



# Attendance Policy

<b>This policy was approved by the Local Governing Body on:-</b>	<b>July 2017</b>
<b>The policy owner is:</b>	<b>Ina Coubrough</b>
<b>This policy will be reviewed by the Local Governing Body in: (unless earlier review is recommended by the Trust)</b>	<b>July 2020</b>
<b>Policy Version:</b>	<b>V1.2 (July 2017)</b>
<b>Signed by the Chair of the Local Governing Body:-</b>	<b>Ms Helen Wardale</b>
<b>Ratified by the Board of Trustees</b>	<b>N/A Renewal</b>
<b>Signed by the Chair of Trustee Board</b>	<b>Mr John Smith N/A Renewal</b>

# HELLESDON HIGH SCHOOL

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

### Our Aims

Hellesdon High School is committed to providing a broad and enriching education to all students. Staff will endeavour to provide an environment where all students feel valued and welcome.

For a student to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance is essential. The School will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all students. Every opportunity will be used to convey to students and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

The aims of this policy are:

- to encourage students to attend School regularly by working closely with parents/carers and students
- to ensure that there is an efficient system, known to all, for ensuring that students who should be attending the School have registered six times daily, or a reason for non-attendance is known to the School.

### School Procedures

#### *Taking the register*

Students' of compulsory school age have their attendance registered electronically six times per day. It is the practice of this School to register ALL students.

The School Register is electronic and is monitored and updated on an hourly basis by the Student Receptionist. In addition all teaching staff are required to check that the students who should attend each lesson actually do so and electronically register their attendance at the start of each lesson.

The Electronic Register records the following:

- whether the student is present, absent, or attending an approved educational activity.

An 'approved educational activity' is defined as:

- a) one taking place off the School premises;
- b) approved by a person authorised by the governing body or the Principals;
- c) supervised by a person approved by the governing body or Principals;

- d) of an educational nature, including work experience, field trips and educational visits, interviews with prospective employers, or for a place in higher or further education; and
- e) Link Courses where students attend a Further Education (FE) college for part of their time, or franchised students receiving part of their education off-site at another location while remaining on roll and under School supervision (e.g. sick children being taught at home), or attending an approved sporting activity:

- When a student is absent he/she is marked as an 'authorised' or 'unauthorised' absence; and
- the nature of the approved educational activity is recorded.

All Period 1 registers will be accessible from 8.30am. If a student arrives late they must go straight to Period 1 lesson, if it is before 9am, or to pupil reception after 9am.

### *Lateness*

Morning registration will take place at the start of School at 8:30am. The registers will remain open for 30 minutes. Any student arriving after this time will be marked as having an unauthorised absence unless there is an acceptable explanation i.e. School transport was delayed.

Late arriving students must ensure that they go straight to Period 1.

Students arriving after the start of School but before 9am will be treated for statistical purposes, as present, but will be coded as 'late' before registers close. There are clear sanctions to promote improved standards of punctuality through, lunchtime or after school detentions.

### *Continuing Absence*

Parents will receive a truancy call every day that their child fails to attend School. If a student's attendance falls below 90% they are considered 'persistent absentees' and the "Attendance Support Panel" system will be put to action. A Student Attendance action plan will be agreed between the School, parent/carer and student and both parents/carers and students are expected to comply with it. In cases where attendance fails to improve Fast Track Proceedings will commence with the support of the Local Authority. Parents/carers could face prosecution or be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### *The Governing Body will:*

- approve the policy and any proposed changes
- receive reports from the Principals
- review the working of the policy in the light of the Principals report
- ensure that the policy is promoted and implemented throughout the School and is recognised and understood by the parents/carers.

*The Principals will:*

- set attendance targets as part of the development plan and target-setting process
- monitor progress and ensure that strategies are in place to promote and implement the policy throughout the School
- determine (in collaboration with the Assistant Principal (Attendance / Behaviour) and Head of Year) whether to authorise any proposed absences requested on the School's official form, or absences which have taken place for which no request was made

*The Assistant Principal (Attendance / Behaviour) will:*

- notify parents/carers as appropriate that if a student of compulsory school age fails to attend regularly his/her parents/carers are committing an offence
- liaise with the Local Authority (LA) over persistent absentees
- liaise with the LA and police when they wish to exercise their powers to enforce truants to return to School
- make an annual report with statistics to the Governing Body
- oversee the attendance arrangements
- work with Heads of Year and Attendance Officers to ensure the efficient running of the system
- fortnightly meetings with the Attendance Officer to check the accuracy of the registers to monitor student absence
- manage the "Attendance Support Panel" system to tackle persistent absentees
- deal with issues of inadequate registering
- arrange appropriate training for staff
- keep the Principals informed of the progress of the policy
- advise the Principals on any strategies that could be initiated or improved

*The Attendance Officer will:*

- liaise with Assistant Principal and Heads of Year to follow up unaccounted –for student absence
- conduct "Attendance Support Panel" alongside the LA representative
- monitor student absence throughout the School and identify particular students whose attendance is a cause for concern
- report to the Assistant Principal with relevant data on School attendance
- initiate with appropriate staff strategies to improve attendance
- make daily checks on absence notes and the reasons for absence
- ensure that unaccounted-for absences are followed up by getting in touch with parents/carers (if there is reasonable concern about a student's welfare, the Assistant Principal will immediately inform the Principals who will decide what action to take including informing the Local Authority).

