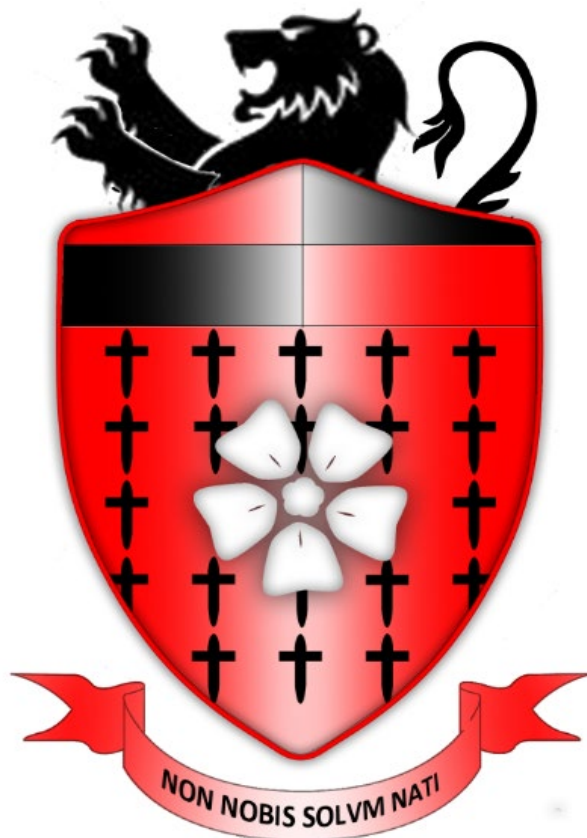


Hornsea School & Language College



School Attendance Policy

Created by:	Gail Smith, Assistant Head (Inclusion)	
Date Created:	September 2007	
Approved by:	Headteacher: 22.11.23	Governing Body: 22.11.23
Last Reviewed:	October 2023	Kay Sullivan (Head of Student Support)
Date of Next Review:	November 2024	

School Attendance Policy

Working together to improve school attendance (Dfe May 2022) outlines that 'improving attendance is everyone's business. The barriers to accessing education are wide and complex, both within and beyond the school gates, and are often specific to individual pupils and families. The foundation of securing good attendance is that school is a calm, orderly, safe and supportive environment where all pupils want to be and are keen and ready to learn.

In this policy, HSLC intend to outline how we hope to meet the expectations outlined in this guidance, ensuring best possible outcomes for all pupils.

Aim of the Policy:

The aim of this policy is to maximise the attendance of students in order to facilitate the highest standards of achievement. The school considers attendance to be of paramount importance. Without good attendance the best efforts of teachers will not have the maximum effect on the learning processes. Education provides a means of advancement for all young people. Students need to attend regularly if they are to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. Our aim is to work collaboratively with parents/carers to offer support around issues relating to absence and punctuality

Elements of the Policy:

Governing Body

The Governing Body is required by law to ensure that the registers are kept accurately. The information needs to be available should it be requested for panel meeting on attendance. School attendance figures are also required to be published annually and reported to parents/carers

The School will try to improve attendance by:

- Encourage students to understand the importance of attendance at their lesson and the relationship between attendance and attainment
- Identifying patterns of non-attendance and then work with students, parents/carers to discuss areas of concern, and formulate a support plan where necessary
- Providing a clear statement of attendance on the student's academic review (termly)
- Sharing attendance data with all students on a weekly basis (PD)
- Working proactively with students whose attendance has declined over a period of time.
- Meeting with Progress Leaders/Pastoral Managers regularly to discuss students causing concern.
- Liaising with parents/carers to support improved individual attendance targets
- Any student with attendance ***below 95%** will be monitored (including sixth form)
- Any student with attendance ***below 90% will likely** trigger targeted support through the Attendance and Inclusion Teams at HSLC
- Incentivised school based reward system for strong attendance through Positive Discipline
- Ensuring that parents/carers are aware of their responsibility to communicate with the school to report a student absence. **This can be done via the EDULINK app or telephoning the school direct 01964 532727**

