



THE HILL PRIMARY ACADEMY ATTENDANCE POLICY

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| Date | September 2018 |
| Written by | Inclusion and Safeguarding Lead |
| Adopted by Trust Board | N/A |
| Adopted by LGB | |
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The Hill Primary Academy Attendance Policy 2018

Introduction

This policy applies to all students at The Hill Primary Academy and will be used to inform attendance practice within the Academy.

Key Requirements/ Legal Duties

By law, all students of compulsory school age (5 to 16) must receive a suitable full-time education. Parents have a legal responsibility to make sure this happens - either by registering their child at a school or by making other arrangements to give them a suitable, full-time education. As a last resort, schools in collaboration with the local authorities have legal powers to deal with poor attendance. The Hill Primary Academy seeks to operate in ways which maximise student potential while supporting parents in meeting their legal requirements.

The Hill Primary Academy fulfils its responsibilities in respect of taking a morning and afternoon session registration, of being open for the required 190 student school days unless prevented by extreme weather or other unforeseen exceptional circumstance, and by using the nationally recognised attendance codes.

Key principles

- Students at The Hill Primary Academy have the right to the best possible education
- In order for students to access the best possible education, a high level of attendance is essential.
- Students' ability to stay and feel safe, enjoy and achieve and to make a positive contribution will be jeopardised by poor attendance

Context

The Hill Primary Academy endeavours to provide a safe learning environment in which students can feel and be safe, enjoy and achieve. The Hill acknowledges the proven correlation between high level attendance and student outcomes. The Hill Primary Academy's attendance policy emphasises positive strategies and a range of interventions to ensure the highest levels of attendance. However, when normal academy procedures do not result in good attendance, a range of further measures, including legal action, have to be considered.

Aims of the policy

- To increase overall Academy attendance to 96.1% or above. To raise the profile of the importance of high level attendance among students, parents and other staff
- To outline a procedure for monitoring attendance and punctuality and intervention strategies
- To eradicate persistent lateness
- To develop understanding of the legal processes for persistent lateness and absence

Attendance practice

Improving attendance is a whole academy initiative. Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility including parents, students and all members of school staff.

The target attendance figure for all pupils is a **minimum of 96.1%** attendance. Based on their attendance figures children will be placed in one of the following groups below:

Gold Star

Attendance 100% - Greatest chance of Achievement

Green

Attendance 96% - 99.9% - Good chance of Achievement

Amber

Attendance 93% - 95.9% - Risk of Under Achievement

Pink

Attendance 90% - 92.9% - High Risk of Under Achievement

Red

Attendance 0% - 89.9% - Severe Risk of Under Achievement

Positive reinforcement

In order to promote high levels of attendance and to recognise individual and collective high percentage attendance or improvement, The Hill Primary Academy uses a range of rewards and positive reinforcement strategies. As appropriate to student age these include:

- Display of tutor/class attendance
- Stickers
- Certificates
- Letters
- Mention in assemblies
- Reinforcement through small prizes
- Inclusion in prize draws
- Special awards
- Postcards home

Authorised and unauthorised absence

If a student is absent from The Hill Primary Academy, it is vital that a parent contacts The Hill at the earliest opportunity to provide a sufficient reason for absence.

Absence can only be authorised where there is good cause. If no sufficient reason for absence is provided, attendance will be recorded as unauthorised. All absences will be subject to receiving a home visit.

Parents cannot authorise absence. This is a decision which rests with The Hill Primary Academy in accordance within the boundaries set by The Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1996.

Lateness

It is The Hill Primary Academy's responsibility to provide the best education possible. This can only be achieved if students attend regularly and punctually. The Hill expects all students to arrive at school, registrations and lessons on time. Poor punctuality is not acceptable. A student arriving late will disrupt not only their own continuity of learning but also that of others. The school entry doors will be closed at 9am. From this point the children will need to enter through the office

Avoiding holidays & appointments during term time

In order to maximise individual achievement, parents should avoid making routine appointments (E.g, dentist/ opticians) for students during the academy day or taking family holidays during the term time period. **Holidays will not be authorised during term time (unless in exceptional circumstances), and may result in a fixed penalty notice.** The decision to unauthorised holidays is The Hill's decision, and not a parental right.

Legal action

All parents have a legal responsibility to ensure their child attends The Hill Primary Academy on a regular and punctual basis. Should any student's attendance or punctuality become a concern, they will be referred to the Astrea Education Welfare officer. Where necessary, The Hill Primary Academy will recommend legal action. The Hill Primary Academy, the Astrea Education Welfare Officer and the Local Authority work together in partnership where legal action is required.

