

Holly Lodge College of Science



# Attendance Policy 2015

## ATTENDANCE POLICY 2015

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### **Aim**

The Attendance Policy will form a coherent and effective strategy for the school to help with issues around attendance. It should promote a consistent, clear and co-ordinated response to attendance. The policy should work alongside other school policies to also have consideration for behavioural and welfare issues, along with the academic curriculum.

### **Ethos**

‘Children should pick up the message that their presence is important’

‘All staff members should contribute to improving and maintaining student attendance to take ownership of attendance as a whole school responsibility.’

### **Policy Statement**

Education is a life-long process and regular school attendance and learner achievement are inseparable. Holly Lodge is committed to providing a comprehensive education for all its learners and understands that irregular attendance will undermine progress.

The school is committed to sending a clear message to parents and students that school attendance is a legal responsibility and unnecessary absence will be challenged, and if appropriate, further action taken.

### **School Attendance and the Law**

The Education Act 1996 states that parents must ensure their children receive appropriate full-time education according to their age, ability and aptitude. This usually means ensuring a child registered at school attends regularly and punctually.

Any person who has the care of a child or who has parental responsibility is responsible for ensuring good attendance. Failure to do so can result in a Fixed Penalty Notice being issued or prosecution.

"If a child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at a school fails to attend regularly at the school, his parent is guilty of an offence". under s.444(1) Education Act 1996.

### **Objectives**

- To promote the importance of, and increase levels of, attendance in school.
- To ensure the marking of registers is accurate, consistent and reliable.
- To identify students whose absence is giving cause for concern and act appropriately.
- To promote an effective whole school approach to the management of attendance ensuring all those involved are aware of their roles and responsibilities to make a positive contribution

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## **Expectations**

Students:

- Attend school every possible day and on time.
- Arrive on time for all lessons.
- Inform a member of staff of any problems which may hinder their attendance at school

Parents:

- Encourage children to attend school regularly.
- Contact school whenever their child is unable to attend school – on the morning of the first day of absence.
- Contact school if any problem is hindering their child's regular attendance.

School:

- To provide a safe and comfortable environment for learning.
- To promote and encourage good attendance at school.
- To take early action when problems are identified.
- Ensure attendance is monitored and parents are informed of any concerns.
- Provide support when appropriate for individual students who are struggling to attend.

## **Responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of all staff, parents/carers and student to promote and ensure good attendance. Any member of staff who has a concern regarding the attendance of a student should report this appropriately.

## **Effective Communication between School and Home**

- This begins with the Home/School Agreement given to the family of all new students which states that a Parent/Guardian shall aim to: '*ensure regular and punctual attendance and provide appropriate explanations for my child's absence*'.
- Contact should be made to parents/carers by text or telephone call on first day of absence (First day calling).
- Explanations for absence are required, expected and chased up by form tutors, Attendance Manager, Student Support Managers, or any other appropriate member of staff.
- Letters are regularly sent to parents/carers informing of the student's level of attendance.
- Students with difficulties are monitored and regular contact is made with parents through letters, telephone calls and meetings.
- Parent/Carer interviews should be held to reaffirm school policies, procedure and individual agreements. In some cases, parents may be asked to sign parenting agreements with action plans, targets and reviews to promote good attendance and punctuality.

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- Parents should be informed if punctuality is a problem as they may not be aware if they have left home before their child, or if the child is loitering before coming into school.
- Parents are informed by letter each week if their child has detention for having three or more late marks in one week.

## **Effective Communication in School**

- Attendance levels regularly reported to form tutors/Key Stage Directors.
- Concerns and responses are promptly conveyed to all appropriate staff.
- Class teachers/form tutors promote and encourage punctuality and attendance.
- Staff who have concerns that lateness or absence may be an indication of more serious problems should report these concerns to an appropriate member of staff.
- Checks should be made regarding suspected internal truancy with registers being completed for each lesson.
- Students who need to leave the classroom should be given passes to show if they are questioned.

## **Lesson Truancy**

This is initially the responsibility of the curriculum area in terms of applying sanctions. These should include communicating with parents, detention to make up for the lost work and reporting such issues to the relevant Key Stage Director.

Teachers should complete lesson registers in order for it to be clear whether students are in lessons for both truancy and safeguarding monitoring.

## **Alternative Provision**

Periodically there are students who, for a variety of reasons, may attend an alternative educational site. These cases are the subject of a discussion between Attendance/Pastoral Staff and Senior Management and are subject to regular review and attendance monitoring.

## **Re-integration**

Following a period of prolonged absence, a variety of strategies may be used depending upon the circumstance and the individual. These include home visit, school meeting, part-time timetables, mentor referrals and daily attendance report. If a student is returning following a period of exclusion, they should not be attending lessons until a return meeting has taken place with a member of senior staff and parent/carer.

## **Rewards**

Praise to good or improved attenders may be given by form tutors, senior staff, support staff and lesson teachers. The attendance of the top attending year group is displayed outside Student Services each week. At the end of year, the top attenders from each year group are entered into a prize draw to win a voucher.

## **Holidays in term time**

The amendments made to the Education (Pupil Regulation)(England) Regulations (2006) mean that Head Teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time

unless there are exceptional circumstances. Parents/carers should make any request for leave in writing and will receive a written response.

The response will be written according to the guidance from the Local Authority Attendance and Prosecution Service and explain responsibilities and possible outcomes if students are taken out of school during term time.