

Attendance Policy

‘Together we are stronger’

Attendance Policy

Good attendance is essential if pupils are to take full advantage of school and gain the appropriate skills which will equip them for life. It is important to ensure that our most vulnerable students are given the same opportunities, which may mean extra support in certain cases.

The academy aims to achieve good attendance by operating an attendance policy within which staff, students, parent(s)/carer(s), local community and the Attendance and Pupil Welfare Service can work in partnership. The academy will monitor attendance and ensure quick and early intervention if a problem is identified.

All staff will encourage good attendance and will liaise with home and partner agencies if this is appropriate. Good attendance will be seen as an achievement in its own right and recognised as such by the academy. The attendance policy is based on the premise of equal opportunities for all.

Aims

- To improve the quality of school life.
- To create a culture in which good attendance is 'normality'
- To demonstrate to pupils, parent(s)/carers and staff that the school values good attendance and to recognise that good regular attendance is an achievement in itself.
- To be consistent in the implementation, both in terms of rewards and sanctions.
- To value the individual and be socially and educationally inclusive.

Objectives

- To involve children more in their school attendance
- To improve communication with parents(s)/carers about regular school attendance
- All school staff to continue to encourage children's attendance.
- To recognise the important role of class teachers and our learning mentor in promoting and monitoring good attendance

Children are expected to attend school for the full 190 days of the academy year, unless there is a good reason for absence. There are two types of absence:

- Authorised (where the school approves pupil absence)
- Unauthorised (where the school will not approve absence)

It is expected that parent(s)/carer(s) will provide an explanation if the child is absent on the first day the absence occurs. This can be by letter, telephone, personally at the office or by appointment.

If contact, explaining the child's absence, fails to be made by parent(s)/carer(s), then the school will contact the home by telephone on the initial day, followed by a letter after 3 days of unexplained absence.

The principal will regularly remind parent(s)/carer(s) of the importance of good attendance and punctuality.

Classes with 100% attendance will be rewarded by the academy weekly and individual children will be rewarded termly with a sticker and yearly with a prize.

Identification and Referral of Poor Attendance

- Identification is made by the teacher (cause for concern)
- Concerns are passed to the school office for contacting parent(s)/carer(s).
- Office staff will contact parent(s)/carer(s) with letter 1.
- Following the letter the child's attendance will be monitored for an appropriate period.
- If there is no improvement, at this point, letter 2 will be sent and parent(s)/carer(s) requested to provide medical evidence for future absences.
- After monitoring, if there is unauthorised absence parent(s)/carer(s) will be informed that a referral to the Attendance and Pupil Welfare Service will take place.
- Reinforce parental duty to ensure full school attendance.
- The referral to the Attendance and Pupil Welfare Service will consist of the referral form, copies of all correspondence to parent(s)/carer(s) and a print out of the child or young person's attendance certificate, for this year and last year.

It is the duty of parents to ensure full school attendance.

Family Holidays during Term Time

Every school day counts towards your child's future. Days off school add up to lost learning.

In total there are 175 non-school days a year. This gives families the opportunity to:

- ***Spend time together***
- ***Go on family visits***
- ***Go on holiday***
- ***Go on days out***
- ***Attend routine appointments***

The law still says that parent(s)/carer(s) do not have the right to take their child out of school for holidays during term time. If you take your child on holiday during term-time without the school's permission this will be recorded as unauthorised absence and may result in parents being issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice.

Why shouldn't I take my child on holiday during term time?

Many parents and carers think it is okay to go on holiday during term time however this has a negative effect on their children's learning and ability to achieve. .

- ***10 days absence = 95% attendance***
- ***19 days absence = 90% attendance***
- ***29 days absence = 85% attendance***
- ***38 days absence = 80% attendance***
- ***47 days absence = 75% attendance***

Children with over 90% attendance throughout their school-life are more likely to gain 5 or more A-C GCSE'S or equivalent qualifications.

How do I request leave of absence?

It is expected that parent(s)/carer(s) will provide an explanation if the child is absent on the first day the absence occurs. This can be by letter, telephone, personally at the office or by appointment. Medical evidence for a stay in hospital should be brought in to support explanations.

If contact, explaining the child's absence, fails to be made by parent(s)/carer(s), then the school will contact the home by telephone on the initial day, followed by a letter after 3 days of unexplained absence.

How do I request leave of absence for a family holiday?

All requests should be made on an Application for Leave of Absence for Annual Holiday which is available from the school or via the website: www.hatfieldwoodhouse.org.uk

This should be submitted no later than 21 days before the start of the holiday.

Will the school authorise taking my child away during term-time?

From 1 September 2013, a change to government legislation means that schools are no longer allowed to authorise requests for children to be taken out of school for a holiday during term time. The Principal may only grant leave in 'exceptional' circumstances.

Exceptional circumstances might be:-

- Service personnel returning from/scheduled to embark upon a tour of duty abroad.
- Where a holiday is recommended as part of a parent or child's rehabilitation from a medical issue. Medical evidence must be provided.

These circumstances must be conveyed in writing to the academy. In considering whether to authorise leave for a family holiday, the school will consider each case individually, taking into account the exceptional circumstances.

Advice will be taken from the Attendance and Pupil Welfare Service.

What happens if the Principal does not agree my request?

If you take your child on holiday during term time, without the authorisation of the principal, the absence is reported to the Local Authority. A Fixed Penalty Notice may be issued. If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued, the penalty is £60 per child, per parent/carer when the payment is made within 21 days, after 29 days it will increase to £120. Failure to pay within 28 days will result in a summons to appear before the Magistrates Court on the grounds that the parent/carer has failed to secure their child's regular attendance at school. Please note that a separate Fixed Penalty Notice will be issued to each parent for each child and all monies are payable to the Local Authority.

The school does not receive any funding from Fixed Penalty Notices.

Lateness

The academy day begins at 8:55am and all children are expected to be in the academy by 8:55am. Children who are consistently late are disrupting not only their own education but also that of others. Where persistent lateness gives cause for concern further action will be taken.

Monitoring and Review

The Principal will monitor the implementation and effectiveness of this policy and will report annually to the Local Governing Body. This report will include overall trends, amendments made to the policy, as a result of best practice, or in response to Government guidelines

Approval by the Local Governing Body and Review Date

This policy has been formally approved and adopted by the Local Governing Body at a formally convened meeting

Policy approved: (Chair of EAB)

Date: January 2017

Date of Policy review: January 2018