



Attendance Policy

2025 - 26

This policy was written on behalf of the school by the Headteacher, Victoria Terry, in conjunction with the Attendance Lead, Lindsay Salter.

They can be emailed at: office@hamer.rochdale.sch.uk or telephoned on 01706 655756

Reviewed: September 2025

Date to be reviewed: September 2026

Hamer Community Primary School

Attendance Policy

The importance of school attendance

At Hamer Primary School our expectation is that every child should strive to achieve excellent attendance.

School attendance is not merely a requirement but a fundamental pillar of education. It plays a pivotal role in shaping academic success, personal growth, and future prospects, making it an indispensable aspect of any educational system.

- ***Academic Achievement:*** Regular attendance directly correlates with academic success. Children who attend school consistently are more likely to keep up with the curriculum, perform better in exams, and improve their life outcomes.
- ***Knowledge Acquisition:*** School is where children acquire knowledge and skills that are crucial for their personal and professional growth. Missing days means missing out on valuable learning opportunities.
- ***Social Development:*** School provides a vital social environment for children and adolescents to interact with peers, develop friendships, and learn essential social skills. Consistent attendance ensures children remain connected to their peer group.
- ***Building Routine:*** School attendance establishes a structured routine in children's lives, teaching them time management and responsibility, which are valuable life skills.
- ***Teacher Interaction:*** Regular attendance allows for meaningful teacher-child interactions. Teachers can provide personalised support, address questions, and assess individual progress more effectively when children attend regularly.
- ***Preventing Knowledge Gaps:*** Frequent absences can lead to significant knowledge gaps, making it challenging for children to catch up with missed lessons, potentially resulting in long-term academic struggles.
- ***School Engagement:*** Children who attend school regularly are more likely to engage in extracurricular activities, sports, and other enriching experiences that contribute to their overall development.
- ***Legal and Parental Responsibility:*** Parents or guardians are legally responsible for ensuring their child's regular school attendance. Failing to do so can lead to legal consequences.
- ***Community Well-being:*** High levels of school attendance contribute to the overall well-being of communities.
- ***Vulnerability:*** *For the most vulnerable pupils, regular school attendance is also an important protective factor and the best opportunity for needs to be identified and support provided.*

At Hamer Primary, we work closely with parents and children to raise awareness of attendance and punctuality. We aim for 98% attendance (with a minimum of 95%) from all children who attend our school.

Aims of this policy

The purpose of this policy is to:

1. Set out the attendance requirements placed upon both parents and school.
2. Explain how we aim to promote and maintain high attendance rates and punctuality for all children.
3. Clarify the procedures for noting absence/lateness and appropriate follow-up strategies.
4. Clarify the response to children whose attendance/punctuality is causing concern.
5. Share how we will support children who are absent/returning from a prolonged period of absence.

Legal Requirements placed upon parents

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education. Where children are registered at a school, their parents have a legal duty to ensure their child attends school regularly. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances.

Responsibility placed upon schools

Schools are expected to:

- Proactively manage and improve attendance across their school community.
- Develop a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance.
- Have a clear policy, which is accessible to all.
- Complete attendance registers and have effective day to day procedures in place to follow up absences.
- Regularly monitor and analyse attendance and absence data to identify those in need of support and put effective strategies in place.
- Build relationships with families, working with them to remove any barriers to attendance.
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools, local authorities or partner agencies, especially where there is a risk of absence becoming persistent or severe.

Responsibility for attendance at Hamer

Attendance is everyone's responsibility and all staff play a crucial part in promoting high levels of attendance amongst our children. Taking a lead in this area are:

- Mrs Salter – the School Attendance Lead
- Mrs Terry – The Headteacher and Attendance Champion
- Mr Nadin – Deputy Headteacher

Mrs Salter and Mrs Terry are also part of the wider Pastoral Team, linking with the SENDCo, Behaviour Lead and Children's Welfare Officer.

