



# Hayesfield Girls' School

*Achieving Ambitions*

## Attendance and Punctuality Policy

### Principles

At Hayesfield School we demand the highest level of attendance and punctuality from every student. Regular and ongoing attendance will provide the opportunity for each student to develop their full potential during their time at school. The school governors, parents, all staff and students must do all in their power to ensure this objective is achieved in line with the legal framework governing attendance and punctuality (Appendix B).

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient, fulltime education suitable to his/her age, aptitude and ability and to any special educational needs he/she may have either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

Section 444 further states that: "The parent of a child of compulsory school age registered at school and failing to attend regularly is guilty of an offence punishable by law."

Although there is no legal framework for Post 16 attendance and punctuality Hayesfield students are expected to have an exemplary record of attendance in order to support their learning. (Appendix E)

### This Policy aims to:

- improve the overall percentage of students at school
- make attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with the school including, students, parents, teachers and governors
- develop a framework which defines agreed roles and responsibilities and promotes consistency in carrying out designated tasks
- provide support, advice and guidance to parents and students, developing a positive and consistent communication between home and school
- develop a systematic approach to gathering and analysing attendance related data
- further develop a system of rewards and sanctions
- promote effective partnerships with the education welfare service and with other services and agencies
- recognize the needs of the individual student when planning reintegration following significant periods of absence
- provide a framework for subject staff to monitor and report poor attendance and punctuality to lessons.

### Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Body will:

- review the Attendance Policy annually;

- monitor its implementation;
- monitor progress against School targets;
- monitor for issues of Equal Opportunity.

The Headteacher will:

- set attendance targets as part of the development plan and target-setting process;
- Monitor progress.

The Assistant Headteacher (Attendance) will:

- oversee the attendance arrangements;
- work with Heads of Year to ensure the efficient running of the system;
- make periodic checks of the registers to monitor student absence;
- make periodic checks on absence notes and the reasons for absence;
- deal with issues of inadequate registering;
- arrange appropriate training for staff;
- keep the Head informed of the progress of the policy; and
- advise the Head on any strategies that could be initiated or improved.
- determine (in collaboration with the 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;
- notify parents as appropriate that if a student of compulsory school age fails to attend regularly his/her parents commit an offence;
- initiate with appropriate staff strategies to improve attendance;
- liaise with the LA over persistent absentees ;
- liaise with the LA and police when they wish to exercise their powers to enforce truants to return to school; and
- make a termly report with statistics to the governing body.

Heads of Year will:

- ensure that all student absences are noted and absence notes received from parents;
- make regular checks on the efficiency of the registering;
- make regular checks on absence notes;
- ensure that all suspected truancy is followed up and dealt with;
- contact parents over student absences where appropriate;
- liaise with Children Missing Education Officer (CMEO) to review patterns of attendance/punctuality and agree appropriate strategies;
- make reports to the Assistant Headteacher (Attendance) on the efficiency of the system;
- liaise with the Assistant Headteacher over training needs.

Form Tutors will:

- ensure that students are registered accurately;
- ensure that students bring absence notes;
- follow up cases of unaccounted for absence or unacceptable 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 and lateness;
- make students aware of their attendance percentages;

- be a significant role model.

Teaching staff will:

- inform the (Head of Year) of the names of students who are absent without notification;
- be responsible for the accurate official registration of students at the beginning of each lesson, using SIMS Lesson Monitor.
- welcome any student with long term absence back into the classroom without question.

Students are required to:

- attend regularly unless they are ill or have an authorised absence
- ('Attending regularly' means registering before the attendance register is closed for the session);
- inform the school of their absence on the first day of non-attendance;
- bring an explanatory note on the day of return to school;
- make any request for leave of absence on the school's official leave of absence form.

Parents are:

- Responsible for ensuring that his/her child attends school regularly and punctually in accordance with their legal obligations;
- To ring school on first day of absence;
- Provide a note to cover any absence;
- Plan holidays outside of term time;
- Attend Attendance Panels and Attendance Planning meetings organised by School and/or CMEO.

