



# Highams Park Academy Trust

## Policy and Procedure for Student Attendance and Punctuality

This policy applies to all teaching and support staff

This Policy is taken from the EPM template and has had minor amendments made to it with the approval of the Governing Body to tailor the Policy for Highams Park School.

Date of Review	SLMT Lead	Trustee Approval
15 October 2018	Cally Halkes	17 December 2018
12 November 2020	Cally Halkes	12 November 2020
28 March 2022	Cally Halkes	28 March 2022
1 December 2022	Enuma Afulukwe	1 December 2022

Date of next review: March 2024



**Some aspects of this policy may be temporarily suspended be due to COVID-19. Therefore, this document should be read in conjunction with the most up to date Risk Assessment which is found on the School's Website.**

**The purpose of this policy is:**

1. To state the importance of good attendance and punctuality; make clear the role of those with responsibility for attendance; state the target setting process
2. To identify actions taken by the school to promote general good attendance and punctuality including working with parents/carers
3. To identify actions taken to reward good or improved attendance and punctuality
4. To identify actions to be taken where there are causes for concern including liaison between the school and external agencies
5. To identify monitoring procedures of the effectiveness of the policy

**Section 1: To state the importance of good attendance and punctuality; make clear the role of the attendance governor; state the attendance and punctuality processes**

The school aims to promote the best possible attendance and punctuality record for its students in order to:

- Ensure that students gain the greatest benefit from the education on offer thus enabling them to reach their full potential
- Ensure that students have continuity of learning and are afforded the best opportunity for success in coursework and examinations
- Ensure that students secure good records for references for further education and employment
- Promote patterns of behaviour which will prepare them for the responsibilities of adult life

**What is good attendance:**

At Highams Park School we expect students to aim for 100% attendance and punctuality. Individual student records prove that this is achievable. We define good attendance as consistently over 96%: -

- 100% = excellent attendance
- 98% = very good attendance
- 96% = good attendance

A student with less than 90% attendance is deemed by the Department for Education a 'Persistent Absentee' regardless of the reason for the absence.

An attendance of 90% means that the equivalent of **one day every fortnight** is being missed due to absence. An attendance of 80% means that a **full year's education** would be lost between Years 7 and 11. Analysis of examination results indicates a strong correlation between good attendance and examination success.

**Processes**

There are special and rare occasions where families may request an 'exceptional leave of absence'. This request must be made in advance of the requested dates, in writing and directed to the SLMT Attendance Lead.

Reporting unexpected absence or lateness can be done so via the school website.

When there is no reason given for an absence, a member of the attendance, safeguarding and/or pastoral team will communicate with the primary guardian. If a pattern of absence is realised, the EWO and HOY will investigate further and challenge the absenteeism accordingly; first facilitating a meeting or home visit.

**Punctuality:** Students have to be in on the school site by 8.30am, in their tutor room to register at 8.35am and their period 5 teaching room at 2.15pm. If they are not, they are late. The official school register closes at 9.05am. All students should have a 100% punctuality records. Only lateness for exceptional reasons will be excused. Regular lateness is unacceptable.

**Roles in School**

Assistant Principal – with attendance responsibility

- Oversee attendance systems within the school
- Prepare, analyse and supply attendance figures for the Trustees, leadership team and year teams
- Liaises with the directors of BACME over the traded EWO service provided to ensure Value for Money and that service is their Gold service
- Delegated authorisation or otherwise to requests for leave of absence

### **Head of Years**

- Monitor the attendance of the year group
- Ensure all absences are accounted for by an explanation from parents/carers
- Monitor the attendance of the individual students in the year group
- Through individual intervention, support students whose attendance is less than good to improve
- Liaise with the parents/carers of students whose attendance is cause for concern
- Meet fortnightly with the Behaviour, Attendance and Children Missing Education (BACME) officer from the Local Authority to discuss support and intervention for students whose attendance is a cause for concern
  
- Refer to Home Education Service those students who are unable to attend school on medical grounds

### **Tutors**

- Take the morning register
- Encourage and motivate tutees to maintain at least good attendance by the promotion of good attendance and displaying the weekly attendance competition figures
- Through individual intervention, support students whose attendance is less than good to improve

### **Subject teachers**

- To take the online Arbor register every lesson within the first 10 minutes. Log any lateness to lesson, the number of minutes late and the reason for the lateness offered by the student. Lateness to lessons to be challenged robustly unless the student presents a late slip from another member of staff.
- Report any unaccounted absences to the Pastoral Support team and notify SLMT via Red Card Referral email.