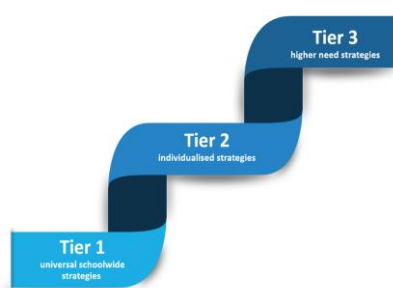
All staff members can be contacted via the school office:
office@hamer.rochdale.sch.uk or via telephone: 01706 655756

Working together to promote regular attendance

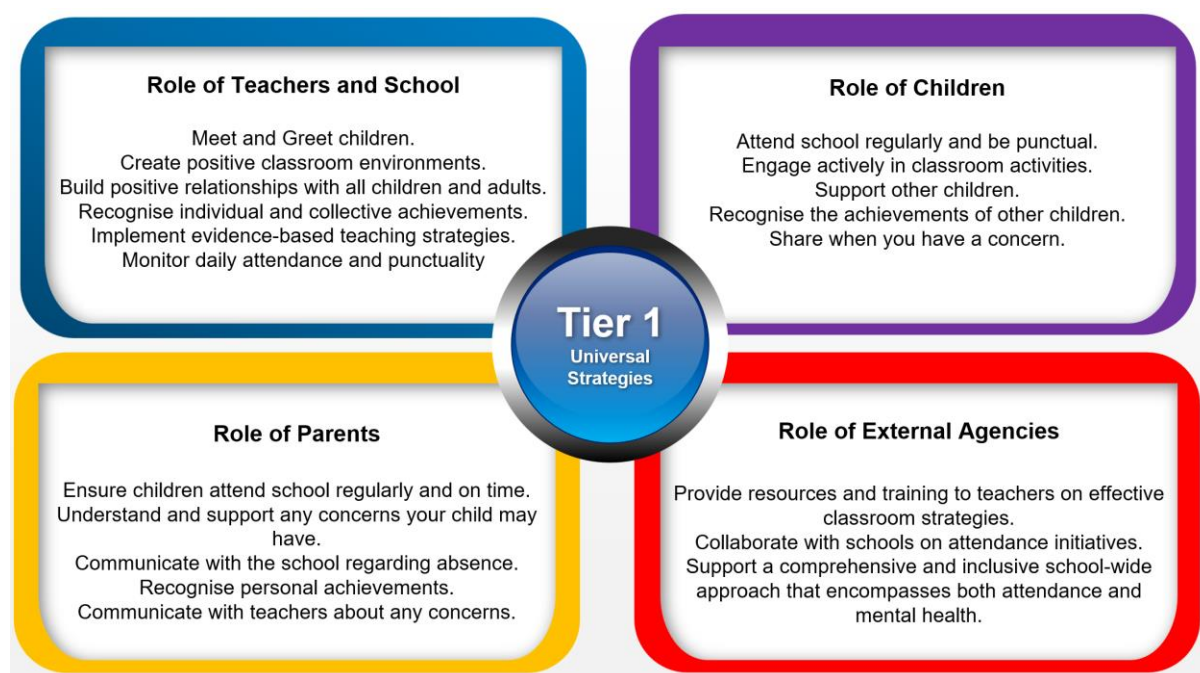
Non – attendance at Hamer school is an important issue and one that is treated seriously. Ensuring that a child attends school regularly is a parent’s responsibility, but we encourage parents to approach school if they are having difficulties with attendance or punctuality so school can endeavor to offer support.

