



Humberston C of E Primary School Attendance & Punctuality Policy

Reviewed: Summer 2024
Next Review Date: Summer 2025

ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY

Senior Attendance Champion – Mrs S Ranshaw

OVERVIEW

If learners are to get the greatest benefit from their education in school, it is important that they have good attendance and arrive punctually. As learners grow and prepare for their next stages of education and employment they need to see good attendance and punctuality as important qualities that are valued by others and employers. We will do all that we can to encourage good attendance and punctuality. Where learners are not conforming to our high expectations for attendance and punctuality we will put into place effective strategies to bring about improvement.

Aims

This policy aims to show our commitment to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance, including those laid out in the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on working together to improve school attendance, through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Ensuring that all learners attend school well.
- Ensuring that all learners are punctual.
- Fostering the support of parents in ensuring that their children attend school well and that they arrive on time.
- Keeping good records of attendance through the school registers and taking prompt action to follow up absences.
- Tracking pupil absences
- Investigating and acting immediately where truancy is suspected or confirmed.
- Working effectively with the LA and other agencies to follow up attendance issues promptly and efficiently.
- Monitoring closely pupils with attendance and punctuality issues and to work with parents and where appropriate other agencies to bring about improvement.

STRATEGIES

1. All staff will complete registers accurately for each morning and afternoon session and will draw to the Head Teacher's attention any absences that are cause for concern or suspicion.
2. Registration will open at 9:00am and 1.00pm and close 30 minutes after these times. Children arriving after the 30-minute open period will be deemed to have an **UNAUTHORISED** mark.
3. After 9:00am the school doors will be closed. Learners arriving after this time will enter through the main entrance. Lateness after 9.00am and 1.00pm is recorded

in the pupils in/out book. These will be monitored on a regular basis by the Head Teacher and appropriate action taken. (see Appendix 4)

4. Parents will be asked to telephone or notify the school if their child is absent or ill.
5. As part of our Christian values and Ethos the School office will make telephone contact with a home when a child is absent if the parents have not notified the school that their child is absent before morning break. All reasons will be recorded and tracked. If contact cannot be made to establish the child's reason for absence then the Education Welfare Service may be involved.
6. Where a child is absent from school due to mental illness, complex barriers or SEND, a meeting may be arranged to explore avenues of further support. Our Emotional Literacy Support Assistant may become involved at an early stage to support pupils with attendance barriers.
7. Pupil absence will be tracked and where a learner is developing a pattern of 'occasional' absences or 'lates' the parent may be contacted or written to, to discuss any patterns. See appendix 1.
8. Where a learner has 10 unauthorised absences in any rolling 10 week period, including where the 10 weeks spans either side of a school holiday, school may be required to issue a fine.
9. Where attendance is causing concern parents will be notified by letters and meetings will be arranged to support improved attendance. See appendix 2.
10. The school will use welfare and attendance officers on a regular basis to follow up absences or lates that are suspicious or causing concern.
11. Where necessary the school will work closely with the LA to take action against those unlawfully keeping learners from school.
12. Children's percentage attendance will be monitored half termly, termly and yearly at a school, both in cohort and pupil level and parents will be kept informed of the statistic through the parent mail app. The school will benchmark its attendance data at whole school, year group and cohort level against local, regional, and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement, and share this with the governing board.
13. Children whose attendance is 100% will be recognised at the end of each term.
14. In line with amendments to 2006 Education Regulations from September 2024 leave of absence in term time will not be authorised. However, in line with our Christian Ethos leave of absence may be granted during term time if a child needs to be with their immediate family during or immediately after an emergency.

Appendix 3

Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Board

The governing board is responsible for:

- Setting high expectations of all school leaders
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties, including:
- Making sure the school records attendance accurately in the register, and shares the required information with the DfE and local authority.
- Making sure the school works effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and keeps them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate.
- Recognising and promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos.
- Making sure the school's attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent support is provided for pupils who need it most by prioritising staff and resources.
- Making sure the school has high aspirations for all pupils, but adapts processes and support to pupils' individual needs.
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on individual pupils or cohorts who need it most.
- Working with school leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and providing support and challenge.
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school and repeatedly evaluating the effectiveness of the school's processes and improvement efforts to make sure they are meeting pupils needs.
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

The Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- The 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.
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies.
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary, and authorising school administrative assistants to be able to do so.
- Communicating with the local authority when a pupil with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs.
- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents through all available channels.