### **School Attendance Officer and/or Attendance Secretary**

- Monitor the taking of registers and send reminders when these have not been completed
- View online absence, late messages and appointment evidence from parents and transfer explanations offered and add to ARBOR
- On first day of absence - send emails and texts phone calls each day to the parents of students for whom their absence is unaccounted. Amend registers as responses are received. Follow up with phone call for the most at risk students as determined by DSL/HoYs/SLMT. Refer to Heads of Year any student whose absence remains unauthorised at the end of the day.
- Prepare attendance information for the tutor group attendance competition
- Send standard weekly letters to the parents of students who arrive late and/or have unaccounted for absence
- Statutory Roll Call register to be complete at the end of each day
- Print attendance list for use during fire alarms

### **School and Year Group targets:**

The school sets annual targets for overall attendance figures. This is never less than the National Attendance figure.

**Section 2: To identify actions taken by the school to promote general good attendance and punctuality including working with parents**

### **Punctuality:**

- Teachers and tutors challenge lateness to lessons or registration.
- Senior staff, HoYs and the attendance secretary monitor and challenge late arrivals at school
- Automated emails or individual phone calls to the parents of students who arrive late for school or absent without reason are made.
- Use of assemblies and student bulletin to promote good punctuality
- Sanctions/actions taken for individuals (as described in section 4) including detentions for students, parental notification and discussion as appropriate and referral to the education welfare service for escalation.
- Details of attendance are to parents each data drop and are also available online for parental scrutiny.

### **Attendance:**

- Potential poor attenders identified in Year 6 (before entry)
- Computerised sessional and lesson by lesson registration
- A member of administrative staff dedicated to the administration of attendance
- School, year group targets set and targets for individuals where necessary
- Tutor group rewards linked to the house point system and debts and rewards system
- Individual rewards for students with excellent attendance
- Information sent home to parents with each data drop and available online to parents at all times
- Information on student attendance included in termly school report
- Leave including but not limited to holidays/weddings and visiting relatives etc requested for term-time is not authorised other than in very exceptional cases
- Parents removing their children from school for holidays for three or more days referred to BACME for consideration for the issuing of a Penalty Charge Notice £120 per child per parent, reduced to £60 per child per parent if paid within 21days. If not paid within 28 days, BACME may refer the matter to court.
- Promotion in assemblies and tutor time.
- Support and education welfare appointments are available for parents and students where attendance issues are emerging.
- Parents required to log online any absence / lateness with full details of reasons for consideration by the school as to whether to authorise or not. Evidence of medical appointments is required before authorisation
- Email/Text or phone call home system on the first day of absence
- All students remain on site at lunchtime with the exception of 6<sup>th</sup> Form
- Weekly monitoring of attendance figures for consideration at each SLMT meeting and half termly analysis for the school as a whole.
- Detailed analysis of attendance figures and trends carried out half termly.
- Advice on the school's website and in the induction booklet on how parents/carers can support good attendance
- Study leave kept to a minimum.
- The school buys in the services of BACME to work with the parents/carers of students whose attendance is causing concern

The school also benefits from the borough truancy patrol of the local area.

