

Heworth Grange School Attendance Policy 2022/23

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.

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 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

How we will Communicate with you

Student Absence

- Parents/carers should telephone school on each day of absence, providing details of the reason for absence, and expected date of return.
- The Attendance Team will follow up communication with a phone call, or in some circumstances a home visit.

- We will contact every student who is marked absent from school. This may be by telephone, text message, email, or a home visit.
- Where school are aware of absence, we may still contact parents to gain more information or for a welfare check. This will help us to identify any support that can be offered to ensure the student returns to school as quickly as possible.
- School will conduct routine home visits to check on student welfare and in line with our safeguarding policy.

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.*

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.

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.*

Leave of Absence

Government guidance states that "head teachers may not grant leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances".

- If a parent/carer wishes to take their child out of school during term time they must complete a leave of absence request form. The request for leave must come from the parent with whom a child normally resides and has parental responsibility. All forms should be returned to the Attendance Manager.
- Parents/carers will be notified in writing if their leave of absence has been approved or declined. If the leave of absence is declined and a parent still takes their child out of school, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and the case may be referred to the local authority Legal Intervention Team.
- No Leave of Absence requests will be authorised for the purpose of a holiday

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.*

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. Please contact School to notify us in advance if you are aware your child will be late to school.

Students arriving late will be required to attend a 30 minute detention that day at 2.45pm.

IMPORTANT

After the registers close at 9:15am any student that arrive after this time 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.

Rewards

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
- Bonus Class Charts positive points for attendance
- Rewards linked to our Passport to Success
- Good Attendance is also a criteria to be invited to the Year 11 Prom

Attendance Coding

Each school day is split into two sessions, the morning (AM) and the afternoon (PM).

/ & \ = / is used in the morning and \ is used in the afternoon. Both these marks mean that your child was present and on time.

B= educated at another place e.g. off-site D= educated at another site and dual registered e.g. a long-term managed move

V = School trip or another educational visit

L = late to school before registers close

U = late to school after registers close. This is an authorised absence.

M = medical appointment. Please try and make these out of school hours whenever possible.

R = Religious Observance i.e. EID

I = ill these marks are used when you have told us that your child is ill and school are satisfied that your child is too ill to attend. Please do not assume your child has an authorised absence just because you telephoned to inform us. If your child's attendance is low and you have received an attendance letter, we may require further information.

C = absence for exceptional circumstances e.g. funeral

J = Interview e.g. college interview

W = Work Experience

P = Approved sporting activity

S = Study Leave

N = is used for an absence with No reason given (it is important you inform us of your child's absence as soon as possible on the first day of absence otherwise this code will change to O)

O = is used when we have not received any reason for your child's absence. These O marks shows that we have been unable to get hold of you and that you have not told us why your child was off school. O is also recorded where

school feel there is not a good enough reason for your child to be absent. This is an unauthorised absence reported in the child's attendance certificate.

G = Unauthorised leave in term time. The G mark is used if a parent takes their child out of school during term time.

Attendance Roles & Responsibilities

Mrs V Carter – Deputy Headteacher - Pastoral

Miss S Rennie – Assistant Headteacher - Behaviour

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 J Taylor – Head of Year 7

Ms L Benson – Head of Year 8

Mr J Maynard – Head of Year 9

Mr L Gates – Head of Year 10

Miss R Chippindale – Head of Year 11

Statutory Requirements, the Law and the Local Authority

- Registers are legal documents; regulatory requirements placed on schools regarding the keeping of registers are to be found in the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006.
- Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that parents/carers are responsible to ensure their child receives a suitable education.
- Under section 444 of the Education Act 1996, a parent who fails to ensure their child attends the school at which they are registered, is guilty of an offence.
- The Academy works together with the relevant Local Authority to ensure that parents/carers fulfil their responsibility. There are a range of legal sanctions that may be imposed for dealing with unauthorised absence: Penalty Notices, Parenting Contracts and Orders, Education Supervision Orders or referral to the Magistrates Court which can recommend fines (up to £2500) or up to 3 months in prison.