Attendance Officer is required to:

- To enter attendance/absence data into SIMS using Lesson Monitor
- To prepare attendance records for tutors.
- To prepare reports for Assistant Headteacher (Attendance/HoY/Tutors)
- To contact parent/guardian on first day of absence
- To support targeted students

Children Missing Education Officer:

- Liaises with Assistant Headteacher (Attendance) and Heads of Year regarding concerns over student absence;
- There will be fortnightly timetabled meetings between Head of Year, Attendance Officers and CMEO to deal with attendance/punctuality and welfare issues.
- The CMEO attends the school attendance panels to represent the LEA

SENCO:

- To support students on the SEN register who have regular patterns of non-attendance.
- To be involved in any reintegration programme where deemed necessary.

## **INTERVENTION PROCEDURES**

### **Level 1 – Tutor Based School Intervention (4 week review)**

In the initial stages, the tutor is best placed to attempt to address any poor attendance of students. This initial intervention should include:

- Making contact with parents either in person or by telephone.
- Working in partnership with parents and students to identify underlying causes of non-attendance such as, SEN, Medical needs, Bullying, Family difficulties, Social problems, Disaffection, Lateness.
- Adopting in-school policies to identify underlying problems and where appropriate, develop suitable strategies to address them.

### **Level 2 – School Based Intervention (4 week review)**

However if the attendance rate drops below 90% over at least a four week period the Head of Year will send Level 2 Attendance letter and they will be monitored weekly by Head of Year and EWO (Amber group). This intervention should be actioned if the following criteria apply:

Tutor intervention has taken place.

There is not a legitimate reason for the low figure e.g. genuine medical condition.

The low figure is not the result of an unauthorised holiday. (This is covered by a separate letter/form)

At the end of a four week period of review the following outcomes may happen:

Attendance has improved significantly and the Level 2 can be removed

Attendance has improved and the Level 2 can be extended

Attendance has not improved and the student will move to Level3

### **Level 3 – School Based in Conjunction with Advice from CME0 (4 week review)**

School based intervention is still considered the appropriate level of intervention.

The criteria for this level of intervention would be:

- Attendance rate drops below 85% and there is not a genuine explanation for the absence e.g. Long term medical treatment
- Attendance rate has not improved in the four weeks since the Level 1 intervention

A School Attendance Panel meeting (Appendix C) will be convened with Head of Year, Assistant Headteacher (Attendance), CME0 and parents. This will give all parties the opportunity to discuss any issues relating to the poor attendance. An attendance agreement will be written and reviewed by School and Children Missing Education Service (CMES) on a four week basis. They will be placed in a group monitored daily by the attendance officer. If these students are absent parents will be phoned on a daily basis. Record cards will be kept recording contact with the parents

Attendance has improved significantly and the Level 3 can be removed

Attendance had improved and the Level 3 can be extended

Attendance has not improved (is below 80%) and the student will move to Level 4

## **Level 4 – Referral to the CMES**

Each Student will be considered on an individual basis. However the general criteria for referral would be:

- Following school intervention at level 2 and 3 and attendance has fallen below 80%
- Unexplained absences of 10 consecutive days after initial enquiries by the school staff
- Continued unauthorised absence
- Patterns of irregular attendance
- The school has been unable to contact parents
- The school is concerned that the absence may be condoned by the parents/carers
- School refusal
- The school is concerned that a student's absences may be due to emotional or medical difficulties.
- Illegal child employment
- The student is at particular risk of disaffection i.e. those with special educational needs, students in care of the local authority (looked after children), students from minority ethnic groups, students of traveller families, students with carers responsibilities, pregnant school girls and teenage parents
- The appropriate referral paperwork must be used for all referrals

## **Truancy**

- Students who truant from lessons and/or school are marked as an unauthorised absence.
- Parents are informed
- Students are placed in a Saturday morning detention from 09.00 – 11.00. These detentions are identified on the school calendar and supervised by the Headteacher

## **Long Term Medical Absence**

When a student is absence because of long term illness a medical action plan will need to be initiated. This will provide a structure for the student to be reintegrated back into the classroom.