Legal action includes:

- Penalty Notice: A penalty notice will be issued for each student who have unauthorised absence or lateness. Full payment of a penalty notice within 21days is £60 and payment after this time but within 28 days is £120.
- Prosecution for unauthorised absence: It is a criminal offence under Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act to fail to secure regular attendance of a registered pupil at The Hill. Magistrates can issue fines of up to £2,500 per child, impose Parenting Orders and impose a period of imprisonment of up to 3 months.

Any prosecution will appear on a criminal record.

Supporting and working with parents

In order to support parents in meeting their legal requirements and to maximise individual student attendance, The Hill Primary Academy seeks to keep parents/carers informed of their child's attendance and to actively involve parents on attendance issues. Methods include:

- Unexplained/unaccounted for absence letter asking for reasons
- Letters generated below 98%
- Home visits made
- Parental meetings

- Active involvement by teaching staff
- Included on student reports
- At Parents' Meetings/Evenings

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

Daily expectations

1. Daily monitoring is conducted through the taking of electronic registers and first day absence calls/texts are made within the first two hours of the school day. If a child/Young person is absent and parents/carers/primary contacts are uncontactable, the 1st and 2nd emergency contacts should be used. If no explanation has been reached for a child/young person's absence, school to follow internal CME (Children Missing Education) flowchart which will detail when a Home-visit is to be conducted.

A Home-visit should *always* be considered on the first day of absence however if this has not been conducted, then on the second consecutive day of absence a home visit should be conducted (if a reason for absence has still not been established through both the primary and emergency contacts). At least two emergency contacts should be held for each child.
2. If through daily calls or home-visits, concerns arise regarding the need for Early Help support or a possible safeguarding concern is identified, the matter should be passed to the schools Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately (both verbally and recorded on CPOMS).
3. If at any stage, further concerns are identified, and the attendance lead/DSL is unsure of what action to take, the Astrea Safeguarding Officer or National Safeguarding Lead is to be contacted for consultation.
4. Whole school and class/tutor group attendance is shared with SLT.

Weekly expectations

1. Tracker completed and circulated to SLT and Class Teachers/Form Tutors.
2. Individual pupil/student and key group Attendance analysed and actions discussed between Attendance Lead and member of SLT responsible for Attendance.
3. Additional strategies to be discussed to address attendance of specific 'groups' causing concern.
4. Class teachers/Form Tutors to share whole class/tutor group attendance and discuss attendance beginning to cause concern with individual parents/carers (also with students within secondary).
5. Weekly actions completed: letters sent and Initial support meeting / Initial School Attendance Panel (ISAP) / School Attendance Panel (SAP) meetings arranged and communicated according to actions agreed within Attendance meeting (alongside SLT member).

If attendance of individual pupils/students and specific groups continues to decline despite following the school's policy regarding escalation, support can be accessed from the Astrea Education Welfare Officer for Barnsley Schools or from Astrea Safeguarding Officer for Sheffield, Doncaster and Cambridge schools.

6. Weekly attendance assembly conducted to share attendance figures- whole school and class/tutor group attendance and share attendance awards.
7. Weekly whole school and class/tutor group attendance shared via either the parent app/website/email/text/social media post with all parents/carers.

Half termly expectations

1. Whole school and groups attendance analysed and actions taken summarised to be shared with the LECC.
2. Half Termly Awards Assembly to include an Attendance Focus - class/tutor group individual attendance awards to be considered

Astrea Attendance Tracker

The Attendance Tracker provides the following analysis:

- **Pupil Tracking** – provides individual student tracking information and should be used to track actions
- **Academy Summary** – provides whole school and cohort analysis for use in SLT and LECC reports. Analysis provided with and without leavers data included.
- **Academy Cohort Tracking** – tracks whole school and cohort attendance over the academic year and provided week on week comparison. Also provides week by week comparison to 2017/18 attendance and national data.
- **Attendance Graph** – pictorial representation of Academy Attendance data showing national and 2017/18 comparison data.
- **Student Attendance Graph** – pictorial representation of individual attendance for use in parent meetings etc.
- **Form Group League Table** – provides class/form group analysis and ranks by weekly attendance can be used for displays and attendance assemblies.
- **Data Tab** – raw attendance data by student.

