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Student Attendance Policy

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1. Aims

For a student to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance is essential.

We are committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all our students, and endeavour to provide an environment where all feel valued and welcome. Parents and students play a part in making our school so successful. Every student has a right to access the education to which they are entitled. Parents and teachers share the responsibility for supporting and promoting excellent school attendance and punctuality for all.

It is our duty to consistently strive to achieve a goal of 100% attendance for all student. Every opportunity will be used to convey to students and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

For our student to take full advantage of the educational opportunities offered, it is vital your student is at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. The routines students develop around attendance and punctuality at school are the same as the expectations of any future employer in the world of work.

High attainment, confidence with peers and staff, and future aspirations depend on good attendance.

It is very important therefore that you make sure that your student attends regularly and this Policy sets out how together we will achieve this.

Our school aims to meet its obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence

We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their student of compulsory school age attend regularly, and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

Why Regular Attendance is so important:

- Statistics show a direct link between under-achievement and absence below 95%
- Regular attenders make better progress, both socially and academically
- Regular attenders find school routines, school work and friendships easier to cope with
- Regular attenders find learning more satisfying
- Regular attenders are more successful in transferring between primary school, secondary school, and higher education, employment or training
- Learning:- Any absence affects the pattern of a student's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any student's absence disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning of others in the same class.

<i>Attendance Grade</i>	<i>% attendance</i>	<i>Days attended</i>	<i>This equates to.....</i>	
			<i>Lessons missed in a year</i>	<i>Lessons missed over 5 years</i>
<i>Outstanding</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>190</i>	<i>zero</i>	<i>zero</i>
<i>Excellent</i>	<i>99</i>	<i>188</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>50</i>
<i>Good</i>	<i>97</i>	<i>184</i>	<i>30</i>	<i>150</i>
<i>Requires improvement</i>	<i>94</i>	<i>179</i>	<i>55</i>	<i>275</i>
<i>Cause for concern</i>	<i>92</i>	<i>175</i>	<i>75</i>	<i>375</i>
<i>Immediate action required</i>	<i><92</i>	<i><175</i>	<i>>75</i>	<i>>375</i>

School attendance is subject to various education laws and this school attendance policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by the Department for Education and Hampshire County Council.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [school attendance guidance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- [The Education Act 1996](#)
- [The Education Act 2002](#)
- [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2010](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2011](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2016](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the [school census](#), which explains the persistent absence threshold.

3. School procedures

3.1 Attendance register

By law, all schools (except those where all pupils are boarders) are required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on this register.

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:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

(See Appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes)

Every entry in the attendance register will be preserved for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

The school day starts at **8.45am** and we expect your student to be in class at that time. The canteen is open from 8am and students should be on the school site by 8.40am to avoid getting a late mark.

Registers are marked by **8.50am** and your student will receive a late mark if they are not in by the time the register is taken.

At **9.15am** the registers will be closed. In accordance with the Regulations, if your student arrives after that time they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site, but this will **not** count as a present mark and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence. This may mean that you could face the possibility of a Penalty Notice if the problem persists.

Record preservation

School registers are legal documents. We will ensure compliance with attendance regulations by keeping attendance records for at least 3 years. Computer registers will be preserved in SIMs.

3.2 Unplanned absence

Parents must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence – for example, if their student is unable to attend due to ill health – by 8.45am or as soon as practically possible (see also section 6).

If your student is absent you must:

Contact us as soon as possible on the first day of absence **and on each subsequent day** of absence. You can call our absence line or call into school and report to reception.

Absence due to illness will be authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

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.

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 in advance.

3.3 Medical or dental appointments

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

However, we encourage parents 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.

Please provide written notification of the appointment via a letter or in the student planner if KS3. Applications for other types of absence in term time must also be made in advance. Information relating to whether the school can authorise such absences can be found in section 4.

3.4 Lateness and punctuality

It is important to be on time at the start of the morning and afternoon school sessions and to lessons. The start of school/lessons are used to give out instructions or organise work. If your student is late they can miss work, time with their class teacher getting vital information, cause disruption to the lesson for others, and it can be embarrassing, leading to possible further absence.