Where the student needs the support of the Home Education and Reintegration Service (HERS) this will be sort/referred to by the medical professional responsible for the student's case.

The school will take the lead role in planning and reviewing the student's provision in conjunction with HERS.

## **Punctuality**

It is important to make the distinction between a late that occurs during the official registration period and a late that occurs after the official registration period. The registration period covers the time between 8.30 and 8.50 am during the morning session and 1.05 and 1.10 pm during the afternoon session.

Students that arrive late during the registration period should go directly to the classroom. Tutors should record this late on SIMS Lesson Monitor. Students who arrive late outside the registration period should sign in at the Main Office.

The Attendance Officer will enter the appropriate late:

L before 9.30am  
U after 9.30am

### **Signing out**

There should be a record of all students on site. Outside of the arrangements described above, all students should sign out if they are leaving the school site. Before signing out at the Main Office students should have written authorisation from Tutor and/or Team Leader Year.

### **Holidays in School Time**

- Parents do not have an automatic right to withdraw students from school for a holiday and, in law, have to apply for permission in advance. A holiday request form is available for this purpose (see attachments).
- Only in exceptional circumstances may the amount of leave granted exceed (in total) more than 10 school days throughout the students time in Key Stage 3 . No holiday will be authorised in Key Stage 4.
- Holidays agreed by the school are authorised absences and shown by code H in the register.
- Holidays not agreed by the school, but taken, are unauthorized absences and shown in the register by code G in the register
- When considering a request for a holiday we would expect the current attendance to always be above 90%.
- Parents will be reminded regularly that it is not an automatic right to take holidays in term time.
- Parents who take their children on holiday without the absence being authorised by the school will receive a written warning that legal action will be taken if there are further unauthorised absences.
- If parents take their children on holiday without the absence being authorised a second time, the School will request that the Local Authority issue a fixed penalty notice (PN).
- In rare circumstances, a Fixed penalty notice may be issued in respect of a first unauthorised absence; where a child would miss an external examination.

### **Fixed penalty notices**

The CMES will issue and administer penalty notices in response to requests from the Headteacher providing that such requests are made using the Penalty Notice Request form.

- Penalty notices may be issued where the CMES determines that to do so would be an effective and appropriate addition to ongoing casework with a student and their parent. The Headteacher will be informed if this action is taken.
- Where feasible, parents should be warned of the possibility of a penalty notice being issued and invited to make representations to the CMES.

### **Reports (see Appendix D)**

The SIMS system will print out a number of reports, which enable tutors/Team Leader Year/ CMEO to monitor the pattern of attendance of students. These are listed below:

Achievement reports for individual students/year groups (termly)

- Individual student summary report (as required)

- Printed register for each tutor group (weekly)
- Analysis of patterns of attendance for tutor groups and year groups (termly reports to Team Leader Year/LMT Meetings)

These will be printed on a regular basis for tutors/Team Leader Year. In addition, the historical record of each student can be viewed in SIMS.

### **Rewards and Incentives**

It is important that there is a reward system that recognises student achievement in these areas and promotes the explanation of regular, punctual attendance.

- Rewards that will be used are:  
Letters home to parents each formal reporting period.  
Achievement certificates  
Use of star charts and short term (2 Week) attendance and punctuality targets  
Recognition by tutor and SLT in assembly.
- Students with 100% attendance for the term will receive a letter of congratulations sent home by the Head of Year.
- Students with 100% attendance for the year will have a 100% Attendance Certificate presented at their end of year celebration assembly. Gift tokens may also be awarded in finance is available.
- Students with 98% attendance or above for the year will have an Excellent Attendance Certificate presented at their end of year celebration assembly.
- Students who have achieved targets set at attendance panels may receive appropriate rewards.