Multi-Tiered System of Support

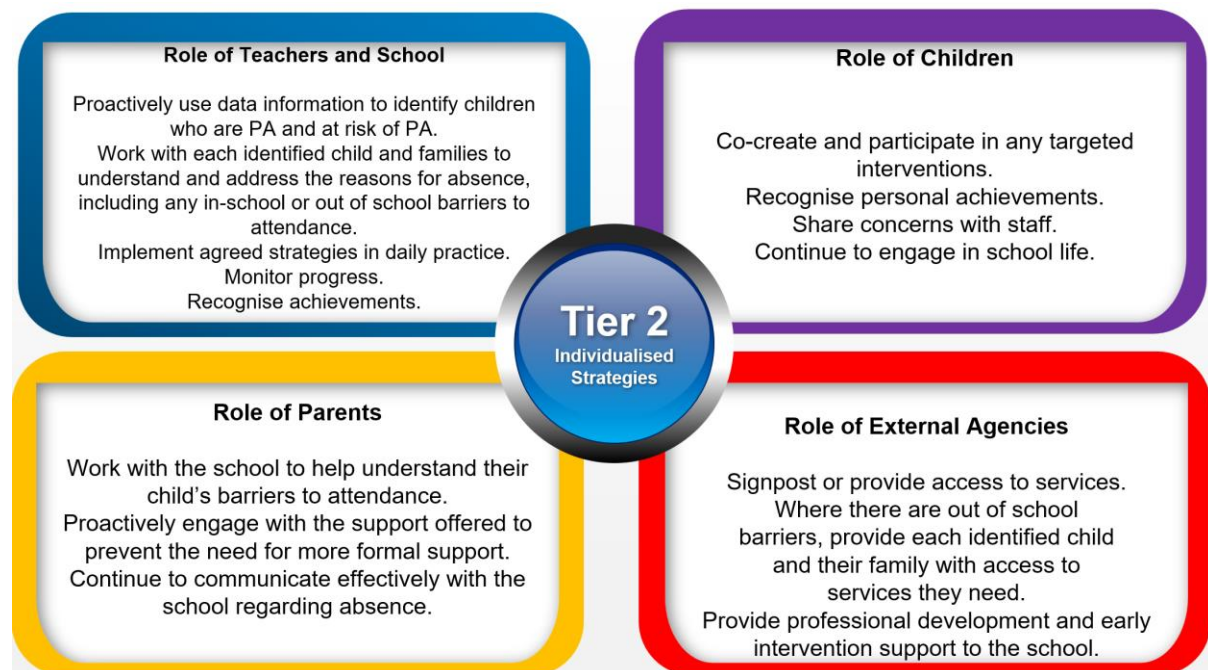
To guarantee a comprehensive approach to attendance, at Hamer, we implement a Multi-Tiered System of Support. A Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) for school attendance involves three tiers of intervention, with roles for teachers, the school, children, parents, and external agencies – including the Local Authority. Data-driven decision-making and training requirements are pivotal to the implementation of the system.



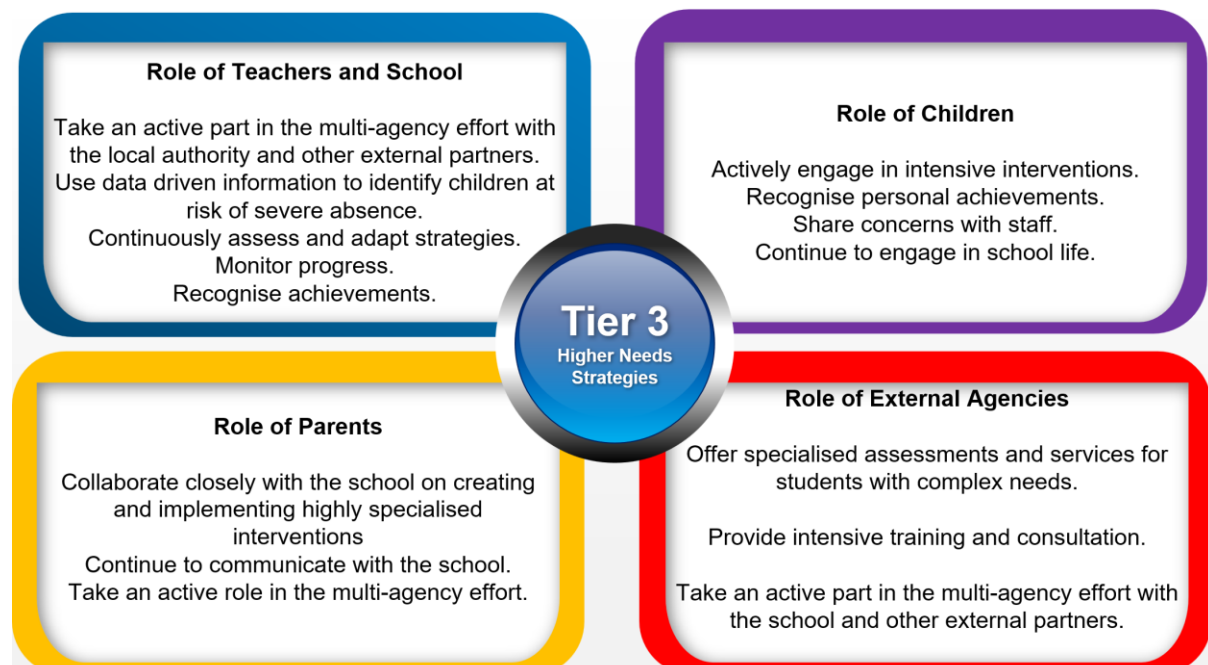
Tier 1 - Universal Approach: Establishing a baseline universal attendance approach that benefits all children.