The Senior Attendance Champion

is responsible for:

- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance

- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff.
- Liaising with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed
- Building close and productive relationships with parents to discuss and tackle attendance issues.
- The Senior attendance champion is Mrs Ranshaw and she can be contacted via telephone number 01472 813474 or via email office@hcep.co.uk

The attendance officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to the Headteacher and reporting concerns about attendance to the senior attendance champion.
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the headteacher when a fixed-penalty notice may need to be issued.
- The attendance officer is Mrs Doughty and can be contacted via the school telephone number or email address 01472 813474 / office@hcep.co.uk

Class Teachers

Class teachers are responsible for;

- Recording attendance for both morning and afternoon sessions on a daily basis, using the correct codes (see Appendix 1), and submitting this information to the school office

Children Missing in Education

Children being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, child sexual and child criminal exploitation - particularly county lines. It is important the school or college's response to persistently absent pupils and children missing education supports identifying such abuse, and in the case of absent pupils, helps prevent the risk of them becoming a child missing education in the future. This includes when problems are first emerging but also where children are already known to local authority children's social care and need a social worker (such as a child who is a child in need or who has a child protection plan, or is a looked after child), where being absent from education may increase known safeguarding risks within the family or in the community.

Children missing education are children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school. Children missing education are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation, and becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training) later in life.

Our school will notify the local authority when we are about to remove a pupil's name from the school admission register other than when a pupil's name is removed from the admission register at standard transition points.

School will make reasonable enquiries to establish the whereabouts of the child jointly with the local authority, including working with the Education Welfare Officer before deleting the pupil's name from the register. Our school will also notify the local authority within five days of adding a pupil's name to the admission register at a non-standard transition point. The notification must include all the details contained in the admission register for the new pupil.

Elective Home Education

Where a parent/carer has expressed their intention to remove a child from school with a view to educating at home, our school will inform the Local Authority and other key professionals so we can work together before a final decision has been made, to ensure the parents/carers have considered what is in the best interests of each child. This is particularly important where a child has special educational needs or a disability, and/or has a social worker, and/or is otherwise vulnerable. Where a child has an Education, Health and Care plan local authorities will need to review the plan, working closely with parents and carers.

Medical and Dental Appointments

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; advance notice and proof of the appointment 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 possible.

Leave of absence requests

The Head Teacher may not grant any leave of absence to pupils during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. The school Governing Body interprets 'exceptional circumstances' as;

'When a child needs to be with their immediate family during or immediately after an emergency'.

Pupils will not be granted authorised absence for holidays during term-time. Any holidays taken during term-time will be unauthorised and parents/carers may be subject to legal sanctions such as penalty notices.

The payment for penalty notices must be made directly to the local authority. No money received from fines goes to the school.

If issued with a first penalty notice, the parent must pay £80 within 21 days, or £160 within 28 days.

If a second penalty notice is issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil, the parent must pay £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 the issue of the first penalty notice. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time within those 3 years, alternative action will be taken instead.

Notices to improve

If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate, but parents do not engage with offers of support, the school may offer a notice to improve to give parents a final chance to engage with support.

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 Head Teacher's discretion in line with the policy.

Valid reasons for authorised absence include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments
 - Performance in a regulated production
- 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
- Exclusion
- Exceptional circumstances e.g. bereavement of immediate family

OUTCOMES

Our school will do all it can to ensure that learners come happily, willingly and punctually to school to ensure that all gain the greatest possible value from their education.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the safeguarding policy.

APPENDIX 1

Dear

1st ' Letter of Concern' regarding your child's attendance

As you may be aware, attendance and punctuality are key influential factors in determining whether or not a child is successful during their time at primary school. As such, it is our duty to point out to you that following our recent register checks, your child's attendance is now raising concerns and this may be affecting their learning and progress.

Children's attendance is monitored very closely and regularly by the school as well as the local Education Welfare Service. Please take the time to look at the enclosed registration certificate for your child. You will see that the number of absences has resulted in your child missing a significant percentage of their education in comparison to the National Average of 96%. Even one or two sessions missed over a term can have a detrimental impact on children, on their learning and on their social skills.

It is understood that sometimes children may be absent from school due to health or medical needs. If there is an ongoing persistent health need, which as a school we are unaware of, please do contact us on 01472 813474 to provide further information about this so we can provide support.

