HOLLINGWORTH ACADEMY ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY

Reviewed by:	Headteacher and Leadership Team
Approved by:	Headteacher
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Contents

1. Aims

Hollingworth Academy recognises that regular attendance and punctuality are key to our pupils maximising educational opportunities available to them and achieving their full potential. Attendance will be increased through an effective partnership between pupils, parents / carers and the school. As such we set a minimum expected attendance of **96% for each academic year.**

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regard to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

› Promoting excellent attendance and punctuality.

› Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence.

› Striving to provide a welcoming, caring environment, whereby each member of the school community feels wanted and secure.

› Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled.

› Acting early to address patterns of absence.

› Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school.

2. Legislation and Guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the working together to improve school attendance from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures. These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

› Part 6 of The Education Act 1996

› Part 3 of The Education Act 2002

› Part 7 of The Education and Inspections Act 2006

› The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments)

› The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 The Governing Body

The governing body is responsible for:

› Promoting the importance of attendance across the school's policies and ethos.

› Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.

› Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data.

› Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school.

› Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

3.2 The Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

> Implementation of this policy at the school.

> Monitoring school level absence data and reporting it to governors.

> Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils.

> Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies.

> Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

3.3 The Designated Senior Leader Responsible for Attendance

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

> Leading attendance across the school.

> Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement.

> Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes.

> Having an oversight of data analysis.

> Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data. These will be monitored and implemented by the SLT for Attendance (A Harwood).

> Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues.

> Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families.

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Mr Andrew Harwood (Assistant Headteacher, Pupil Development & Welfare) and can be contacted via 01706 292800 and / or aharwood@hollingworthacademy.co.uk.

3.4 The Attendance Team

The school attendance lead and team are responsible for:

> Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7).

> Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement.

> Take calls from parents / carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system.

> Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher.

> Working with Heads of Year and the Education Welfare Officer to tackle persistent absence.

> Advising the headteacher / deputy headteacher (authorised by the headteacher) when to issue fixed-penalty notices.

The attendance officers are Mrs J Wallis (KS3) and Mr Z Bashir (KS4) and can be contacted via 01706 292800 and/or jwallis@hollingworthacademy.co.uk (KS3) jbashir@hollingworthacademy.co.uk (KS4).

3.5 Form Tutors and Class Teachers

The form tutor is responsible for:

> Recording attendance and punctuality on a daily basis, using the correct codes and submitting this information using Progresso by **8.55am**.

> Monitor punctuality and attendance daily, enforcing rewards and sanctions where necessary.

> Issuing Level 1 reports and monitoring identified s during each two weekly cycle, liaising with HOY (Head of Year) / safeguarding and the attendance team.

The class teacher is responsible for:

> Recording attendance and punctuality in every lesson; they are allocated on a daily basis and submitting this information using Progresso **no later than 10 minutes** after the start of the lesson.

> Monitor punctuality daily, enforcing rewards and sanctions where necessary.

> To report any concerns to HOY/Safeguarding team.

3.6 School Administrative Staff

School administrative staff will:

> Transfer calls from parents/carers to the attendance team/HOY in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance.

> In some cases, absence calls may be transferred to the SENDCO or the safeguarding team.

3.7 Parents/Carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

> Make sure their child attends every day and fully prepared on time, no later than 8.40am.

> Call school to report their child's absence before 8.40am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of the absence, and advise when they are expected to return.

> Provide school with more than one emergency contact number for their child and to notify the school of any changes to contact information.

> Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day.

3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

> Arrive at school and attend registration no later than 8.40am with full equipment, ready for the day ahead.

> Attend every timetabled session on time.

4. Recording Attendance

4.1 Attendance Register

We will keep an attendance register and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

> Present.

> Attending an approved off-site educational activity.

> Absent.

> Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

› The original entry.

› The amended entry.

› The reason for the amendment.

› The date on which the amendment was made.

› The name and position of the person who made the amendment.

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

› Whether the absence is authorised or not.

› The nature of the activity, if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity.

› The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for three years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by **8.40am** on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken by 8.50am and will be kept open until 9.00am.

The second register for the afternoon mark will be completed no later than 1.20pm.

4.2 Unplanned Absence

The pupil's parent / carer must notify school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8.40am or as soon as practically possible by calling reception (option 1) or emailing the attendance team (attendance@hollingworthacademy.co.uk).

It is the parent's / carer's responsibility to inform school on **each day** of absence, even if the reason is the same as for the previous day's absence, and on each subsequent day that the absence occurs, informing the school of progress, and to ensure that your child is not believed to be missing and to guard against truancy. The only exception to this is where the school has a medical professional's note advising of a longer-term illness eg, from a General Practitioner or hospital Consultant.

Absences will be marked as either authorised or unauthorised based on a number of factors. These will include: current attendance, historical absence patterns and symptoms.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent / carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised, and parents / carers will be notified via text of this in advance.

