

# Attendance Policy

<b>Date to be reviewed</b>	September 2024
<b>Policy Status</b>	Statutory
<b>Responsible member</b>	Mr Steve Carrington

This policy applies to all schools and stakeholders within Poppy Hill Academy Trust

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## **Rationale and Aims**

It is the right of every young person to receive full-time education. Young people who fail to attend school regularly cannot receive a coherent education program as absence disturbs the continuity of the curriculum and also damages social relationships. Young people with poor attendance records will inevitably miss out on essential learning and on events taking place such as school visits.

Research shows that good attendance and punctuality go hand in hand with good examination results and the positive life habits necessary for future success. Good attendance also reduces the risk of pupils conducting anti-social behaviour or becoming victims or perpetrators of crime or abuse. Regular attendance also encourages children to build friendships and develop social groups, working together as a whole team, sharing ideas and developing life skills.

The school displays a positive and proactive ethos that places high value on attendance and punctuality and values its partnership with parents/guardians to promote good attendance. This policy advocates close working relationships with all stakeholders to provide a cohesive approach to tackling attendance.

With this rationale in mind, Henlow CE Academy aims to:

Ensure that all pupils are appropriately supported in reaching their potential in order that they can attain at the highest possible levels.

- Make attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with the school including pupils, parents, carers, staff and governors.
- Register pupils accurately and effectively.
- Maintain a high attendance record and a low unauthorised absence rate.
- Further develop a positive relationship between home and school.
- Provide support, advice and guidance to pupils and parents.

- Promote effective partnership with the School Attendance Officer (SAO) and other agencies.
- Encourage pupils to catch up with work missed.
- Encourage pupils to maintain high attendance levels by use of a reward system.
- Publish attendance figures for parents, carers and governors.
- Analyse attendance rates (%) and at pertinent points in the year certain attendance rates will trigger standard letters that will be sent to the pupil's parent(s)/carer(s).
- Analyse and report on sub groups as defined by the Headteacher and governors.

### **Attendance and the Law**

This policy meets the requirements of the working together to improve school attendance 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:

Part 6 of The Education Act 1996

Part 3 of The Education Act 2002

Part 7 of The Education and Inspections Act 2006

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments)

The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

It also refers to:

School census guidance

Keeping Children Safe in Education

## Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools

The school will work closely with the Access and Inclusion Service where attendance or punctuality does not meet the school's expectations. The SAO visits regularly to support regular attendance and help remove barriers that might be preventing a pupil from accessing the education to which he/she is entitled.

### **Roles and responsibilities**

#### **The governing board**

The governing board is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

#### **The headteacher**

The headteacher is responsible for:

- 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

## **The designated senior leader responsible for attendance**

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having an oversight of data analysis
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Building relationships with parents/carers to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance for Henlow is Mr Steve Carrington and can be contacted via 01462 813 733 or on [scarrington@henlowacademy.org.uk](mailto:scarrington@henlowacademy.org.uk)

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance for Mappershall is Mrs Margaret Newman and can be contacted via 01462 813 293 or on [mnewman@meppershallacad.org](mailto:mnewman@meppershallacad.org)

## **The attendance officer**

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence

- Advising the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices
- The attendance officer for Henlow is Mrs Laura McLelland and can be contacted via 01462 813 733 or on [lmclelland@henlowacademy.org.uk](mailto:lmclelland@henlowacademy.org.uk)
- The attendance officer for Meppershall is Mrs Gemma Jackson and can be contacted via 01462 813 293 or on [gjackson@meppershallacad.org](mailto:gjackson@meppershallacad.org)

### **Class Teachers and form tutors**

Class teachers and form tutors are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office. Legal registers will be taken between 08:45 and 09:00 in the morning and 13:35 - 13:50 in the afternoon. Register will be taken by teachers in every lesson of the day for safeguarding purposes.

### **School office staff**

School office staff will:

- Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents/carers to the appropriate member of staff in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

### **Parents/carers**

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time, registration at Henlow opens at 08:45 at which point students should be sat in their form room. The school gates open at 08:35. The school day finishes at 15:35. At Meppershall the school gates open at 8:40 and registration begins at 8:50. The school day finishes at 15:15 for Reception and 15:30 for the rest of the school.

- Call the school to report their child's absence before 09:00 on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence), and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day

### **Pupils**

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend every day and timetabled session on time

### **Authorised and Unauthorised absences**

#### **Absences authorised by the school**

We will communicate with Parents/carers about planned absences such as Approved Educational Activity (AEA) and sporting fixtures by Parentmail/letter. In these cases, parents/carers will be asked to complete a consent form.

