

# Attendance Policy

2023/2024

PARTNERSHIPS | OPPORTUNITY | INTEGRITY | EQUITY | EXCELLENCE | PEOPLE-CENTRED

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Heworth Grange  
School

*Enriching Lives, Inspiring Ambitions*

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## 1. Introduction:

Heworth Grange School is committed to ensuring all students achieve their full academic potential while developing the personal and social skills they need to start their lives as young adults. Data shows that there is a direct link between excellent school attendance and high levels of progress and achievement. We will work relentlessly towards an aspirational goal of 100% attendance for all students. Every student's minimum expected target for attendance is 96%. This means having no more than 10 school days of absence in the academic year.

## 2. Legislation and Statutory Requirements

See Section 5 of the Trust Attendance Strategy September 2023

## 3. Expectations

### The school will:

- Promote good attendance & investigate unexplained and/or excessive absence
- Ensure registers are taken daily for every period
- Work closely with parents/carers where a student's absence is a cause for concern
- Support students to achieve good attendance and punctuality
- Support students returning to school after prolonged absence
- Regularly review internal systems to ensure procedures are robust
- Analyse and examine attendance figures

### Students will be expected to:

- Start everyday with an Attendance focus, either celebrating high attendance or investigating why students have missed school
- Attend every day, on time. This means being on site by 8.35am
- Be on time for every lesson
- Monitor their own attendance by recording this weekly
- Ensure all absence notes and appointments are shown to their Advisor and where appropriate the Attendance Manager

### Parents/Carers are expected to:

- Ensure their child attends school on days it is open as stated in the Education Act 1996. This is a legal responsibility.
- Telephone school on each day of absence, providing details of the reason for absence, and expected date of return.
- Provide their child with a written explanation for their absence on the day of return. This should be signed and dated and the relationship to the student stated. Parents should be aware that an absence note does not necessarily mean the absence will be authorised.
- Ensure their child is dressed in full uniform and equipped to learn
- Ensure their child arrives on time for the start of the school day at 8:35am
- Avoid any absence from school for any reason other than significant illness or other authorised explanation (examples are given later in this policy)
- Avoid making medical/dental appointments for their child during the school day.
- Avoid arranging holidays during term time

## 4. Parent Communication/Home visits

### Student Absence

- Parents/carers should telephone school on each day of absence, providing details of the reason for absence, and expected date of return.
- We will contact every student who is marked absent from school. This may be by telephone, text message, email, or a home visit.

The school will take the following actions to ensure absence is challenged and to ensure student wellbeing. All actions taken and any necessary escalation will be in line with the child protection and safeguarding policy at each school.

Day 1 to 3 Absence: Phone call home daily to obtain reason for absence and wellbeing check. Contact is expected daily to

confirm when the student is due back to school.

If contact is not made with a parent/carer during day 1, 2 or 3 - Eyes on the student will be expected on day 3 in the form of a home visit. If this is unsuccessful then escalation will be made where necessary.

Depending on the reason for absence and the history of absence, if a student has not been seen for 5 consecutive days, a wellbeing check will be completed in the form of a home visit. If this is unsuccessful then escalation will be made where necessary.

If contact has been made between school and the parent/carer but the student still has not returned for 8 consecutive school days, another home visit wellbeing check will take place. If this visit is unsuccessful this may be escalated in a referral to the Police, to ensure the welfare of the student.

## 5. The importance of school attendance

The pupils with the highest attainment at the end of key stage 2 and key stage 4 have higher rates of attendance over the key stage compared to those with the lowest attainment. At KS2, pupils not meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and maths had an overall absence rate of 4.7% (9 days), compared to 3.5% (6.5 days) among those meeting the expected standard. Moreover, the overall absence rate of pupils not meeting the expected standard was higher than among those meeting the higher standard (4.7% - 9 days) compared to 2.7% - 5 days). At KS4, pupils not achieving grade 9 to 4 in English and maths had an overall absence rate of 8.8% (17 days), compared to 5.2% (10 days) among those achieving grade 4-1. The overall absence rate of pupils not achieving grade 9 to 4 was over twice as high as those achieving grade 9 to 5 (8.8% - 17 days) compared to (3.7% - 7 days). 2 12. For the most vulnerable pupils, regular attendance is also an important protective factor and the best opportunity for needs to be identified and support provided. Research has shown associations between regular absence from school and a number of extra-familial harms. This includes crime (90% of young offenders had been persistently absent)<sup>3</sup> and serious violence (83% of knife possession offenders had been persistently absent in at least 1 of the 5 years of study)<sup>4</sup>. The table below highlights the impact that days of absence will have on the % attendance for each student. This is useful when looking at the absence rates for a student across a term.

