

Powerful Hornbillers are
positively engaged citizens.



Attendance Policy

Updated October 2022

Attendance Policy

Hornbill School, Brunei

Approved by	Gary Margerison
Date	November 2022
Review Date	November 2023
Related Policy/Guidance	<u>The Education Act 2002</u> <u>The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006</u> <u>The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010</u> <u>The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2011</u> <u>The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013</u> <u>The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016</u> <u>The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013</u>
	Department for Education Statutory Guidance: School Attendance Department for Education Statutory Guidance: Parental responsibility measures for school attendance and behaviour Department for Education Advice: Behaviour and Discipline in schools

Aim

1. Our school aims to meet its obligations with regards to school attendance by:
 - a. Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence. DCS considers “good” attendance is at least 96% (excluding post operational leave POL¹)
 - b. Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
 - c. Acting early to address patterns of absence
2. We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

¹ Post Operational Leave is detailed at paragraph 22 of the DCS Directive 3.2.6 School Attendance.

School Procedures

3. **Attendance register.** Adopting statutory requirements for school attendance (England), our school is required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on this register.
4. The attendance register will be taken at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:
 - a. Present
 - b. Attending an approved off-site educational activity
 - c. Absent
 - d. Authorised Absent (due to medical/dental appointments, exceptional circumstances or POL)
5. Any amendment to the attendance register will include:
 - a. The original entry
 - b. The amended entry
 - c. The reason for the amendment
 - d. The date on which the amendment was made
 - e. The name and position of the person who made the amendment
6. Every entry in the attendance register will be preserved for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.
7. Pupils must arrive in school by 07:40 on each school day.
8. The register for the first session will be taken at 07:45 and will be kept open until 07:50. The register for the second session (excluding FS1) will be taken at 12:00 and will be kept open until 12:05.

Unplanned Absence

9. Parents must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence – for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health – by 07:45 or as soon as practically possible.
10. Parents should make a telephone call to the main school office.
11. Absence due to illness will be authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.
12. If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask parents to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

13. If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised, and parents will be notified of this prior to recording.

Medical or Dental Appointments

14. Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; advance notice is required for authorising these absences.

15. However, parents are encouraged to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

16. Parents should visit or make a telephone call to the school office in advance of the appointment.

Other Term Time Absence

17. Applications for other types of absence in term time must also be made in advance.

Lateness and Punctuality

18. A pupil who arrives late but before registration has been taken will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.

19. A pupil who arrives after the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code.

20. Punctuality is important to ensure that a full education is provided. We will follow up pupils with more than 5 punctuality episodes in a term with the parents and if required the Unit Welfare Officer.

Following up Absence

21. The school will follow up any absences to ascertain the reason, ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary (liaising with the district Educational Welfare Officer, if appropriate), identify whether the absence is approved or not and identify the correct attendance code to use.

Where a child has been marked as not being in school by the teacher taking the register, the school office will make a telephone call to one of the two contact telephone numbers held by the school. Where the first number tried is not answered the second number will be tried. This will be repeated until a reason for the pupil absence is established.

Reporting to parents

22. Attendance reports will be sent to all parents, in writing at the end of the school year.

Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

23. Head teachers (or designated deputy) may not grant leave of absence to pupils during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'.

24. We define 'exceptional circumstances' as those events which cannot be undertaken at any other time.

- bereavement or serious illness of relatives.
- medical needs where treatment is required in the UK.
- where delivery of the Defence Mission by service parents employed in specific roles impacts on the ability to observe standard leave patterns

25. The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances, current attendance figure, and relevant context behind the request. The head teacher may choose to discuss a request with their local Assistant Chief Education Officer (ACEO); however, a leave of absence is granted entirely at the head teacher's (or designated deputy) discretion.

26. Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments.
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart.
- Post Operational Leave.
- There may be occasions where travel to Nepal in term time will be agreed as authorised absence.
- Unavoidable flight delays.