The significance of these 'unauthorised' absences is that such 'unauthorised' absences can then be used to support and make a referral to the local authority for subsequent action including being issued with a Penalty Notice, and where the Penalty Notice is not paid within the stipulated time limits, the matter being potentially presented before the Magistrates' Court for prosecution.

> The criteria for a Penalty Notice for poor school attendance is a minimum of **10 school days** or **20 sessions** 'unauthorised' absences in a **12 week** period ('O' codes).
>
> The criteria for a Penalty Notice for term time absence is a minimum of **5 school days** or **10 sessions** 'unauthorised' absences ('G' codes).

The school reserves the right to ask parents / carers to provide medical evidence to show that the absence is genuine, and in particular where absence lasts longer than three continuous days. Evidence to confirm an appointment or support an illness absence can take the form of appointment letters / cards, prescriptions, hospital / infirmary discharge letters, medicine boxes, pharmacy / chemist / store till receipt containing the name of the over-the-counter medicine bought for the nature of the illness for which your child is absent for, or such other evidence that clearly confirms that medical treatment was being sought for the illness

The school sincerely hopes that parents / carers are not offended when school staff contact parents / carers seeking an explanation for their child's absence on each day that absence occurs. The School, as part of its legal safeguarding responsibility is simply ensuring that your child is safe by making contact with parents / carers whenever a pupil is absent from school.

4.3 Planned Absence

Medical, dental, and other related appointments should all be made outside of school teaching and learning hours at all times. If managed carefully, routine optician's appointments, dental check-ups, asthma reviews, etc can all be arranged for after school hours or during school holidays. If a hospital appointment occurs during term-time, parents / carers are kindly requested to consider rearranging the appointment, so that the appointment can take place either after 2.00pm if the appointment is local or after 1.00pm if not local and will involve some travelling distance or during holidays. Parents / carers should be able to rearrange an appointment, as hospital appointments are notified in advance, allowing ample time and opportunity for the appointment to be rearranged; sometimes it will simply be a case of rearranging the appointment later on in the day.

By actively taking steps to minimise absences, this will greatly maintain your child's maximum attendance and learning, as well as enable your child to be able to be entered for relevant prize draws and raffle tickets and the chance to earn other rewards and incentives for maintaining excellent attendance.

If an appointment is **genuinely urgent and/or unavoidable**, parents / carers should make sure their child attends school before and after the appointment in order to minimise loss in learning time, as well as not affecting their attendance rate, where appropriate e.g. if the appointment is at 10.00am, then your child should attend school in the morning for morning registration, get their morning session mark, and then leave school at, for example, 9.30am in order to maintain full attendance for the morning session. The pupil should then return back to school immediately after the appointment, wherever possible, and thus receive an attendance mark for the afternoon session. Pupils should have evidence, in the form of a medical appointment card or text from the medical establishment, to authenticate the appointment. Parents will also need to inform the school as to whether their child is being collected from school reception or is making their own way off site; this can be done via email or written letter.

If no evidence is presented in regards to a medical/dental appointment, then the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

4.4 Lateness and Punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

> Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.

> After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code.

> Any pupil who is late on five separate occasions, across a half term, will be placed on punctuality report to their Head of Year, where they will be required to show the report at the end of each day to show their punctuality throughout the day

> Any pupil who is late on four occasions in one week will be placed on punctuality report to their Head of Year, to whom they will be required to show the report at the end of each day to show their punctuality through the day

> If pupils fail to arrive on time for 10% or more of their report, parents will be invited into school to discuss the issue.

> Punctuality is just as important as overall attendance. Arriving late to the school or lessons has an adverse impact on everyone in the classroom. Learning is disrupted and routines are disturbed. It is not always possible, or appropriate, for a teacher to stop the lesson to help a pupil catch up on what they have missed.

> It will be noted that a pupil arriving late to lesson is already at a huge disadvantage compared to other pupils in the class. This can lead to frustration, disengagement and poor behaviour that, over a period of time, inevitably leads to low academic achievement.

> It may not seem that much but being 10 minutes late to every lesson equates to 6.5 days of learning lost a year.

Given the immense importance of arriving at school in the morning on time, any pupil arriving at school after **8.40am** will be held in detention for an Hour on the same day, each day that they are late (parents / carers will be notified by text).

> The school kindly requests parents / carers to ensure that their child is on site at school by **8.30am** at the latest, so that your child has sufficient time to get to, and be inside their form tutor group classroom comfortably, by the time the bell sounds at **8.40am** for start of morning registration.

> No detention will be given where pupils arrive after 8.40am due to an **urgent and/or unavoidable** medical appointment **and** suitable evidence is provided or where pupils are on reduced timetables or those receiving personalised support.

> It should be remembered that punctuality is an important part of self-discipline and essential to good time management.

