

# Havercroft Academy

Attendance Policy

June 2017

Next review: June 2018

## Aims

Our attendance policy aims to:

- Support pupils and their parents/carers in the establishment of the highest possible levels of attendance and punctuality
- Ensure that all pupils have full and equal access to the best education that we can offer in order to increase learning
- Enable pupils to progress smoothly, confidently and with continuity through the academy
- Make parents/carers aware of their legal responsibilities
- Ensure attendance remains at or above Government and Local Authority targets

School education lays the vital foundations of a child's life. Research clearly demonstrates the link between regular attendance and educational progress and attainment. Parents/carers and Havercroft Academy staff should work in partnership in making education a success and in ensuring that all children have full and equal access to all that the academy has to offer. Havercroft Academy will encourage parents and carers to ensure that their child achieves maximum possible attendance and that any problems that prevent this are identified and acted on promptly. As parents, it is their responsibility to ensure that their children arrive at the academy on time and return home safely.

## Expectations

**We expect that all pupils will:**

- Attend the academy every day
- Attend the academy punctually
- Attend appropriately prepared for the day

**We expect that all parents/carers will:**

- Ensure regular academy attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities
- Ensure that their child arrives at the academy punctually and prepared for the school day
- Ensure that they contact the academy daily of absence or if known in advance, whenever their child is unable to attend the academy
- Contact the academy promptly whenever any problem occurs that may keep their child away from the academy
- Notify the academy of any home circumstances that might affect the behaviour and learning of their child
- Notify the academy immediately of any changes to contact details

**We expect that the academy will:**

- Provide a welcoming atmosphere
- Celebrate good attendance and punctuality
- Provide a safe learning environment
- Provide a sympathetic response to any child's or parent's concerns
- Maintain regular and accurate records of AM and PM attendance and punctuality, monitor individual child's attendance and punctuality
- Contact parents when a child fails to attend and where no message has been received to explain the absence
- Follow up all unexplained absences to obtain explanations from parents. Although parents may offer a reason, only the academy can authorise the absence. In the case of long term or frequent absence due to medical conditions, a plan will be drawn up to maximise attendance
- Make initial enquiries regarding pupils who are not attending regularly
- Meet regularly with the attendance representatives from the Trust and where appropriate the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) to monitor and support academy attendance and punctuality
- Refer irregular or unjustified patterns of attendance to Education Welfare. Failure by the family to comply with the planned support set by Education Welfare may result in further actions, e.g. a Penalty Notice, parental prosecution or an application for an Education Supervision Order

- Will notify the Local education Authority (LEA) after 15 days sickness
- Will notify EWO after 10 days continuous unexplained absence
- Children with attendance below 90% are classed as a persistent absentee (PA). PA figures are reported to the government
- Will put a copy of the policy on the academy website
- Will report key facts and figures to governors at each full board meeting

### **Examples of absences (this list is not exhaustive):**

#### **Authorised absences:**

- Genuine illness of the pupil
- Hospital/dental/doctor's appointment for the pupil
- Major religious observances
- External exams or educational assessments.

#### **Unauthorised absences:**

- Shopping /day trip / visit to a theme park
- Birthday treat
- Oversleeping due to a late night
- Looking after other children / other family member.
- Appointments for other family members.

### **Registers, Punctuality and Lateness**

Punctuality to the academy is crucial. Lateness into the academy causes disruption to that individual's learning and to that of the other pupils in the class. It is paramount, therefore, that all pupils arrive at school on time. The main playground is open from **8.15am** and the school doors are open from **8.45am**. A breakfast club is also available from **8.15am** at a small cost.

By law, schools must take a morning and afternoon register and record the attendance or absence of every pupil. School starts at **9.00am**. Morning registers close at **30 minutes after the start of the session**. If a child arrives after the start of school but before the register closes they will be recorded as L and the minutes late recorded. After this lateness is recorded as an unauthorised absence and can be subject to prosecution by the local authority. Afternoon registration is taken at **1:00pm**. Pupil's attendance and punctuality is recorded on their report and will be passed on to future schools as necessary.

### **Pupils Leaving During the School Day**

During school hours the academy staff are legally in loco parentis and therefore must know where the pupils are during the school day.

- Pupils are only allowed to leave the site with an adult
- Pupils are not allowed to leave the premises without prior permission from the academy
- Whenever possible, parents should try to arrange medical and other appointments outside of school time
- Parents are requested to confirm in writing, by letter or email, the reason for any planned absence, the time of leaving, the expected return time
- Pupils must be signed out on leaving the academy and be signed back in on their return
- Where a pupil is being collected from the academy, parents are to report to the academy office before the pupil is allowed to leave the site
- If a pupil leaves the academy site without permission their parents will be contacted. Should the academy be unable to make contact with the family it may be appropriate, in certain circumstances, to contact the Police and register the pupils as a missing person.