Tier 2 - Individualised Strategies and Early Help Support: Tailoring strategies to individual needs and providing early help support for persistent attendance challenges.



Tier 3 - Higher Needs Strategies Support: Furnishing specialised support for children, young people, and families with complex attendance requirements, including access to external agency support when necessary.



Incentives

We use a number of incentives to encourage regular attendance at school, to ensure that all children reach their full potential and take full advantage of educational opportunities available.

Weekly incentives- Assembly to celebrate the previous week's class attendance and points awarded to the top five classes. Attendance information also features on the weekly newsletter which is sent electronically to all parents. A display in the school dining room is updated weekly to promote attendance matters amongst the children.

Termly incentives – Certificates awarded at the end of each term for children who have achieved 100% attendance. The class with the most points for attendance receive a prize afternoon involving a film and treats. Certificates are also awarded for most improved attendance.

Annual incentives – Children who achieve 100% attendance for the whole school year, receive a small trophy and a 100% certificate. Children with the most improved attendance also receive a trophy and certificate.

Ad hoc incentives – letters and leaflets are sent home to parents throughout the year, reinforcing the importance of regular school attendance in order to improve outcomes for children. Teaching and Learning afternoons are held in school to examine issues such as attendance.

Absence recording

Children should arrive at school at 8:45am ready to start the school day.

The school day begins at 8:45am and finishes at 3:15pm.

For children in our Nursery setting timing as are follows: morning Nursery open from 8:30am – 11:30am, afternoon nursery open from 12:30pm – 3:30pm. Nursery children can be picked up/dropped off at the same time as other children if this is preferred.

School registration is: 9:00a.m. but learning takes place before this time and children are expected to be present in classroom ready to learn at 8:45am.

8:45am – 9:00am – maths passports practice, spelling practice, reading and 1:1 interventions with staff usually take place.

Children arriving after school gates are locked must be brought into school via the main entrance and signed in by a parent, giving the time and reason for lateness. They will then be marked Late in the register - (L) code on SIMS.

Children arriving after 9:15am must be brought into school via the main entrance and signed in by a parent, giving the time and reason for lateness. They will then be marked in the register as 'Late after register closes' - (U) code on SIMS. **This counts as an unauthorised absence for the whole morning session.**

Any child with two or more lates for the week is sent a parentmail message on the Friday, reminding parents of school expectations and the reasons for these.

Authorised absence is when a child is absent from school for either a morning/ afternoon or a full day and the school deems this reason to be acceptable - such as for illness and funerals. It is the Head teacher's ultimate decisions as to whether an absence can be authorised and, in some cases, medical or other evidence may be required. Where pupils are deemed to be taking an excessive number of days off due to illness for example, a referral to school health may be suggested or medical evidence asked for.

Unauthorised absence is an absence which is unexplained by the parent, and the school do not consider reasonable. This includes: shopping trips, caring for family members, parental illness, days out, family visits, airport trips, holidays/visits taken in term time, late after 9:15am.

Absence reporting

It is the responsibility of parents to inform school of any absence, by telephone between 8:00am and 9:00am, on the first day of absence and daily for each day a child is absent from school. In a small minority of cases alternative contact arrangements may be made.