The Attendance Team are responsible for:

- Ensuring registers are being completed accurately (please see Appendix A: Registration procedure) and challenge any discrepancies that may be apparent

- Providing requested data for governing Body (termly)
- Providing punctuality data for Progress Leaders
- Rewarding good and improving attendance
- Monitoring attendance levels of all pupils and sharing this data with the Progress leaders and Form tutors. Relevant information may also be shared with teaching staff
- Liaising with parents/carers to identify any problems which may be affecting attendance and offer support if appropriate to parents/pupils through Inclusion structures at HSLC
- Making home visits if appropriate to meet with parents to discuss issues around attendance.
- Implementing support plans with parents and students and monitoring improvements for attendance.
- When improvements have not made significant changes to liaise with Education Welfare Service and discuss strategies towards necessary improvements.
- Should students have missed a substantial period of learning, Attendance Team may work in partnership with local authority services to determine an appropriate reintegration plan.

Parents/carers will try to improve attendance by:

- Try to make all medical appointments (doctors, dentist and hospital) out of school time. Obviously, this is not always possible, but in such cases, try to minimise the disruption to the day by getting an early morning appointment so that your child can attend afterwards OR a late afternoon appointment so that s/he can complete most of the school day before leaving.
- Encourage your child to take responsibility for being on time for school. Try to make sure s/he has an alarm clock that is reliable. Make sure that s/he has a realistic bedtime and will not be too tired to get up in the morning for school. Bags, books and other equipment should be prepared the night before. Regularly checking your child's planner can help you to do this.
- Discourage your child from staying overnight with friends during the school week. This sometimes leads to them both being late (or not attending at all) the next day.
- Encourage your child to come to school even if s/he is feeling slightly unwell. Many aches and pains are forgotten when they are with friends and school will contact you if it becomes necessary.
- Talk positively about going to school – “What was good about school today?” “Did anything funny happen?”
- If a student is likely to be absent for a known period of time, parent/carers should liaise with school, and where appropriate

Parents/carers have a legal responsibility.

“All parents/carers who have children of compulsory school age are responsible in law for ensuring that their children receive an efficient full-time education, suitable to their age, ability and aptitude and any special educational needs which they have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.” (Section 7 Education Act 1996).

This responsibility includes ensuring that all children attend punctually, regularly and stay in school.

Parents/carers to encourage a good attitude to learning and support the Home-school Agreement, working in partnership with the school and other agencies in the best interests of the child

It is the parent/carer's responsibility to inform school of their child's absence. This can be done via telephone or Edulink. This must be done on the first day of the absence. The Attendance Team will contact home if this has not been done. In the event of concerns, efforts will continue and information will be shared accordingly (in school with DSL/DDSL and if necessary the East Riding Safeguarding and Partnership Hub) to clarify reasons for absence and any related concerns.

If your child has been off ill for a period of time, you may be requested to supply a medical note from your GP to support the absence. This is in line with the guidance from the Local Authority.

Educational Visits – Paper registers must be taken prior to departure and a copy sent to the Attendance Team. Students will be given their marks for lessons in that session.

Signing Out – Any student who leaves the school premises during the day should go to the Attendance Office located in Student Support where s/he will be given an ‘Authorised Absence Pass’ which gives permission for the student to be off the site. Parental/official verification for the reason for leaving the site will be sought/looked at before pass is given. The Authorised Absence Pass must be shown if a student is challenged outside the school by the Community Policing Team.

No student will be given permission to leave school site without verbal or written consent from parent/carer

First Aid Room Procedure – if any student is feeling unwell they should inform a staff member who will give them written permission to go to the First Aid Provision (based within Student Support Building). A medical assessment will be made and should the First Aid person believe that the student is not well enough to remain in school then they will make contact with parent/carer to see if suitable arrangements can be made to collect the student.