## **Leave of Absence**

The academy holiday dates and end of Key Stage Assessment dates are published a year in advance and leave of absence will not be authorised during these assessment periods. INSET days are published as soon as the academy have agreed these, but may be subject to change.

In line with the Government's amendments to the 2006 regulations (appendix 1), holidays during term time will NOT be authorised. The Headteacher and Governors have determined that:

- In exceptional circumstances permission may be granted for a maximum of ten days of holiday
- Where leave of absence in term time is due to exceptional circumstances, a letter outlining the reasons must be submitted for consideration by the Head Teacher on behalf of the school governors
- If leave is taken without prior authorisation by the school, it will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and Education Welfare will be notified. Letters received retrospectively will not be considered

## **Failure to ensure regular school attendance**

Havercroft Academy will attempt to support all students to achieve maximum possible attendance and will inform parents/ carers when attendance starts to fall. Where attendance is falling to a level causing concern parents will be invited in to school to discuss ways to improve. Where attendance continues to fall then a further meeting may be held with governors or Trust representatives. Where attendance falls in to the persistent absentee category the school will refer to the EWO who will work in partnership with the academy and parents in support of pupils who are failing to attend the academy on a regular basis. (See Appendix A)

Education Welfare may also issue a Penalty Notice to parent/carers who are failing to secure their child's regular school attendance and are not engaging with supportive measures to improve attendance proposed by the academy or Education Welfare Officers. Before a Penalty notice is issued, parents will be warned of their liability to receive such a notice.

## **Penalty Notices**

Parents and pupils are supported by the Academy and by the LA to overcome issues that prevent regular school attendance through a wide range of intervention strategies. Where this intervention fails a penalty notices can be issued for unauthorised leave and if a parent/carers fails to ensure regular school attendance. This policy is in line with the Wakefield Council Code of Conduct on Penalty Notices and falls under Sections 444a and 444b of the Education Act 1996. The Education (Penalty Notices: England) Regulations 2007 set the framework for the operation of the Penalty Notice Scheme.

Circumstances in which a penalty notice might be issued are:

- Irregular school attendance
- Overt Truancy (including pupils found during truancy sweeps)
- Parentally condoned absences which are not authorised by school
- Unauthorised holidays in term time
- Persistent late arrival at school after the register has closed
- Being in a public place during the first five days of an exclusion
- Pupils on the "Fast Track to Attendance" scheme

## **Payment of Penalty Notices**

- The amount payable on issue of a Penalty Notice is £60 if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice, rising to £120 when paid within 28 days.
- If the Penalty Notice is not paid within 28 days the local authority is then obliged to prosecute for failing to ensure regular school attendance or withdraw the penalty notice

## **Attendance at Nursery**

Children do not become Statutory School Age until the term following their 5<sup>th</sup> birthday and as such are not bound by regulations regarding attendance at school. However Havercroft Academy recognises the importance of regular attendance to ensure that good habits are formed and progress is maximised in preparation for the

rigour ahead of them. As such Havercroft Academy monitor the attendance of all students and where patterns of non-attendance are identified the Academy will support families in the following ways:

- Make an arrangement to meet the parent or carer of the pupil as early as possible
- Plan actions with the parent or carer to support attendance improvement

### **Changing Schools**

It is important that if families decide to send their child to a different school/academy that they inform Havercroft Academy as soon as possible.

A pupil will not be removed from the academy roll until the following information has been received and investigated:

- The date the pupil will be leaving the school and starting the next
- The address of the new school
- A new home address if appropriate

The pupil's records will then be sent to the new school. In the event that the academy has not been informed of the above information, the family will be referred to the local authority for follow up.

**Further information on school attendance and the Wakefield Council Penalty Notice Code of Conduct can be found at:**

<http://www.wakefield.gov.uk/residents/schools-and-children/supporting-families/education-welfare-service/school-attendance-matters>

<http://www.wakefield.gov.uk/residents/schools-and-children/supporting-families/education-welfare-service/legal-measures-to-support-school-attendance>

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/401467/parental\\_responsibility\\_measures\\_for\\_school\\_attendance\\_and\\_behaviour.pdf.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/401467/parental_responsibility_measures_for_school_attendance_and_behaviour.pdf.pdf)

<http://www.wakefield.gov.uk/Documents/schools-children/education-welfare-service/penalty-notice-code-of-conduct.pdf>

## Attendance Thresholds