- All lateness is recorded daily. This information will be required by the courts, should a prosecution for non-attendance or lateness be necessary
- A pupil who arrives late but before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.
- Arrival after the close of registration will be marked as unauthorised absence code 'U' in line with county and Department for Education (DfE) guidance. This mark shows them to be on site, but is legally recorded as an absence.
- If a student is late due to a medical appointment, they will receive an authorised absence coded 'M'. Please be advised that where possible doctors and dentists appointments are to be made outside of school hours or during school holidays.

Students who are consistently late are disrupting not only their own education but also that of the other students. On-going and repeated lateness is considered as **unauthorised absence and will be subject to legal action**

Parents, guardians or carers of students who have patterns of lateness will be contacted to discuss the importance of good time keeping and how this might be achieved. If lateness persists, parents, guardians or carers will be invited to attend the school and discuss the problem and support offered. If support is not appropriate or is declined and a student has 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence due to lateness recorded in any 10 week period the school or the Hampshire County Council will be required to issue parents with a penalty notice in accordance with Hampshire's Code of Conduct for issuing penalty notices for non-attendance

How we manage lateness:

If a student is late for school they will receive an automatic 15 minute lunchtime catch-up session for the same day. If they fail to attend that, fail to sign in late, or are late on more than one occasion in a week they will be set a 45 minute catch-up session with a Head of Year Failure to attend this sanction will result in a 1 Hour catch-up session with the Assistant Headteacher: Behaviour and Attendance.

If your student has a persistent late record you will be asked to meet with the Assistant Headteacher and/or your Head of Year to resolve the problem, but you can approach us at any time if you are having problems getting your student to school on time.

3.5 Following up absence

The school will follow up any absences to ascertain the reason, ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary, identify whether the absence is approved or not and identify the correct attendance code to use.

A text and email will be sent on the morning of the first absence and every subsequent day, requesting information as to the reasons for absence should we not have received notification. Until reasons for absence are confirmed the absence will be coded as Unauthorised.

3.6 Reporting to parents

Your student's attendance data is available to you at any time via the SIMs Parent App, and is featured in their annual report.

4. Authorised and unauthorised absence

4.1 Granting approval for term-time absence

Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence to pupils during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'.

The fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional' are rare, significant, or unavoidable which means the event could not reasonably be scheduled at another time. **There are no rules on this** as circumstances vary from school to school and family to family. There is however, no legal entitlement for time off in school time to go on holiday.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the headteacher's discretion.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments – as explained in sections 3.2 and 3.3
- 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
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a Traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision
- External examinations – i.e. musical instruments

Unauthorised absence is when the school has not received a reason for absence or has not approved a student's leave absence from school after a parent's request. This includes:

- parents giving their student permission to be off school unnecessarily such as for shopping, birthdays, to look after siblings
- unauthorised Holidays
- truancy before or during the school day
- absences which have not been explained
- student who arrive at school too late to get a mark
- college 'Taster Days'

A school can, if needed, change an authorised absence to an unauthorised absence and vice versa if new information is presented. Any changes will be communicated to parents/carers. An example of this would be where a parent states a student is unwell but on return to school there is evidence they have been on holiday.

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parents), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required, preferably in writing.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause.

4.2 Legal sanctions

In Education law, parents/carers are committing an offence if they fail to ensure the regular attendance of their student of compulsory school age at the school at which the student is registered, unless the absence has been authorised by the school.

Legal Measures for tackling persistent absence or lateness

Hampshire Schools and Hampshire County Council will use the full range of legal measures to secure good attendance. Legal measures will only be considered through a referral to Hampshire's Attendance Legal Panels where:

- 1. The student or family do not require the support from any agency to improve the attendance**
- 2. The student has 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence and parents are complicit in the student's absence.**

The following legal measures are for students of compulsory school age who are registered at a school:

- Parenting contracts set at Education Planning Meetings
- Parenting orders
- Penalty notices
- Education Supervision Orders
- Prosecution

Legal Measures for absence taken when the Headteacher has declined parent/carers request for leave of absence

Where a student has unauthorised absence due to either:

- 1. non approval of a parent/carer's request for leave of absence or**
- 2. a holiday that has been taken without permission**

and the unauthorised absence is for 10 or more sessions (5 days) in any 100 possible school sessions then a penalty notice for non-attendance will be issued