Under no circumstance should students make their own arrangements to be collected from school. These procedures are in place to enable us to maintain a high level of safeguarding.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason and that are permitted under government guidelines like illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause. Medical and Dental appointments, where possible, should be made for after school or during school holidays. The School understands that this isn't always possible, however, students should attend school prior to or following a medical/dental appointment and avoid a full day's absence.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been given. This type of absence can lead to the School pursuing concerns. This may include:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- truancy before or during the school day
- absences which have never been properly explained
- children who arrive at school too late to get a mark
- shopping, looking after other children or birthdays

If a student is absent without prior authorisation or explanation, the school will treat the absence as unauthorised. This could lead to a possible referral for a penalty notice. Please note that if you believe that there are exceptional circumstances that require taking your child from school then the exceptional circumstances request form can be found on the school's website under term time absences. Please follow the guidance on the website.

Expected First Day of Attendance

Schools must enter pupils on the admission register and attendance register from the beginning of the first day on which the school has agreed, or been notified, that the pupil will attend the school. For most pupils the expected first day of attendance is the first day of the school year.

If a pupil fails to attend on the agreed or notified date, the school must establish the reason for the absence and mark the attendance register accordingly.

All schools must notify the local authority within five days of adding a pupil's name to the admission register and must provide the local authority with all the information held within the admission register about the pupil. This duty does not apply to pupils who are added to the admission register at the start of the school's youngest year – for example pupils who are registered at a secondary school at the start of Year 7 - unless the local authority also requests for such information to be provided.

Deletions from the Admission Register

A pupil can lawfully be deleted from the admission register on the grounds prescribed in regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended.

Amendments to the Admission Register and Attendance Register

Every amendment made to the admission register and the attendance register must include: the original entry; the amended entry; the reason for the amendment; the date on which the amendment was made; and the name and position of the person who made the amendment.

Preservation of the Admission Register and Attendance Register

Every entry in the admission register and attendance register must be preserved for a period of three years after the date on which the entry was made

Pupils Moving to a New Address and/or School

Where the parent of a pupil notifies the school that the pupil will live at another address, schools must record in the admission register: (a) the full name of the parent with whom the pupil will live, (b) the new address, and (c) the date from when it is expected the pupil will live at this address.

Where a parent notifies the school that the pupil is registered at another school or will be attending a different school, schools must record in the admission register: (a) the name of the other school, and (b) the date of when the pupil first attended, or is due to start attending, that school.

Persistent Absence (PA)

The Government's has had a strong emphasis on attendance, with evidence showing the better their school attendance, the more likely pupils will succeed at school with a downward spiral in pupils' level of attainment as overall absence increases. Schools take attendance very seriously and will be expected to take preventative measures well before any national persistent absence threshold is reached. As from September 2015, the persistent absence threshold was changed to 10%, an equivalent of 38 sessions or 19 school days missed in a school year, rather than 15%, 56 sessions or 28 days.

Term time holidays can no longer be authorised. This is in line with government policy from September 2013. All requests for term time holidays will be unauthorised unless specific local authority criteria can be met:

Exceptional circumstances could include:

- Service personnel returning from a tour of duty abroad where it is evidenced the individual will not be in receipt of any leave in the near future that coincides with school holidays.
- Where an absence from school is recommended by a health professional as part of a parent or child's rehabilitation from a medical or emotional issue.
- The death or terminal illness of a person close to the family.
- To attend a wedding or funeral of a person close to the family.
- Where there are exceptional and unforeseen circumstances that fall outside of 1 to 4 above, the headteacher agrees to consult with the principal education welfare officer prior to any authorisation being given to the parent. The principal education welfare officer will discuss each case with an independent Headteacher and will make a recommendation to the referring school.

Please note: Evidence would be required in each case.

If a request meets the above exceptional circumstances but falls within the following times, the headteacher must be convinced that absence from school is the only option:

- The first half-term of any academic year (applies to all pupils)
- Year nine options time (for pupils in year nine)
- At any time during years 10 and 11 (for all pupils in these year groups)
- At any time specified by the school (this will be communicated to parents by each school).