27. Strategies for Encouraging and Enabling Good Attendance

- By ensuring that the school is a place to which the children want to come; that the school is a place where the children are treated with respect and feel valued; a place where their needs are recognised and are being addressed; a place where all children can experience success within a rich, relevant and diversified curriculum.
- It is clear that children alone cannot ensure their regular and punctual attendance at school. From the outset, parents are encouraged to take an active interest in the work of the school and to build and support their children's enthusiasm for attending school.
- All staff make children aware of the importance of good attendance and children are praised.
- Each child's attendance record is shared with their parent/s as part of the annual written report and attendance is discussed at Parent Consultations. It follows that individual records of attendance are kept and are passed onto subsequent schools.

29. Monitoring Attendance

- Regular checks on attendance are carried out by all class teachers.
- The Attendance Registers are marked twice each day, at the start of the morning session and again in the afternoon. Registers are checked by administrative staff.

- All absences and persistent lateness are investigated.
- When the register closes the administrative staff check the messages and operate 'first day calling' for those pupils absent with no reason given.
- Attendance data is held electronically on Bromcom, accessible by the Headteacher, and Administrative Staff who are able to conduct spot checks on individual children and provide comprehensive attendance records.
- If a pupil's absence goes above 10 days, we will contact the parents to discuss the reasons for this.

30. If a pupil's absence goes above the threshold identified in paragraph 29 and continues to rise. The Headteacher will contact the DCS Education Welfare Officer for support.

Roles and Responsibilities

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Raising attendance issues with the local command

The class teacher is responsible for:

- Recording attendance on a daily basis
- Using the correct codes
- Submitting information to the school office

The school office staff and business manager are responsible for:

- Taking and making calls from/to parents about absence and recording this on the school system
- Providing attendance reports

The School Governance Committee (SGC) is responsible for:

- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis in the Head Teacher report to SGC.

Annex B Application for Term-Time Leave for Exceptional Circumstances

Name of child: _____

School/Class: _____

I would like to request permission for my child to be granted term time absence from school on the grounds of 'exceptional circumstances' for the following reasons and understand that family holidays are not a valid reason and that any absence may be detrimental to my child's education.

Explanation of exceptional circumstances

I am requesting term time absence for my child from (date) _____ until _____ resulting in an absence of _____ school days.

I understand that I may be required to provide evidence of the above if required and that this may require this information to be discussed with the relevant Unit Welfare Office.

Signature of parent: _____ Date: _____

Head teacher (designated deputy) use only

Thank you for your application for 'exceptional leave' for your child.

Your child's attendance record for the last term/academic year is: _____% attendance

a) I confirm that this exceptional absence has been agreed:

Signed _____ Date _____

b) Your request for exceptional leave has not been agreed for the following reason:

Signed _____ Date _____

Annex C Application for Term-Time Absence for Post Operational Leave

Name of child: _____

School/Class: _____

I would like to request permission for my child to be granted term-time absence from school during term time due to my own post operational leave. I understand that any term time leave for children is discouraged and may be detrimental to my child's education.

Explanation for exceptional leave:

I understand that DCS MOD Schools expects that a maximum of ten days is applied for and that the Serving person must have returned from a minimum of a 3 months tour of duty.

I understand that permission for this exceptional term time leave from school can only be granted by my child's head teacher.

Unit Declaration confirming entitlement to apply for term-time absence in support of POL:

UNIT DECLARATION

Name of Unit _____

Rank/Name of Unit representative _____

This is to certify that _____ is entitled to apply for term time absence from school for their child in support of post operational leave.

Signature of Unit representative _____ Unit Stamp

I am requesting term time absence for my child from (date) _____ until _____ resulting in a total absence of _____ school days.

Signature of parent: _____ Date: _____

Head teacher(designated deputy) use only:

Thank you for your application for 'post-operational leave' for your child.