If you do not supply school with this information, school will contact you on the first day of absence and then on a daily basis until the child returns - this is a safeguarding measure as we need to know about the wellbeing of all children in our care. You may also receive a visit to the home address.

If school do not manage to make direct contact with parents, either via a phone call or via a home visit, a message will be left via telephone or a calling card left at the home address. If this is the case, as soon as possible, we ask that parents contact school with a reason for this absence. If school do not receive a reason for this absence by the end of the week, school will mark this absence as unauthorised.

If school have been informed that the absence is due to illness but nobody is at home when we visit over a period of several days, we will treat this as an unauthorised absence and will instruct the LA to apply a fixed penalty notice once 5 days unauthorised absence have passed.

In the event that we struggle to make contact with parents, we may call other adults named on the child's emergency contact form. This is to see if they know about the child's whereabouts.

Schools contact details are: 01706 655756.

Medical appointments

Every effort needs to be made to arrange medical appointments outside of the school hours. Most routine medical appointments such as dentist or opticians can be made outside of school hours. Where it is absolutely necessary that a child attends a medical appointment, a copy of an appointment card or letter, as proof of attendance, will be needed for the appointment to be authorised.

Where a child needs to attend a hospital /consultant appointment during school hours, a copy of the appointment letter will need to be provided for this to be authorised. An electronic copy of this will be retained on the child's electronic file.

ALL CHILDREN NEEDING TO ATTEND APPOINTMENTS DURING THE SCHOOL DAY SHOULD :

ATTEND SCHOOL BEFORE LEAVING FOR THE APPOINTMENT IF POSSIBLE

RETURN TO SCHOOL PROMPTLY AFTER THE APPOINTMENT, TO ENSURE THAT IT HAS THE LEAST IMPACT ON LEARNING.

Medical conditions

Vomiting and diarrhoea - children with these symptoms need to remain at home for the period of the illness and only return to school 48 hours after the last symptom. This is to prevent the spread of infection.

All other illnesses such as stomach ache and temperatures - once symptoms have subsided the child/ children can return to school, they do not need to wait 48 hours until returning.

For children who are experiencing any short- term injuries resulting in some level of incapacity (e.g. a broken arm/leg), once a care plan has been completed and the agreed mitigations are in place, children are expected to attend. If your child has suffered an injury, please report this to the Children's Welfare Officer: Mrs Smith or one of the school first aiders via the main reception area. Relevant forms will need to be completed prior to your child being left in school.

Children unable to attend due to medical conditions

In certain circumstances, children may be admitted to hospital or another in patient unit. Where these stays are for a prolonged period of time, the child will remain on our school role and we will continue to maintain regular contact with both the family members and any other agencies involved in the child's care. Where appropriate, if the child is well enough, school will provide work or liaise with other educational teams working with the child. Throughout, school will work with all agencies involved in order to facilitate a return to school once circumstances allow for this.

Term time holidays/visits - unauthorised

School recognises the cultural, social and educational opportunities offered to children on extended holidays and visits to family homes. We also recognise that many holidays are cheaper during term time. However, in line with DFE and Local Authority guidance, Hamer Community Primary School operates a zero- tolerance policy to leave taken during term time.

PARENTS ARE STRONGLY URGED TO NOT BOOK FAMILY HOLIDAYS/VISITS DURING TERM TIME, AS THESE WILL BE UNAUTHORISED AND WILL RESULT IN A FIXED PENALTY NOTICE BEING ISSUED.

Exceptional circumstances

Only in **exceptional circumstances** can a visit in term time be authorised. Exceptional being **rare, significant, unavoidable and short** and could **not be scheduled for another time**. The decision to authorise leave during term time due to exceptional circumstances lies solely with the Headteacher and each case will be taken on its own merits, dependent upon individual circumstances. Medical or other evidence will be required if authorisation is to be considered.

Where a death has taken place in another country and the family wish to attend the funeral with their children, there is the possibility that school will authorise **up to a maximum of 3** school days of leave. A death certificate or other medical documentation would be required in this event in order for the leave to be authorised. In order to be eligible for leave to be

authorised, the relative who has died must be a close blood relative to the pupils in school e.g. grandparent.