Present at an Approved Off-Site Educational Activity

An approved educational activity is where a pupil is taking part in supervised educational activity such as field trips, educational visits, work experience or alternative provision. Pupils can only be recorded as receiving off-site educational activity if the activity meets the requirements prescribed in regulation 6(4) of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. The activity must be of an educational nature approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school. The activity must take place during the session for which the mark is recorded.

Requesting medical evidence

Schools have the right to consider whether to accept the parent's explanation for the absence as there are occasions when parental condoned absences are reported to the school as illness. If there are concerns that pupils absence from school is not genuine, or become a regular occurrence, the DfE guidance, September 2014, states that schools can ask for proof of illness (appointment card, date of medication, prescriptions etc.) before marking as 'I'.

Religious observance

School will treat absence as authorised when it is due to religious observance. The day must be exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents/carers belong. Where necessary, school will seek advice from the parents' religious body about whether it has set the day apart from religious observance.

Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence

A number of different groups are covered by the generic term Traveller – Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers.

To help ensure continuity of education for Traveller children, it is expected that the child should attend school elsewhere when their family is travelling and be dual registered at that school and the main school. Children from these groups whose families do not travel are expected to register at a school and attend as normal. They are subject to the same rules as other children in terms of the requirement to attend school regularly and in line with school expectations.

Safeguarding

School reserves the right to invite parents into school to discuss any attendance issues that raise potential safeguarding concerns, i.e.: female genital mutilation, sexual exploitation, domestic abuse, forced marriage, radicalisation. In addition, if the school suspects that a student may be at potential risk as a result of their absence, school will refer concerns to the appropriate external agency, i.e.: Children's Social Care, Police. Should a referral to an external agency be made, school will endeavour to inform parents/carers, however, this may not be appropriate in every circumstance depending on the nature of the safeguarding concern, and as such, a referral can be made without informing the parent/carer.

Children Missing from Education

School governing bodies, academy trusts, and other school proprietors must have regard to the statutory guidance *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (September 2023) when making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Schools should put in place appropriate safeguarding responses for children who go missing from school, particularly on repeat occasions. Where reasonably practicable, for every pupil, schools should hold an emergency contact number for more than one person. Emergency contact numbers should be provided and updated by the parent with whom the pupil normally resides. This goes beyond the legal requirement but is good practice. Doing so provides schools with additional options for making contact with a responsible adult when a child is missing school and is also identified as a welfare and/or safeguarding concern.

Where school staff have concerns about a child, they should use their professional judgement and knowledge of the individual pupil to inform their decision as to whether welfare concerns should be escalated.

Local authorities have a duty to put in place arrangements for identifying (as far as it is possible) those children of compulsory school age in their area who are not school registered or receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school. Local authorities should trace those children and ensure that they receive full-time education.

All schools must notify the local authority when a pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register under any of the grounds prescribed in regulation 8 of the *Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006* as amended, as soon as the ground for removal is met and no later than the time at which the pupil's name is removed from the register. This duty does not apply where the pupil's name is removed after they have completed the school's final year, unless the local authority requests for such information to be provided.

Where a school notifies a local authority that a pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register, the school must provide the local authority with the following information:

- the full name of the pupil;
- the full name and address of any parent with whom the pupil lives;
- at least one telephone number of any parent with whom the pupil lives;
- the full name and address of the parent who the pupil is going to live with, and the date the pupil is expected to start living there, if applicable;
- the name of pupil's other or future school and the pupil's start date or expected start date there, if applicable; and
- the ground prescribed in regulation 8 under which the pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register.

School recognises that when a child goes missing from school, it may be a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. School follows local authority procedures, and under section 8 of the *Education Regulations Act (2006)*, School will make enquiries into the location of pupils with 10 days continuous unauthorised absence, or for those who fail to return from leave of absence granted during term time. School reserve the right to contact relevant agencies to seek advice (*Children's Social Care, Police, Education Welfare Service*) if any child is absent from school for five days without confirmation from parent/carer.