Your child's attendance record for the last term/academic year is: _____ % attendance and the number of sessions missed last term/year was _____

a) I confirm that this exceptional leave has been agreed:

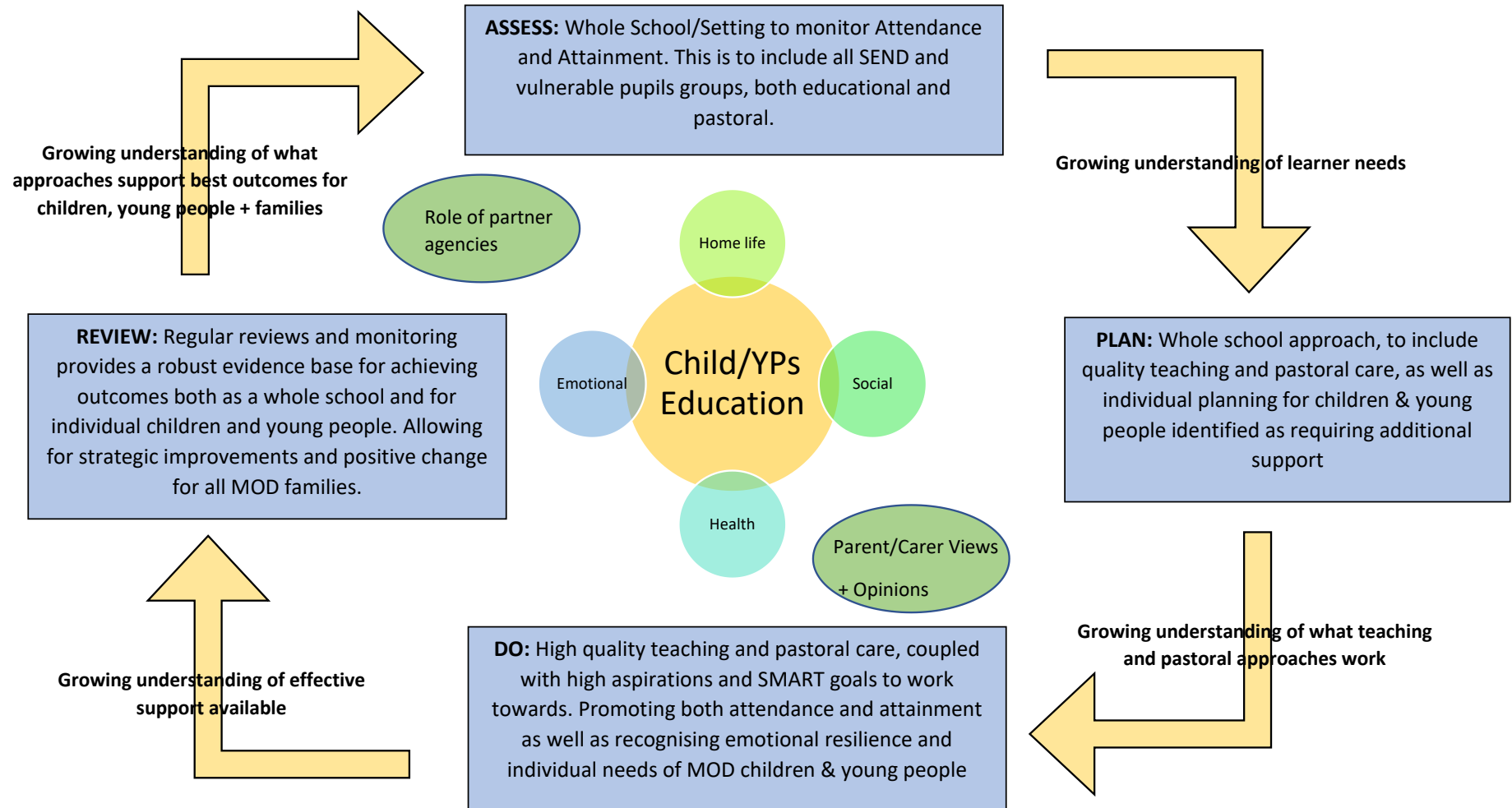
Signed _____ Date _____

b) Your request for exceptional leave has not been agreed for the following reason:

Signed _____ Date _____

Annex D Attendance Graduated Response

Attendance Graduated Response



Annex E Unauthorised Attendance Flow Chart

Stage 1

First unauthorised absence recorded:

(day 1) 2 Sessions missed: Welfare T/C from school
 (day 2) 4 Sessions missed: Further Welfare T/C from school
 (day 3) If parents are not contactable after 6 missed sessions: Welfare visit to be undertaken *by school*. - Offer of referral to informal EWO support
 (day 4) 8 Sessions missed: Depending on success of welfare visit, parents to be invited in for an informal attendance discussion.
 (day 5) 10 sessions missed: If after 5 days, no attendance has been achieved and parents not contacted, child is reported as Missing from Education and reported to the EWO.