> Parents / carers are kindly requested to take a proactive role in ensuring that their child receives the education that their child is entitled to and try to book appointments such that the appointment does not affect their child's attendance or rearrange appointments outside of school learning hours or during the holiday period.

> Please speak to the Attendance Administrator for help and guidance.

> Persistent lateness may lead to further, more serious, sanctions.

4.5 Following up Unexplained Absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending without reason, the school will:

> Call the pupil's parent / carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may contact outside agencies in cases of concern.

> Identify whether the absence is approved or not.

> Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained.

> Call the parent / carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will

consider involving an Education Welfare Officer. If required, home visits will be carried out by an appropriate member of staff or a delegated officer such as an Education Welfare Officer

4.6 Reporting to Parents / Carers

The school will regularly inform parents / carers about their child's attendance and absence levels via termly reports. Where a pupil's attendance is causing concern, a much more rigorous and regular update will be given to parents / carers.

5. Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

5.1 Approval for Term Time Absence

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

The school considers each application for term time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least four weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, the headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

We would also like to remind parents / carers that the law, with respect to family holidays during term time, has changed. Family holidays will, therefore, not be routinely authorised. All holidays taken during term time have to be recorded as an absence and will affect your child's overall attendance record.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

> Illness and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail).

> Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart.

> Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision.

5.2 Legal Sanctions

The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

> The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year.

> One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission.

> Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason.

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

5.3 Elective Home Education

Elective home education (EHE) is a term used to describe a choice by parents to provide education for their children at home - or at home and in some other way which they choose - instead of sending them to school full-time. This is different to education provided by a local authority otherwise than at a school - for example, tuition for children who are too ill to attend school.

Deciding to educate your child at home is a major step that not only involves a financial commitment but also a large investment of time and energy. The DfE expect schools and other professionals to engage with the Local Authority's 'Elective Home Education' Team where a parent is considering withdrawing their child from school for EHE before the child's name is removed from the register. This will ensure that any decision taken to electively home educate is taken as a positive choice and in the best interest of the child.

Should you wish to electively home educate your child, you must inform the school in writing at the following address:

Mr R McGinty (Headteacher)
Hollingworth Academy
Cornfield Street
Milnrow
OL16 3DR

Any information will then be shared with the local authority in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (amended in 2016).

6. Strategies for Promoting Attendance

The school runs a league system for form groups which operate on a nine weekly cycle. Throughout these nine weeks, rewards are given to top performing tutor groups, as well as for pupils who are improving their attendance.

These league tables are updated and published each week both on the media screens around the school, as well as on the school's social media accounts.

7. Attendance Monitoring

The school will monitor attendance daily and inform form tutors of attendance figures for their tutor groups. Where pupils are in danger of falling below the high standards set by the school, they will be monitored closely and Heads of Year in conjunction with the attendance team will begin regular dialogues with parents to support their child in ensuring their attendance does not drop below 96%

7.1 Monitoring Attendance

The school will:

> Monitor attendance and absence data half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level.

> Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern.

Pupil level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing body.

7.2 Analysing Attendance

The School will:

> Analyse attendance and absence data daily to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families.

> Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns.

7.3 Using Data to Improve Attendance

The school will:

> Provide regular attendance reports to form tutors and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families.

> Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies.

7.4 Reducing Persistent and Severe Absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

> Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence.

> Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school.

> Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance.

If absence persists, an attendance panel will be called, consisting of the attendance team within the school as well as the Educational Welfare Officer (EWO). In this meeting strategies and interventions will be discussed regarding attendance as well as the possibility of prosecution.

7.5 Children missing in Education

As an establishment we work closely with the local authority when monitoring attendance. Where a pupil has not returned to school for ten days after an authorised absence, or is absent from school without authorisation for 20 consecutive school days, the pupil can be removed from the admission register, when the school and the local authority have failed, after jointly making reasonable enquiries, to establish the whereabouts of the child. This only applies if the school does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend because of sickness or unavoidable cause.

A referral would be made to the local authority and this would lead to the pupil being registered as 'Missing in Education'. Where this occurs the local authority and other outside agencies will work together to establish the location and educational status of the pupil in question

8. Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum, each academic year by Mr Andrew Harwood, Senior Attendance Lead. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing body.

9. Links With Other Policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy.
- Behaviour policy.
- Children missing in Education
- Elective Home Education

10. Resources and Useful links

Hollingworth Academy: *Attendance Policy*

Our Rochdale: Our Rochdale

Hollingworth School: *Top Tips for Top Attendance*

Department for Education: *School Attendance Parental Responsibility Measures*

Government Website: *School Attendance and Absence*

Rochdale Borough Council: *Truancy*

Rochdale Borough Council: *Early help support for families*

Rochdale Borough Council: leaflet

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BBC: *School Attendance and Absence: The Facts*

ACE Education Advice

You Tube Videos
School Anxiety
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6sg_10ZDhEw

Q & A Emotionally Based School Avoidance
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L5LDmj_f9js