Where a student has **unauthorised absence** the school must enforce Hampshire's Code of Conduct for issuing Penalty Notices or follow its guidance on other Legal Measures for Non-Attendance. The Code of Conduct is a statutory document that ensures that powers for legal sanctions are applied consistently and fairly across all schools and their families within the authority. A copy is available from

<http://www3.hants.gov.uk/education/hias/learning-behaviour-attendance/attendance-guidance-for-parents/possible-penalties.htm>

The code of conduct states that:

Schools or Hampshire Local Authority will issue a Penalty Notice for any unauthorised absence where the student has been:

- absent for 10 or more half-day sessions (five school days) of unauthorised absence during any 100 possible school sessions – these do not need to be consecutive
- persistently late (coded *U*) for up to 10 sessions (five days) after the register has closed
- persistently late before the close of the register (coded *L*), but the school has met with parents and has clearly communicated that they will categorise as unauthorised any further lateness (code *O*), and where the threshold of 10 sessions (five days) has been met
- absent for any public examinations of which dates are published in advance
- absent for any formal school assessments, tests or examinations where the dates have been published in advance

unless the issuing of a Penalty Notice would conflict with other intervention strategies in place or other sanctions already being processed.

If a student's has unauthorised absence, meets any of the above criteria and the family or student do not require any agency support to improve the attendance then a single Penalty Notice is issued for either:

- 1. 10 sessions of unauthorised absence or lateness in any 10 week school period**
- 2. 1 or more sessions of unauthorised absence during a public exam, formal school assessment of testing where dates are published in advance.**

Parents and Carers will be warned of the likelihood of a penalty notice being issued for unauthorised absence either via a letter, through the leave of absence request form, or through the schools attendance policy and website. The penalty notice is a fine that is issued to each parent/carer who condoned (or was responsible for the student) during the period of unauthorised absence for which the fine has been issued. For each case of unauthorised absence the school or Hampshire County Council will decide whether a Penalty Notice is issued **to one or more parent/carers** for each student. **N.B.** This could mean four penalty notices for a family with two siblings both with unauthorised absence for holiday i.e. one PN for each student to each parent

Each penalty notice carries a fine of £60 if paid within 21 days of the penalty notice being posted. If the fine is not paid within 21 days the Penalty is automatically increased to £120 if paid within 28 days. If the fine remains unpaid the Hampshire County Council will consider prosecution for the non-attendance. Payment methods are detailed on the Penalty Notices themselves. Penalties are to be paid to Hampshire County Council and revenue resulting from payment of Penalties is used by the County Council to help cover the costs of issuing Penalty Notices and/or the cost of prosecuting recipients who do not pay.

For further information parents/carers can request a leaflet from their school and should visit Hampshire County Councils website at:

<http://www3.hants.gov.uk/education/hias/learning-behaviour-attendance/attendance-guidance-for-parents/possible-penalties.htm>

5. Strategies for promoting attendance

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility - parents, students and all members of school staff.

We will work with parents and our expectations of what parents will need to do to ensure their student achieves good attendance.

To help us all to focus on this we will:

- Give you access to your student's attendance data via SIMS
- Provide information on all matters related to attendance on our Website
- Report to you on how your student is performing in school, what their attendance and punctuality rate is and how this relates to their attainments;
- Celebrate good attendance by displaying individual and class achievements;
- Reward good or improving attendance through class competitions and certificates.

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility - parents, students and all members of school staff.

6. Attendance monitoring

The attendance officer monitors pupil absence on a daily basis.

Parents are expected to call the school in the morning if their student is going to be absent due to ill health (see section 3.2).

Parents are expected to call the school **each** day a student is

ill. If your student is absent we will:

- Code his or her absence appropriately
- Invite you in to discuss the situation with their Head of Year or the Assistant Headteacher: Behaviour and Attendance if absences persist
- Arrange a meeting to draw up an Attendance Plan if attendance moves below 90%.
- We may refer the matter to Hampshire's Attendance Legal Panels if unauthorised absence falls below 90% and is not improving.

Third Day Absence

Please Note: If your student is not seen and contact has not been established with you any of the named parent/carers after three days of absence the school is required to start a student missing in education procedures as set down by Hampshire County Council Guidance. We will make all reasonable enquires to establish contact with parents and the student including making enquires to known friends, wider family and contact via our Parent Support Advisor.