## 6. If a child is too ill to attend school

In order to make informed decisions about their child's fitness for attending, parents and carers are encouraged to refer to the NHS guidance; Is My Child Too Ill for School?

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>.

Where attendance is of a serious concern, we may require medical evidence to authorise any further periods of absence through illness. This will be determined on an individual basis and parents/carers will be notified of this. Telephone calls and handwritten notes from a parent will not be accepted as medical evidence when attendance is a serious concern.

For the purpose of this strategy, 'serious concern' may be defined as: repeated unexplained/unauthorised absences or 3 x separate illnesses within a half term where no medical condition or underlying health issues have been identified.

If your child suffers from an underlying health issue or medical condition that may affect their attendance, the intervention and/or support strategies put in place may be different to the traditional interventions in place at the school.

For further information on pupils with medical conditions or special educational needs and disabilities please see section 16 of Trust Attendance Strategy September 2023.

## 7. Monitoring Attendance

- Every Child has an attendance target of 96%.
- Students will monitor their attendance weekly and record this in their Passports to Success.
- We will regularly monitor attendance levels and absence patterns of all students.
- All registers are monitored by staff for any incidents of truancy and if truancy is suspected on call staff are immediately alerted.
- All absence- authorised and unauthorised – will be analysed and subject to challenge to ensure that any concern regarding frequency, pattern or validity is acted upon swiftly to ensure safeguarding responsibilities are met.
- Data on all absences will be regularly analysed and published within school and shared with The Trust and all partners.
- The Attendance Manager has responsibility for the school attendance processes and referrals made to the Local Authority Legal Intervention Team.

## Authorised/Unauthorised Absence

The decision to authorise or not authorise any absence will always rest with the school. Only the Head Teacher (or their delegate) can authorise an absence from school. If there is no known reason for absence at registration, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised in the first instance.

### Examples of authorised absence

- Genuine Illness
- Days of Religious Observance
- External examinations, where proof of examination is shown

### Examples of unauthorised absence

- Excessive absence rates without supporting medical evidence
- Absence with no reason provided
- Truancy
- Absence due to birthdays, shopping including for school uniform, resting after a late night
- Family celebrations Inc. visiting relatives
- Looking after parents, siblings, family or pets, minding the house/waiting in for workmen
- Late arrival after registers have closed

## Medical / Dental Appointments

We ask that all medical and dental appointments are made for out of school hours. If this is not possible, an appointment card/ parent's note must be shown to the school office before any student may leave the school premises. Where possible an appointment card or letter should be shown to the office in advance.

If it is an emergency appointment, please contact the school on the day of the appointment to advise us of the time of the appointment and the arrangements for your child leaving the school premises.

*\*Please be aware that if we have not seen any evidence or received a phone call from a parent/carer regarding an appointment we will not allow a student to leave the premises.*

## 8. Intervention strategies for Improving Attendance

96% and above – No intervention, keep it up!

**Stage 1 (Usually 95% or below)** - Letter sent home advising parent/carer attendance is below minimum expected level of 96%. These letters are sent throughout the year.

**Stage 2 (Usually 93% or below)** – Serious Concern letter sent with opportunity for parent/carer to complete a feedback form. Parent/Carer will be invited to an Attendance Meeting due to there being no improvements in attendance.

**Stage 3 (Usually 92% or below)** – If the previous intervention strategies have not improved your child's attendance, your child will be placed on a monitoring period for 4 weeks.

**Stage 4 (Usually 90% or below)** – Parent carer will be referred to the Local Authority Legal Intervention Team. This could result in a penalty notice being issued or Prosecution.