*Heads of Year will:*

- make fortnightly checks on patterns on attendance in collaboration with the attendance officer
- ensure that all suspected truancy is followed up and dealt with

- contact parents/carers over student absences where appropriate
- make reports to the Assistant Principal on the efficiency of the system
- liaise with the Assistant Principal /Attendance Officer over training needs.

*Form tutors will:*

- ensure that students are registered during tutor time
- ensure that students bring absence notes
- keep the Head of Year informed of any signs of suspected truancy
- inform the Head of Year of any possible underlying problems which might account for absences.
- Make checks on absence notes
- Discuss absences with pupils

*Classroom teachers will:*

- call the register and record the attendance of students at their lessons
- inform the (Admin/Attendance Officer) of the names of students who are absent without notification.

*Students are required to:*

- attend school at all times unless they are ill or have an authorised absence
- bring an explanatory note on the day of return to School
- discuss with the Tutor any planned absences well in advance
- make any request for leave of absence on the School's official leave of absence form.

*Parents/Carers are required to:*

- ensure that their children receive efficient, full-time education by attendance at School or otherwise (*Education Act 1996*)
- inform the School of the reason for their child's absence on every day of non-attendance (via the telephone absence line on 01603 254333), by 8.30am.
- provide a written explanatory note for their child's absence on their child's first day returning to School

## **Inspection**

The Assistant Principal will ensure that the School Admission and Attendance Registers are available for inspection by Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs), registered inspectors and an LA officer.

## **Leave of absence during Term Time**

Parents are required under the Education Act (1996) to ensure their child attends school regularly. There is a discretionary power to allow leave of absence in exceptional circumstances during term time. This is not an entitlement and is purely at the discretion of the Principals. The school will not authorise the absence if it believes it is to the detriment of the child's education or if the absences are during school exam periods. A refusal of leave of

absence is recorded as unauthorised on the student's school record. Unauthorised absences may result in legal proceedings, either through a Fixed Penalty Notice or the Magistrates' Court.

### **Fixed Penalty Notices**

With the implementation of the Anti-Social behaviour Act (2003) the Local Authority has statutory powers to use Penalty Notices to help tackle irregular school attendance and unauthorised absences.

Penalty Notices are issued in accordance with the Norfolk Local Protocol (May 2014). The Local Authority operates a system where any pupil will meet the criteria for legal intervention where they have:

- 10 consecutive sessions of unauthorised absence where some or all of the absence may be attributed to an unauthorised holiday in term time (for absences from 1 September 2017) or
- 15% unauthorised absence over a period of 6 school weeks for reasons other than unauthorised term time holiday.

Failure to pay a Fixed Penalty Notice reverts back to a Section 444 1 Education Act 1996 offence and parents/carers will face prosecution in the Magistrates Court.

### **Adverse weather**

The School will follow County Council advice but will take measures in order to keep the School open to the extent that it is possible depending on the weather conditions in the local area. The School's Emergency School Closure Policy will apply.

### **Short -term leave**

The School can legally grant short-term leave for family reasons. It is for the Principals to determine whether individual circumstances are reasonable.

Where a student becomes pregnant, leave will be given of no more than 18 weeks after which the absence would be unauthorised. The School will do all it can to support the student remaining in School as long as possible.

Dental and medical appointments are valid reasons for missing registration and constitute authorised absence, although we would recommend these are made outside of school hours where possible. If the student leaves for an appointment after registering, the absence needs to be recorded as 'medical' and the student must ensure that their departure is recorded on the electronic system in Student Reception. When the student returns to school they must sign in at Pupil Reception first.

The School may, exceptionally, sanction limited absence for young carers until other arrangements can be made. The Principals will set a time limit for such absences in consultation with the Assistant Principal and Head of Year. The Principals may also seek advice from the LA or other appropriate agency before coming to a decision.

### **Long term Absence**

There are sometimes genuine cases where students return after a prolonged illness. The School would ensure that appropriate provision and support is put in place.

### **Rewards**

The School uses a number of methods to promote attendance throughout the school year, such as trips, vouchers and certificates.

### **Religious observance**

The Principals will review each application reasonably, and in consultation with the Assistant Principal, Head of Year and the parent/carer.

The School expects advance notice, since religious festivals are likely to be fixed well ahead.

### **Taking a student off the register**

The Principals will authorise the taking of a student's name off the School Register in accordance with the current Regulations.

### **Monitoring and review**

Each year the School will examine its attendance figures and set attendance/absence targets. These will reflect both national and Norfolk attendance targets.

The Principals will review the working of the policy with the Leadership Team and make at least annual reports to the local Governing Board.