#### **Authorised unforeseen circumstances**

The school should be notified on the day of absence in the event of illness, bereavement or other family emergency or severe disruption to transport where there is no possible means of getting the pupil to school safely (e.g. very heavy snow), upon return to school the pupil should bring in a letter explaining the absence.

#### **Planned absence which may be authorised**

These require a letter or email to the school office. Where possible, this should be done six weeks prior to the absence. Examples of this include:

- Medical appointments that cannot be organised outside school time

- Occasional care for a family member if the pupil is a known young carer
- Religious holiday (guidelines state three days)
- Visit to another educational establishment (AEA)
- Occasional extra-curricular activity which gives the pupil significant benefit
- Attendance at a family wedding or funeral

### **Term time Holiday**

Amendments to the 2006 regulations (The Education regulations 2013) remove references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. The amendments make clear that the Headteacher may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances and should determine the number of days a pupil can be absent if leave is permitted.

A parent/carer wishing to make a leave of absence application, must complete the Leave of Application Due to Exceptional Circumstances form which can be seen in appendix 1. If the leave of absence is refused but the leave of absence is still taken, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and a fixed penalty notice will be requested from Central Bedfordshire Council in accordance with their policy. You can find out more about the CBC approach to term time holidays at

[https://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/info/4/pupil\\_support/522/school\\_attendance/6](https://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/info/4/pupil_support/522/school_attendance/6)

### **Appointments during school hours**

We do ask that parents try to avoid taking pupils out of school for medical appointments where possible, but recognise that this is not always possible. If it is unavoidable, pupils must sign out at the main office and provide written evidence. If regular appointments are necessary, for example orthodontic procedures, we ask that parents try to make these during school holidays.

## **Lateness, Punctuality and Leaving the School Site**

An Electronic register will be completed during morning registration (08:45 - 09:00) and at the beginning of Period 4 (13:35-13:55). Meppershall's morning registration is completed electronically (8:45 - 9:00) and at the beginning of the afternoon session (1:00 for KS1 and 1:15 for KS2) It is a legal requirement that a register is taken twice daily and it is the responsibility of the tutor at these times to ensure that it is taken accurately. Staff take an electronic register in every lesson at Henlow.

If a pupil arrives later than the registration period, after 9.00am they will be given a late mark. If the pupil arrives after 9.15am, the register will have been closed and the pupil will receive an unauthorised mark and the parent/carer will need to provide a reason in writing.

A pupil that arrives late and misses a registration will need to report to the main office and sign in.

No pupil should leave school without permission. Any pupil that must leave school during the day (e.g. for an unavoidable medical appointment) must sign out at the main school office and, if they return to school before the end of the day, should sign back in at the main school office upon their return.

In the event that a pupil is unwell, they should first report to the office (as directed by a member of staff). At Henlow one of the first aiders will log their attendance to the medical office and contact parents/carers to advise them of the issue, together they will make the judgement about whether or not it is appropriate to send the pupil home. Meppershall office staff will follow the whole procedure.

## **Persistent Absence (PA)**

This is a term used by the DfE to denote an absence of greater than 10% for a pupil regardless of whether or not they are authorised. The links between poor attendance and poor attainment are well documented; any such levels of attendance will be reported to the SAO.

## **Missing Children Procedure (2012)**

A missing Child Referral Form should be used when a child 'disappears' e.g. when parents/carers move without providing a forwarding address, when it is suspected that a family has gone on an extended holiday without school agreement or when a child doesn't return within two weeks of the expected return date of a family holiday.

If the school has Child Protection (CP) concerns the school should contact social services and if the school suspects that a crime has been committed, then the school should contact the police. If a pupil is in this situation, the school will complete the Child Missing in Education form and submit it to Central Bedfordshire.

<https://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/officeforms/ChildMissingEducation.ofml>

## **Monitoring and Evaluation**

Attendance data is available on the Ofsted Schools Data Dashboard. Consultation will take place between the school and the School Attendance Officer to develop and maintain the attendance policy. Certain attendance figures will trigger standardised letters at various points in the year; these will be sent to the pupil's parents/carers. Attendance procedures will be reviewed by the Headteacher and governors.

## **Implementation and Review**

This policy will be published on the school website and made known to parents/carers, staff and governors. A copy is available on request from the school office. This policy will be reviewed annually or as required.