*\*Please be aware that every child's attendance is looked at on an individual basis. This may result in students escalated through stages. If your child suffers from a medical condition that may affect their attendance the intervention/support strategies put in place would differ from those above provided supporting medical evidence was provided.*

## 9. Persistent Absence

**Any student whose attendance is less than 90% is classed as being a persistent absentee (PA).**

Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects. Students with persistent absence are routinely monitored by The Pastoral team with actions tracked and regularly reviewed. As part of this process regular home visits are scheduled with frequent contact made by both the Attendance and Safeguarding teams. This will ensure interventions are put in place to support students and their families to increase attendance and ensure the student no longer

misses out their entitlement to valuable learning.

### Legal Intervention Team

A referral to The Local Authority Legal Intervention Team may result in the issue of a penalty notice\*, Prosecution in a magistrate's court or an application to family court for an Education Supervision Order.

*\*A fixed penalty notice is £60 per parent, per child if paid with 21 days or £120 per parent, per child if paid after 21 days but before 28 days. Failure to pay a fixed penalty notice could lead to prosecution in a Magistrates Court*

<u>% Attendance</u>	<u>Days Missed</u>
100%	0
99%	1.9
98%	3.8
97%	5.7
96%	7.6
95%	9.5
94%	11.4
93%	13.3
92%	15.2
91%	17.1
90%	19
85%	28.5
80%	38

## 10. Holidays/Leave of Absence

Family holidays are discouraged and are not authorised by the school. The Headteacher will not grant any leave of absence during term time unless they consider that there are exceptional circumstances relating to the application. Any application for leave must establish that there are exceptional circumstances and the Headteacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave.

Where the school does not agree on an absence or where the parent/carer keeps the child away from school in excess of the period agreed, that time will be treated as unauthorised absence.

Applications for leave of absence which are made in advance and are refused or parents/carers who take their child on holiday without seeking schools approval will result in the absence being unauthorised which may result in legal action against the parent/ carer in the form of a Fixed Penalty Notice\*.

## 11. Punctuality

Students should arrive in school at 8:35am and be at "Line Up" for 8.45am promptly. Students arriving after this time will be required to sign into school via Student Reception and be recorded as late. Parent/carers must notify school in advance if you aware your child will be late to school. If there is a justifiable reason for their lateness the office will make a note of it and will ensure that your child is not given a 'late detention'.

After the registers close any student that arrive after this time (without a legitimate reason) will be given a 'U' code on the registers. This is classed as an unauthorised absence. Please be aware that the school can apply to the Local Authority for a fixed penalty notice\* for any student that receives 10 or more 'U' codes for lateness. This may result in parents/carers receiving a fine of up to £120 per parent/per child.

## 12. Celebrating Good Attendance

We celebrate Students who have excellent attendance and who have worked to improve their attendance. Attendance incentives and rewards include:

- A whole school inter-advisory attendance league
- Individual attendance rewards in weekly assemblies
- Attendance Fridays – Sweet/Chocolate rewards
- Bonus Class Charts positive points for attendance
- Weekly attendance tracked and rewards linked to our Passport to Success programme.
- 100% Club Prize Draw
- Good Attendance is also a criteria to be invited to the Year 11 Prom and reward trips.

## 13. Attendance Roles & Responsibilities

Miss C Gibson – Deputy Headteacher

Miss S Rennie – Assistant Headteacher - Behaviour & Attendance

### Attendance Team:

Mrs L Anderson – Attendance Manger  
Miss A Hetherington Attendance assistant  
Miss D Longhurst – Attendance Worker  
Mrs M Harland – Attendance Worker

### Heads of Year:

Mr L Gates – Head of Year 7  
Mr J Maynard – Head of Year 8  
Mrs S Brooks – Head of Year 9  
Miss R Chippindale – Head of Year 10  
Mrs S Brooks – Head of Year 11

**For further information please refer to Trust Attendance Strategy September 2023**

- Section 15 Children Missing in Education
- Section 17 Part-time timetables
- Section 18 Alternative Provision

## 14. Appendix 1 – Attendance Codes

(School attendance: guidance for schools – GOV UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)))

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 DFE 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
<b>Authorised Absences</b>		
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
<b>Unauthorised Absences</b>		
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
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)
<b>Other Attendance Codes</b>		
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
#	Panned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day