Procedures to be followed when notifying school of a visit/holiday during term time

IN THE EVENT THAT PARENTS MAKE THE DECISION TO TAKE THEIR CHILD OUT OF SCHOOL DURING TERM TIME, SCHOOL REQUIRE AS MUCH NOTICE AS POSSIBLE. IDEALLY THIS SHOULD BE BEFORE TICKETS HAVE BEEN PURCHASED/ANYTHING IS BOOKED. IN THE EVENT OF AN EMERGENCY, SCHOOL SHOULD BE INFORMED AS SOON AS THE DECISION TO LEAVE HAS BEEN MADE.

When parents wish to take their child out of school during term time for any purpose, parents need to complete a Request for Absence form which is available from the School Office. Parents need to return the form to school and a meeting with the schools Attendance Lead (Mrs Salter) will be arranged.

In cases where families have to leave as an emergency over a weekend/ school holiday, when school is not open, parents need to contact school on the first day school is open to inform them of the absence and an expected return date. Parents will be reminded of the school attendance policy and will then be invited into school upon their return to complete any paperwork and to discuss the absence in more detail. Where messages linked to absence are passed by other family members, we will try to contact parents directly, as we have a duty of care to maintain direct contact with those with parental responsibility.

Contact during visits

Where a holiday during term time exceeds 5 days, there is an emergency whilst away or a return to the country has been delayed, school have a duty of care to keep in touch with the family. This contact will be made via telephone, parent mail or What's App. This contact will be weekly until a return to school.

Consequences of unauthorised absence - Fixed penalty notices

Term Time Leave: Unauthorised leave of 10 consecutive sessions (5 days) or more will qualify for a fine to be issued by the Local Authority. School will instruct the LA to issue a fine in all circumstances which meet this criteria, other than those deemed as exceptional by the Headteacher and which are backed up with appropriate evidence.

10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 10 week period (Irregular School Attendance):

Where a pupil has 10 sessions or more of unauthorised absence within any given 10 week period, this will qualify for a fine to be issued by the Local Authority.

Per parent, per child: Where a fine is issued this will be per parent for each child. For example, if 2 children have met the threshold, both parents will receive a fine for 2 children.

First Offence: The first time a penalty notice is issued for Term Time Leave or Irregular School Attendance, the penalty notice will be charged at £160 per parent, per child if paid within 28 days, reducing to £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days. Any unpaid payments may result in parental prosecution.

Second Offence (within 3 years of the First Offence): Where a second penalty notice is issued to the same parent for the same pupil within 3 years of the first notice, the penalty notice will be charged at £160 per child, per parent if paid within 28 days. There is no reduction for early payment and any unpaid payments may result in parental prosecution.

Third Offence (within 3 years of the First Offence): On the third time that an offence is committed, a penalty notice will not be issued. The case may proceed straight to parental prosecution and a fine of £1000 could be imposed.

Consequences of unauthorised absence - Removal from the school roll

Unauthorised leave of 20 days or more will result in removal from the school roll.

Absence Monitoring

In order to effectively target attendance support, school closely monitors and analyses attendance data. This is done, to varying degrees, on a weekly, half termly, termly and annual basis and includes pupil level, group level and coding data.

In cases where attendance or punctuality requires improvement, in the first instance, we will try and support by addressing any barriers to attendance:

- 1) We will report any concerns to parents for either attendance or punctuality, exploring ways in which this might be improved.
- 2) If the attendance is under 95% for a half term, we will send a written letter to inform parents. If the attendance is under 90%, we will arrange a short meeting with either the class teacher, HLTA or Attendance Lead.
- 3) If there are specific concerns about a pupil, we will write a letter to parents outlining our concerns and invite them into school for a meeting.
- 4) We may invite parents in to an Attendance Panel to discuss concerns with the Attendance Lead, Children's Welfare Officer, Headteacher or in some cases our Education Welfare Officer.
- 5) We may construct an Individual Attendance Support Plan (IASP) or Formal Attendance Support Contract.
- 6) We may make a referral to Education Welfare Service for further intervention or support.
- 7) We may submit a Fixed Penalty Notice referral to Education Welfare Service.
- 8) We may offer an Early Help Assessment (EHA).