**Section 3: To identify actions taken to reward good or improved attendance and punctuality**

The school rewards individual good/improved attendance and punctuality by:

- House points for 100% attendance or improved attendance records
- Half Termly issue of certificates
- Attendance badges for 100% in an academic year
- Termly lottery for 100% attendance voucher

**Section 4: To identify actions to be taken where there are causes for concern including liaison between the school and external agencies**

**Punctuality:**

Causes for concern are identified as:

- Lateness to school in the morning
- Lateness to lessons

**Actions taken:**

**Lateness**

- Senior members of staff have a late duty at the pupil entrance after the 8.35am bell
- Students register their late and reason using the Inventory system at the late entrance. A late slip is printed to be shown to teacher to ensure the student goes straight to lesson and it also has a reminder about the late detention they are required to report to.
- Assistant Principal - attendance runs a 15 minute at lunch time and after school detention served on the day of lateness in the school hall for students for whom there is no supporting justifiable reason received from the parent on the online lateness form. In exceptional circumstances e.g. tube/train strike detentions will not be given. 6<sup>th</sup> form students have an 8am detention the following day in the Year 12 study area
- Non-attendance to the initial late detention is escalated to 30-minute detentions, SLMT detention and a day in the Inclusion room, respectively.
- Parents are informed in advance of any escalated sanctions
- Where there are no improvement parents, are contacted by letter and more serious sanctions given. These will include but are not limited to:  
Agreement with parents where possible, re sanctions that can also be applied at home or on the day of lateness. Punctuality report. Referral to BACME

**Attendance:**

Causes for concern are identified as:

- Attendance falling below 95%
- Pattern of absence where the same day is taken off with frequency
- Odd days of absence for alleged illness
- Previous history of poor attendance
- Condoned absence
- Any unauthorised absence
- Extended period of absence which is unexplained
- Refusal by child to attend school

**Actions taken:**



Investigation to check no special and extenuating circumstances exist via student and family conversations and meetings to offer support with completion of 'Our Family Journey'. This could also include the offer of a Learning Mentor, Welfare officer, Pastoral Support Worker, Counselling, Mental Health Work and/or Parenting Course.

If no such circumstances apply, actions from the following list will be taken as appropriate:

- Parents informed where there are causes for concern
- Placed on report
- Short term target of a period of time set for 100% attendance. Rewards linked to outcomes.
- Medium term target set for the next half term showing overall improvement in attendance % for that period of time. Rewards linked to outcomes.
- Parents contacted for all unauthorised absences
- BACME informed
- Parental interview with Head of Year and/or BACME Officer or further action to offer support and which may include a notification of parental responsibility or request for a medical evidence to cover future absences.
- School attendance panel meeting involving the local authority's Court Officer
- Parents referred to the Educational Welfare Service for issuing of Fixed Penalty Notice if they remove their child for 6 or more sessions for a holiday (i.e. 3 days or more)
- In exceptional circumstances of prolonged absence, reintegration offered via a reduced timetable and/or time in the Student Service Area for students to catch up on work missed

#### **Section 5: Monitoring of school attendance and punctuality policy**

**Annually (Using figures from the start of the school year to the date specified by the DFES for the Annual Absence Return)**

By year group and by whole school:

- Overall authorised and unauthorised attendance figures
- Breakdown of attendance/absence figures by each of the following
  - ✓ gender of students
  - ✓ year group
  - ✓ prior attainment band of students
  - ✓ ethnicity
  - ✓ pupil premium
  - ✓ EAL
  - ✓ SEN
- Numbers of students who have received various levels of attendance in the previous three terms and the previous year
- 100% = excellent attendance
- 98% = very good attendance
- 96% = good attendance
- 91-95% = concern
- Less than 90% = DfE PA student
- Analysis of year groups attendance against targets
- Analysis of the above figures compared to previous years
- Analysis of reasons for absence across year groups and the whole school

The DfE return figures and the figures for each year group are reported to the Trustees

**Half Termly:**



A report is made to the Senior leadership team about the previous half term attendance figures in line with the statutory attendance tables, together with any feedback on the implementation of the policy.

**Weekly:**

A report is made to the Senior leadership team about the current weekly attendance figures in line with the statutory attendance tables, together with any feedback on the implementation of the policy.

A running total of the attendance for each year group and for the whole school is kept.

**Other monitoring processes:**

- Attendance is regularly discussed and evaluated as part of the school evaluation framework and pastoral management systems

**Last approved by the Trustees March 2022. Next review March 2024**