Ten Day's Absence

We have a legal duty to report the absence of any student who is absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive days. If the student is not seen and contact has not been established with the named parent/carer then the Local Authority is notified that the student is 'at risk of missing'.

Student's Services Staff will visit the last known address and alert key services to locate the student. So help us to help you and your student by making sure we always have an up to date contact number. There will be regular checks on telephone numbers throughout the year.

Continued or ongoing absence

If your student misses 10% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason they are defined as **persistent absentees (PA)**. Absence at this level will do considerable damage to any student's educational prospects and we need parent's fullest support and co-operation to tackle this. Where this absence is authorised the school will meet with the parent(s) and student to discuss reasons for absence and formulate a plan for how to minimise their impact on learning.

Pupil-level absence data is collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. We compare our attendance data to the national average, and share this with governors. Attendance is registered on SIMs, where we can track the attendance of individual pupils, identify whether or not there are particular groups of student whose absences may be a cause for concern, and monitor and evaluate those student identified as being in need of intervention and support.

Leavers

If your student is leaving our school (other than when leaving at the end of Year 11) parents are asked to give the attendance officer comprehensive information about their plans including any date of a move and your new address and telephone numbers, your student's new school and the start date when known. This should be submitted to our school in writing.

If students leave and we do not have the above information, then your student is considered to be a 'Student Missing in Education'. This requires schools and Local Authorities to then carry out investigations to try and locate your student, which includes liaising with Student's Services, the Police and other agencies. By giving us the above information, these investigations can be avoided.

7. Roles and responsibilities

The Governing Board

The Governing Board is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy. The Care, Support and Guidance Committee carries out this responsibility.

The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the school, and for monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.

The Headteacher also supports other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils and issues fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

The School's Attendance Leader

A member of the Senior Leadership Team will oversee, direct and co-ordinate the school's work in promoting regular and improved attendance and will ensure the Attendance Policy is consistently applied throughout the school.

This person will also ensure that attendance is both recorded accurately and analysed. They will ensure that attendance issues are identified at an early stage and that support is put in place to deal with any difficulties.

If absence is frequent or continuous, except where a student is clearly unwell, staff will discuss with parents the need and reasons for their student's absence and will encourage them to keep absences to a minimum. A note or explanation from a student's home does not mean an absence becomes authorised. The decision whether or not to authorise an absence **will always rest with the school.**

The Attendance Officer:

- Monitors attendance data at the school and individual pupil level, and meets with Heads of year regularly to identify actions and interventions to reduce absence
- Prepares data and analysis for Governors and the Senior Leadership Team
- Identifies pupils and families where attendance is poor and works with the schools pastoral team and outside agencies to tackle persistent absence
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Supports the Headteacher in issuing fixed-penalty notices
- Communicates information to parents about their student's absence with staged letters and attendance plans
- Administrates the late detention system

Classroom Staff:

- Ensure that all students are registered accurately
- Promote & reward good attendance at all appropriate opportunities.
- Liaise with their Head of Year on matters of attendance and punctuality
- Communicate any concerns or underlying problems that may account for a student's absence.

Students:

- Attend every day unless they are ill or have an authorised absence.
- Arrive in school on time.
- Go to all their registrations and lessons on time.
- Take responsibility for registering at the Reception.
- Desk if they are late or are leaving the school site during school hours.

Parents and Carers:

Ensuring your student's regular attendance at school is a parent's legal responsibility (as in The Education Act 1996) and permitting absence from school that is not authorised by the school creates an offence in law.

Parents will:

- Inform the school on the first day of absence.
- Discuss with the tutor/class teacher any planned absences well in advance.
- Support the school with their student in aiming for 100% attendance each year.
- Make sure that any absence is clearly accounted for by phone or text on the first and subsequent days of absence, or by letter if a phone is unavailable.
- Avoid taking their student out of school for non-urgent medical or dental appointments.
- Only request for leave of absence if it is for an exceptional circumstance.

The people responsible for attendance matters in this School are:

- Assistant Headteacher – Behaviour and Attendance
- The Heads of Year
- Attendance Officer
- Student Support Leaders

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed bi-annually by the Assistant Headteacher in charge. At every review, the policy will be shared with the Governing Board.

9. Links with other policies

This policy is linked to our student protection and safeguarding policy

Appendix 1: Attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness

M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day