### **Monitoring and Evaluating the Policy**

It is important to set realistic targets; these targets will be set in consultation with the LEA. The school will look at those interventions which have been successful as part of the evaluation process. When evaluating success the school will consider whether or not:

- Attendance has improved
- Punctuality has improved
- Parental response to absences has improved
- Re-integration plans have been successful
- The school has been successful in raising the profile of attendance both within school, governing body and the local community
- Students are fully aware of the importance of punctuality and regular attendance and the attendance
- procedures operating within school
- Attendance issues have been included as topics in school assemblies, Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education (PSHE) lessons, or as a theme for any other lessons

The monitoring of the attendance and punctuality policy will be the responsibility of the Governors Welfare and Guidance Committee.

### **Appendix A Attendance Codes**

<b>CODE</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>MEANING</b>	
/	Present (am)	Present	
\	Present (pm)	Present	
B Activity	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved	Education
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by Another appropriate code/description)	Authorised Absence	
D Activity	Dual registration (i.e. student attending other Establishment)	Approved	Education
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised Absence	
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised Absence	
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed or days in excess of Agreement)	Unauthorised Absence	
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised Absence	
I	Illness (NOY medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised Absence	
J Activity	Interview	Approved	Education
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present	
M	Medical/ Dental appointments	Authorised Absence	
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised Absence	
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other Code/description)	Unauthorised Absence	
P Activity	Approved sporting Activity	Approved	Education
R	Religious observance	Authorised Absence	
S	Study leave	Authorised Absence	
T	Traveller absence	Authorised Absence	
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised Absence	
V Activity	Educational visit or trip	Approved	Education
W Activity	Work Experience	Approved	Education
X	Non-compulsory school age absence	Not counted in possible Attendances	
Y	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible Attendances	
Z	Student not yet on roll	Not counted in possible Attendances	
#	School closed to students	Not counted in possible Attendances	

The key consideration in the use of codes J, P, V, W and B is that:

They are of an educational nature, directly linked to the schools programme

They are approved by the school

They are supervised either by a member of staff or another individual authorised by the school

## **APPENDIX B THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK GOVERNING ATTENDANCE**

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient, full time education suitable to his/her age, aptitude and ability and to any special educational needs he/she may have either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

Section 444 further states that: "The parent of a child of compulsory school age registered at school and failing to attend regularly is guilty of an offence punishable by law." An offence is not committed if it can be demonstrated that:

- The student was absent with leave (authorised absence)
- The student was ill or prevented from attending by unavoidable cause
- The absence occurred on a day set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the student/parent belongs

Failure to comply may lead to prosecution in the Magistrates Court where on conviction each parent would be liable to a fine up to £2500 and/or 3 months imprisonment.

The Act also places a legal obligation on:

- The LA to provide and enforce attendance
- Schools to register attendance and notify the LA (or the CMES) of a child's absence from school without authorisation of 10 or more days.
- The governing body to make sure that school registers are kept, one for attendance and one for admissions.

## **Appendix C Attendance Panels**

- Attendance Panels are set in advance on the school calendar (6 times a year for each Key Stage.)
- These dates are circulated to Attendance Officers and Connexions Officer
- Students for each Panel are identified by the HoY/Key Stage Coordinator, and Attendance Officer in the meeting 2 weeks in advance of the Panel
- A letter is sent to the relevant parents/carers at least 5 days in advance of the Panel explaining why their daughter has been identified and the venue – Key Stage 3 in Lower School Library and Key Stage 4 in the Upper School LRC. The letter requests parents/carers to confirm attendance by phone.
- A copy of the letter will go to the tutor for information
- If the student is in Year 9, 10 or 11 a copy of the letter goes to the Connexion Officer inviting them to attend.
- A copy of the letter and the registration certificate goes to the SLT member i/c Attendance.
- A phone-call is made to remind parents/carers two days in advance of Panel.
- A file of all letters is kept by the KS3 and KS4 Attendance Officer for reference by HOY/KS Coordinator, tutor, Connexions officer etc marked 'KEY STAGE ... PANEL CANDIDATES'.
- At the Attendance Panel the following are expected:
  - SLT member i/c Attendance and Punctuality
  - HOY/KS Coordinator
  - Parents/carers
  - Student
  - Connexions Officer – Years 9-11
- An Attendance Agreement is signed by all parties present. (Note: The Panel meeting goes ahead in the absence of parents/carers.) A review date is set – usually the end of that Term. In the event of a 'severe' case this date will be three weeks from the Panel.
- Within two days following the Panel a letter goes to the parent/carer summarising the key points of the meeting along with a copy of the agreement. Copies go to staff attending the Panel and one is filed by the relevant Attendance Officer.
- On the review date the SLT member i/c Attendance will write to parents/carers regarding progress. Lack of improvement will lead to referral to CMES. All letters will be filed by Attendance Officers with copies to HOY/KS Coordinator for reference/information.