Responsibilities

The Academy will:

- Approve the policy and any proposed changes
- Receive reports from the Principal
- Review the working of the policy in the light of the Principal's report
- Ensure that the policy is promoted and implemented throughout the Academy, and is known by the parents

The Principal will:

- Set attendance targets as part of the Academy Development Plan and target-setting process
- Monitor progress
- Ensure that strategies are in place to promote and implement the policy throughout the Academy
- Determine (in collaboration with relevant senior staff) whether to authorise any proposed absences requested on the Academy'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 academy age fails to attend regularly his/her parents commit an offence
- Initiate with appropriate staff strategies to improve attendance
- Liaise with the appropriate bodies (including the Local Authority's agencies) where appropriate

The Inclusion & Safeguarding Lead (Mrs Lawrence) will:

- Reward good attendance
- Oversee the attendance arrangements
- Work with all attendance staff to ensure the efficient running of the system
- Make periodic checks of the registers to monitor student absence
- Make regular 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 child's welfare)
- Deal with issues of inadequate registering
- Make home visits where appropriate to deal with attendance and child protection concerns
- Arrange appropriate training for staff
- Keep the Principal informed of the progress of the policy
- Advise the Principal on any strategies that could be initiated or improved
- Communicate with offsite providers with regard to student attendance
- Contact parents on first day absence
- Make all staff aware when a student is considered to be a persistent absentee

Home/ School liaison Officer (Mrs Steed) will:

- Reward Good Attendance
- Input / check daily attendance figures
- Complete the tracker on a weekly basis
- Contact parents on the student's first day of absence after registration has closed
- Ensure that all student absences are noted and absence notes received from parents
- Make regular checks on the efficiency of the registering
- Ensure that all suspected truancy is followed up and dealt with
- Contact parents over student absence patterns where appropriate
- Make reports to the Attendance Lead on the efficiency of the system

- Liaise with the Attendance Lead over training needs
- Inform the Attendance Lead reasons for student absence
- Produce attendance data / statistics for the Attendance Lead and Principal
- Alert the Attendance Lead to patterns of whole school absence and truancy

Educational Welfare Officer (Louise Champeau) will:

- Work in partnership with all attendance staff
- Monitor whole school attendance on a fortnightly basis, making recommendations for actions
- Support staff with 'Late Gates' as requested
- Share information with The Hill Academy staff as appropriate; recording information as necessary on SIMS and/or CPOMS
- Undertake home visits where possible and as requested by attendance staff
- Attendance at meetings, such as, Internal School Attendance Panels (ISAP's), Core Groups, Child in Need (CIN) Meetings etc as appropriate
- Manage a caseload of identified pupils that may require additional support to increase their attendance at The Hill Academy
- Refer cases to the Local Authority Education Welfare Service for the issuing of FPN's or referral for prosecution

Academy Staff/Class Teachers will:

- Reward for good attendance
- Monitor and Support all Students attendance
- Ensure that students are registered accurately and efficiently
- Identify patterns of absence which may be significant
- Ensure that students who are late attend payback detentions to complete work missed
- Ensure that the SIMS programme is not left on smart screen during the classrooms
- Arrange meetings with parents/carers of those students who are late or have poor attendance. Poor attendance is anything less than 98%
- Not accept students into the classroom when arriving late without an explanation
- Display weekly record sheets of their class attendance
- Encourage and praise students with good attendance records or those that have improved
- Keep the Attendance Lead informed of any signs of suspected truancy; and inform the Attendance Lead of any possible underlying problems which might account for absences

Parents are required to:

- Ensure their children attends regularly unless they are ill or have an authorised absence
- Inform the Academy of their child's absence on the first day of non attendance
- Not take Holidays in term time
- Inform office staff before 12pm if someone other than person(s) on the schools contact list will pick child up, and also provide a password to safeguard the child

Students of statutory school age 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)
- Bring an explanatory note from parents/carers on the day of return to the Academy
- Payback any time lost through lateness

Students of non-statutory school age are required to:

- There is an expectation that if a child of non-statutory school age has a place in the academy nursery, they must attend regularly as required. Failure to attend will result in the academy place being withdraw where appropriate.

Taking the Register

Registration is carried out at the beginning and end of each day, using the Electronic Register. Registers are marked using a set code so that reasons for absence can be quickly established. A high standard of marking is regarded as essential. Staff are regularly given updated instructions on the marking of registers.

Class teachers are required to take a register at the beginning of each lesson, using SIMS. A pattern of attendance for the day can be seen clearly by all staff in every session.

Students of compulsory Academy age must have their attendance registered twice per day. It is the practice of this Academy to register ALL students every session (including those not of compulsory Academy age).

The register must record whether the student is present, absent, or attending an approved educational activity.

An 'approved educational activity' is defined as:

- One taking place off the Academy premises
- Approved by a person authorised by the Principal
- Supervised by a person approved by the Principal
- Of an educational nature, including field trips and educational visits

When a student of compulsory Academy age is absent it must be marked as an 'authorised' or 'unauthorised' absence using the appropriate code.

All registers will be closed thirty minutes after the start of the morning and afternoon session.