over time, this can have a serious impact on children's academic and social development.

When do penalties apply?

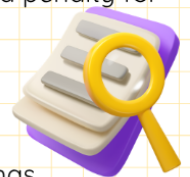
Where a child has missed a minimum of 10 sessions of school due to unauthorised absence, a penalty for irregular school attendance may apply.

Each school day is 2 sessions of school, so 10 sessions is equivalent to 5 days.

The 10 sessions apply over a rolling period of 10 school weeks. For example, if your child has unauthorised absence in Week 1, Week 3 and Week 10 of any 10 week period, a fine may apply. The local authority will issue a **Notice to Improve** and this is a final opportunity for a parent/carer to engage with support to improve attendance.

A Notice to Improve is a set period of time given for an improvement in attendance to be shown. If there is further absence during a Notice to Improve period, a penalty may apply.

Attendance at our school is tracked on a daily, weekly, half termly and rolling ten week basis.



What constitutes authorised and unauthorised absence?

Authorised absence is where the child is absent due to illness, attends a medical appointment, leave has been granted by the Head Teacher for exceptional circumstances, religious observance.

Unauthorised absence applies where the following apply:

- Parents have not contacted school to inform of their child's absence and school have been unable to establish the reason for absence. (O code)
- Pupils arrive after the register closes at 9:20am (U code)
- Unauthorised leave of absence (Holidays G code)
- School have requested medical evidence and this has not been provided (O code)

Please note that both the above authorised and unauthorised lists are not exhaustive.



When do penalties apply?

Fixed penalties can be issued for Irregular attendance and Unauthorised leave of absence (Holidays) For Unauthorised leave of absence (Holidays) Fines will apply per parent per child. Please see our information sheet relating to absence due to holidays.

For Irregular attendance fines will apply per parent in respect of the child who has accumulated 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling ten week period.

A penalty may apply where there is combination of absence due to a holiday and other unauthorised absence. For example, in a ten week rolling period, a child has 3 days unauthorised absence due to a holiday in Week 2, then 1 day unauthorised absence in Week 6 and a further 2 days unauthorised absence in Week 9, a penalty may apply.

The rolling period of 10 school weeks can also span different terms or school years.

What are the penalties?

In cases where attendance has not improved following the local authority's notice to improve the following may apply:

The first penalty notice issued to parent/carers in respect of a particular pupil will be charged at £160 if paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.

A second penalty notice issued to the same parent/carers in respect of the same pupil is charged at a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days.

A third penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of issue of the first. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time (or subsequent times) within those 3 years, alternative action should be taken instead. This will often include considering prosecution, but may include other tools such as one of the other attendance legal interventions.

Who can help with issues relating to attendance

We are aware that families can face challenges which impact on school attendance and punctuality.

We are fully committed to supporting families with punctuality and attendance issues to avoid issues developing that lead to parents/carers facing fines or legal interventions.

If you are concerned about your child's attendance, require any advice or have questions relating to the national changes relating to financial and legal penalties for school attendance, we are available to help you.

You may contact Mrs Flanders on 01244 323890 or by email: head@hooleceprimary.cheshire.sch.uk