It is important that all our pupils attend school as much as possible to ensure that they are able to fully succeed with their learning and the opportunities presented to them. We will continue to monitor this over the coming weeks and it is hoped, that by highlighting this matter to you, steps are taken to improve (name's) attendance at school. Should you wish to discuss the contents of this letter with me further, or if you would like to arrange a meeting, please contact me on 01472 813474.

Yours sincerely

Mrs S Ranshaw
Head Teacher

APPENDIX 2

Dear

Second ' Letter of Concern' regarding your child's attendance and punctuality

Recently, a letter was issued to you regarding the attendance level of (name). Since this letter was issued, there has not been a sustained improvement and (name) now has an attendance figure of (percentage)% compared with national average of 96%. A copy of your child's registration certificate has been enclosed for your information.

Regular and punctual attendance is vital to enable students to maximise their learning and achieve their full potential. Pupils with good attendance benefit in the following ways:-

- Continuity of learning which leads to better progress in school
- Able to make strong relationships and friendships
- Good habits are formed for later life

Ongoing, persistent low attendance can lead to statutory measures being taken to ensure a more regular attendance pattern at school. In order to avoid this, immediate steps need to be taken to improve (name's) attendance at school. Should you wish to discuss the contents of this letter with me further, or if you would like to arrange a meeting, please contact me on 01472 813474.

Yours sincerely

Mrs S Ranshaw
Head Teacher

APPENDIX 3

Parent Form: Request Leave of Absence

Relevant legislation: Statutory Instrument 2006 No. 1751

**The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
Regulation 7: Leave of absence**

Amendments to the 2006 regulations September 2013.

Amendments to the 2006 regulations make clear that Head Teacher's may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

The School Governors have decided that leave of absence in term times will **only** be granted under the exceptional circumstance listed below:

- 'When a child needs to be with their immediate family during or immediately after an emergency'.

Leave of absence may only be granted by the Head Teacher. Forms must be submitted prior to the holiday and evidence in support of these circumstances are provided. Retrospective consent will not be given.

If a request, or any part of it, is refused, and the child does not attend school, or if days in excess of granted leave are taken, that absence will be **unauthorised**.

The Education Welfare Service may be informed of Unauthorised Absences relating to requests for leave of absence and may take appropriate action, which could include a Penalty Notice or prosecution.

The Penalty Notice is £80.00 per child, for each parent/carer, if paid within 21 days, rising to £160.00 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. An unpaid Penalty Notice would lead to prosecution under the Education Act 1996, section 444, for the offence of failing to ensure your child's regular attendance, and may incur a fine of up to £2500.

APPENDIX 3 cont'd

Parent Form: Request Leave of Absence

Please make an appointment to discuss your request for Leave of Absence with the Headteacher.

Name of Pupil.....

Class..... Year.....

Address.....

.....

Contact telephone number(s).....

I would like to request that the above pupil is given Leave of Absence for:

(reason for request).....

from.....to.....(please give dates)

Total number of days pupil would be absent from school.....

Exceptional circumstances are defined as :-

When a child needs to be with their immediate family during or immediately after an emergency'.

Parent/Guardian Name.....

Signature.....Date.....

(Please keep Page 1 and complete and return Page 2 to the Headteacher as soon as possible)

Please consider the following facts:

- **A pupil who misses 10 days during one whole academic year will only attain 94.7% attendance**
- **There is a strong link between the amount of absence and the results/qualifications that a pupil achieves.**
- **Every lesson matters – children who have time off often find it difficult to catch up and do well at school.**
- **Research suggests that just 17 days missed from school equates to a GCSE grade**

Source: DCSF

APPENDIX 4

Dear

Letter of Concern regarding your child's lateness

We have recently completed a register check and my attention was drawn to the number of late arrivals into school has had this academic year. Enclosed is an attendance certificate showing the late arrivals.

Lateness is not only detrimental to a child's education, due to missing vital learning that takes place during the first lesson of the morning; it also causes disruption within the classroom for both the teacher and the other pupils. I enclose a leaflet showing how much learning is lost through regularly arriving late into school and also explains what the impact is on a child's attainment levels. It is therefore in everyone's best interest that all children arrive on time.

I trust that I can rely on your co-operation in ensuring that attends school regularly and arrives on time in the future. We will continue to monitor attendance and will contact you should there be no improvement. If you wish to discuss any concerns you have concerning your child's attendance please contact me.

Yours sincerely

Mrs S Ranshaw
Head Teacher