Unauthorised Persistent Lates (UPLs).

(day 1) Late arrival: Welfare T/C from school
 (day 2) Repeat Late arrival: Further Welfare T/C from school – offer of referral to informal EWO support
 (day 3) Repeat Late arrival: Welfare visit school and EWO if possible.
 (day 4) Prolific Late arrivals: Referral to EWO service for support. *After this point, UPLs are supported in the same way as Repeat Unauthorised Absences*

Attendance Letters from Head Teacher to be sent to parents/carers if by day 4, no contact with family has been made and child remains out of school.

Stage 2

Repeat Unauthorised Absences & Persistent Lates

If attendance is **above 98%** and pupil has two separate unauthorised absences: School to monitor attendance.
 If attendance is **above 96%** and pupil has two separate unauthorised absences: T/C from schools to discuss absence and invite to informal meeting with EWO and school. *Letter to be sent as a follow up advising around good school attendance, importance etc.*
 If attendance is **below 96%** or 3 separate unauthorised absences: Referral to EWO and parents/carers invited in for MOD Attendance Review (MOR) *EWO Flow chart to be followed moving forward.*

Continued Unauthorised Absence – no contact

If a child is not in school for 5 or more days (10 sessions) the child is deemed **MISSING** from Education (**CME**) and must be reported to EWO for tracking. School should make every effort within reason to contact the family and track the child's location and any updates should be shared directly with the EWO.

Continued Unauthorised Absence – contact made

If a child is not in school for 5 or more days (10 sessions) but the family are in contact with the school, the child is deemed **MISSING OUT** on Education. Referral to EWO formal support with parents/carers invited to MOD Attendance Review (MOR). *EWO Flow chart to be followed moving forward.*

Attendance Letters from Head Teacher to be sent to parents/carers at each stage, advising of next steps.

Repeat Unauthorised Absence, Persistent Lates and Continued Unauthorised Absences.

If attendance continues **below 96%** despite formal support from EWO. **After 3 MOR's** (timescales individual to the needs of the family), consideration for initiating an assessment of supportability as the families needs may not be able to be met overseas.
 Further EWO support can be provided if DCS, School and Command all in agreement, this will be agreed on individual circumstances.

Continued Unauthorised Absence – no contact

If after **28 days**, school (with EWO support) unable to locate child, the child can be "off-rolled" from the setting and will remain with EWO for continued CME tracking. Child **MUST** remain on-roll for 28 academic days before being off-rolled.

Annex F Template Letter Persistence Absence

Dear PARENT/CARER

Persistent Absence Letter 1/2/3

I am writing to you to inform you that your child's current school attendance is % with % of this being unauthorised.

Currently your child's attendance is at Stage 1/2/3.

I have attached a copy of our attendance flow chart for your reference.

Please delete depending on stage

Stage 1: Your child has missed X sessions since X date. Our Education Welfare Office is able to provide informal support if you wish to access this please let us know. If your child's attendance does not improve by X date, we will move to stage 2 of our attendance process.

Stage 2: Your child has now missed further sessions despite support at stage 1. They have now missed X sessions. We would like to invite you in for a MOD Attendance Review (MOR) on X date/time/location. Our Education Welfare Officer will be available to attend this review to support you and your child moving forward.

Stage 3: Despite support at stage 1 and 2, your child's attendance has not improved. At this point we are requesting a review of your family's supportability overseas and further details will be provided to you. You were informed of this decision at your last MOR on X date.

At X School, we strive to achieve the best outcomes for our children and young people and positive school attendance and attainment is at the forefront of our focus. Supported by Defence Children's Services our school is available to support you and your family at every stage of your child's education.

If you have any questions about the attendance process, please speak to us at the earliest possible opportunity.

Yours sincerely, [can be handwritten or typed]

Add signature or [Signed on original]

Name

Rank (if appropriate)

Job title, if not included in address

Copied to: List of copy addressees