## **Appendix D Guidelines for taking registers**

### **Registration**

Docs on Admin/School Policies/Attendance and Punctuality Policy

There are two periods of official registration for Years 7-11, one in the morning session and one in the afternoon session.

Morning Registration will be taken in tutor groups                      8.30 – 8.50am

Afternoon Registration will be taken in teaching groups                      1.05 – 1.10pm

In addition, teaching staff will complete and hold a register each lesson of each class taught. The administration of attendance and absence will be by the SIMS Attendance Module.

### **Attendance**

- Attendance is recorded in the two official registration periods by using Lesson Monitor.
- Tutors should check that the list of students is accurate. Any errors should be reported to the Attendance Officer.
- Students are marked as either present or absent or late.
- Tutors should check that the date of the register relates to the current week.
- Lesson Monitor should only be completed by a member of staff.

### **Absence**

- The Attendance Officer will enter all reasons for absence.
- Letters to parents will be sent to request an explanation for unexplained absence.
- Each period of absence for each student should be authorised once a note/telephone call from the parent has been received to explain the absence. The Attendance Officer should use one of the designated codes explained in Appendix A
- **BY LAW ONLY THE SCHOOL CAN AUTHORISE ABSENCE, NOT PARENTS**
- An absence should only be marked as unauthorised in one of two sets of circumstances:
  - Parents provide a letter/note/message, which does not meet criteria outlined above.
  - Letters have been sent to parents, which have not resulted in an explanation for the absence.
- The medical absences of students on Level 1, Level 2 or Level 3 Attendance Intervention should not be authorised unless supported a medical note/evidence.
- Assistant Heads Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 should confirm whether an absence should be marked as unauthorised.

## **Appendix E Post 16 Attendance and Punctuality Statement**

### **Attendance and Registration**

Attendance at all lessons is compulsory. Students are expected to arrive promptly at the start of lessons.

It is never acceptable to miss a lesson without informing the school in the way set out below. If your attendance is poor, this may jeopardise your future on your course and poor attendance will be regarded as a problem which will be discussed with parents.

Examples of reasons for absence from lessons include: illness (which renders you incapable of attending school), driving test, Open Day visit if authorised by Head of 6<sup>th</sup>

Examples of unacceptable reasons for absence from lessons include: driving lessons, part-time employment, working on homework or medical appointments which could be attended outside of lesson time.

Students must attend morning registration when required by their tutor to do (Y12 students, every morning, Y13 students, 4 mornings a week, the 5th morning can be negotiated 'off' with your form tutor)

### **How to report absence**

If you are away from school, you should telephone the main office on the first day you are away to report the reason for your absence. If you are likely to be away for some time, you should inform the Sixth Form Office so that work can be sent home for you.

On your return, if you have been away for three days or more, you will need to complete a Reason for Absence form available from The Sixth Form Office.

### **Holidays during term time**

Permission to take holiday during term time must always be sought before booking a holiday. Permission will only be granted if parents make a written request to The Head of Sixth Form stating the reasons why they want their son/daughter to miss school during the period in question.