If further intervention is needed, a more formal approach in conjunction with the local authority may be needed. This may involve:

1. A referral to Fast Track/LEAP.
2. A Parenting Order or a School Attendance Order being imposed.
3. Prosecution.
4. Statutory Children's Social Care involvement.

Exceptional circumstances

Whilst every pupil has a right to a full- time education, we are aware that in a small minority of cases, there may be certain individuals for whom this is difficult – this may include children with certain medical conditions or with specific special educational needs and disabilities. In these circumstances, school will consider the individual needs of the child and family and will liaise with the local authority to gain extra support where needed. Where a part time timetable is agreed with parents and other professionals, this will be for a time limited period only. The Local Authority will be notified of any instances of this.

Support when returning from prolonged absence

In some rare cases, children will sometimes experience a prolonged absence from school and will require additional support when they return. In such cases, needs will be assessed on an individual basis and an individual support plan agreed with parents/carers. This plan may involve support from the Pastoral or SEND teams and may require a phased re-introduction to the school day/week. In these rare cases, absences will be authorised by school.

Children moving schools within Rochdale

Should you and your family have plans to transfer schools for any reason, please let school know at the earliest opportunity and ensure an in- year transfer form is completed with the LA. You will be asked to provide details of the new school(s) that your child(ren) will be attending, along with your new home address and contact details (where relevant). Information needed in regards to the new school includes: name, address and phone number. Your child(ren) will be deleted from our school role on the day that your child(ren) is expected to start at their new setting and a deletion from role notification will be made to the LA.

****In certain situations, timeframes before removal may vary.**

If it is possible for your child to attend our school until they are admitted to their new one, then this is legally expected.

Children moving schools within the UK

Should you and your family have plans to move, meaning your child will be educated out of borough, please let school know at the earliest opportunity. Upon leaving our setting, you will be asked to provide details of the new school(s) that your child(ren) will be attending, along with your new home address and contact details. Information needed in regards to the new school includes: name, address, phone number and start date. Once the child (ren) has completed their last day with us their name(s) will be deleted from our role and the LA notified of this. A CME (Child Missing from Education) form may also be completed.

If it is possible for your child to attend our school until they are admitted to their new one, then this is legally expected.

****In certain situations, timeframes before removal may vary.**

Children moving abroad

Should you and your family have plans to move abroad, please let school know at the earliest opportunity. Upon leaving our setting, you will be asked to provide details of the new school(s) that your child(ren) will be attending, along with your new home address and contact details. Information needed in regards to the new school includes: name, address, phone number and start date.

We will provide you with information that needs to be passed to the new school that your child will be attending. This information needs to be returned to the relevant body within a 12- week period.

Once the child (ren) has completed their last day with us their name(s) will be deleted from our role and the LA notified of this. A CME (Child Missing from Education) form may also be completed.

****In certain situations, timeframes before removal may vary**

Removal for Elective Home Education (EHE)

Should parents wish to withdraw their child in order to educate them at home, we would request that a meeting first be held to explore the reasons for this; school's preference would always be for the child to continue to attend school. At this point, school will make contact with the EHE Team at the local authority in order to make them aware of the potential for EHE. Following discussions, if parents still wish to proceed with a withdrawal, notification should be made to school in writing. The letter should outline the reasons for EHE and provide a date from which the child will be withdrawn. School will then make contact with the EHE team at the local authority, confirming the decision of parents. Various pieces of documentation will be provided to the local authority at this point and arrangements made to remove the child from role. In the event of EHE, someone from the local authority team will contact parents directly.

Assistance with attendance matters

If you require support with an attendance/ punctuality issue or would like to discuss a child's attendance, please contact the school office on: **01706 655756** or e mail the school office on: office@hamer.rochdale.sch.uk

A message will be passed to the Attendance Lead, Mrs Salter or the Headteacher, Mrs Terry, who will arrange a convenient time for a meeting.

This policy was reviewed and updated in September 2025 by L Salter (Attendance Lead) and V Terry (Headteacher). It has been agreed by the Governing Board.

It will be reviewed again in September 2026.