All staff should be aware that children going missing, particularly repeatedly, can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse and neglect, which may include sexual abuse or exploitation and child criminal exploitation. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance misuse, risk of travelling to conflict zone, risk of female genital mutilation or risk of forced marriage. Early intervention is necessary to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in the future. Staff should be aware of their school's unauthorised absence and child missing from education procedures.

When is it appropriate for a pupil to be absent because of a mental health issue?

As per *DfE guidance Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools Feb 2023*, it is important to recognise that, in many instances, attendance at school may serve to help with the underlying issue as much as being away from school might exacerbate it, and a prolonged period of absence may heighten their anxiety about attending in future. School staff will recognise that there can be attendance challenges where a child has a social, emotional or mental health issue, particularly a severe issue for which the child is receiving clinical treatment.

As per paragraph 219 of the *Working together to improve school attendance guidance*, school staff should advise parents/carers to notify them on the first day the child is unable to attend due to illness. School staff must record absences as authorised where it is not possible for a pupil to attend due to illness (both physical and mental health related).

Many children will experience normal but difficult emotions that make them nervous about attending school, such as worries about friendships, schoolwork, exams or variable moods. It is important to note that these pupils are still expected to attend school regularly.

School staff should work quickly to communicate this expectation to parents/carers, and work together with them to ensure that such circumstances do not act as a barrier to regular attendance. Any associated anxiety about attending should be mitigated as much as possible by creating a plan to implement reasonable adjustments to alleviate specific barriers to attendance. These adjustments should be agreed by and regularly reviewed with all parties, including parents/carers. As mentioned above, in this guidance any actions taken to support attendance are referred to as "reasonable adjustments". This term is used throughout this guidance as a way of describing those actions in general terms, as opposed to relating to a school's duty to make reasonable adjustments pupils with a disability under section 20 of the 2010 Equality Act.

In developing a plan to support attendance through reasonable adjustments, school staff will need to take into account the individual circumstances of the child, being mindful of safeguarding responsibilities as set out in the *Keeping children safe in education 2023* guidance.

Home Educated Children (Elective Home Education)

On receipt of written notification to home educate, schools must inform the pupil's local authority delegated officer (Education Welfare Service) that the pupil is to be deleted from the admission register. Schools should not seek to persuade parents to educate their children at home as a way of avoiding excluding the pupil or because the pupil has a poor attendance record.

Schools and local authorities should not seek to prevent parents from educating their children outside the school system. There is no requirement for parents to obtain the school or local authority's agreement to educate their child at home.

Parents have a duty to ensure their child of compulsory school age receives suitable full time education but this does not have to be at a school.

New Attendance Codes, Descriptions and Meanings

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
D	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)	Approved Education Activity
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
X	Non-compulsory school age absence	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendances

Appendix A

Contents of Attendance Register

Schools must take the attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. On each occasion they must record whether every pupil is:

- Present;
- Attending an approved educational activity;
- Absent; or,
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

The school should follow up any absences to:

- Ascertain the reason;
- Ensure the proper safeguarding action is taken;
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not; and,
- Identify the correct code to use before entering it on to the school's electronic register, or management information system which is used to download data to the School Census/Registration Procedure

Class Teacher must complete the morning register accurately and save it within the first 10 minutes (remembering that the register is a legal document). If this is not possible for whatever reason, Steph Naylor, Safeguarding and Welfare Manager, Attendance, Health and First Aid must be contacted on 01964 530258 naylors@hslc.co.uk

When marking a register any discrepancies in attendance need reporting to the Attendance Team immediately.

The class register for each and every period including double and triple lessons must be completed and saved within the first 10 minutes. Please remember period 4 is the equivalent of afternoon registration.

Students arriving late should be marked with an 'L' and enter how many minutes late.

Morning registration closes at 9am, students signing in after this time without a valid reason, will be marked as an unauthorised late. This is registered with a 'U' and will be included alongside any unauthorised absences when looking at individual's attendance.