



The High School
Leckhampton

Attendance Policy

Reviewing Member of Staff: Miss A O'Riordan
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1. Aims

At The High School Leckhampton we aim for excellent attendance from all pupils. All pupils should aim for 100% attendance whenever possible. A minimum of 97% attendance is expected by all pupils and parents are encouraged to support students reaching these goals. For minor illnesses, such as a sore throat, headache or mild cold, pupils are encouraged to still attend school, where they will be supported and encouraged to attend as many lessons as possible.

We are committed to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence

We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons. As per convention 28 of the Convention of the Rights of the Child, all children should have access to education.

2. Legislation and Guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [school attendance guidance](#) 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](#)
- Working Together to Improve School Attendance May 2022

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 reviewing attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds 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
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

3.3 The Attendance Officer

The school attendance officer:

- Monitors attendance data across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Reports concerns about attendance to the Headteacher
- Works with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Advises the Headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The attendance officer will produce the following data weekly:

1. List of pupils with attendance below 95% from 1st September
2. Attendance percentage for the week for each Tutor Group/House/Whole School
3. Attendance percentage since 1st September for each tutor group
4. Attendance percentage for each House since 1st September
5. Attendance for PP
6. Attendance for SEN

The Assistant Head (Pastoral) is the Senior Leader responsible for the strategic approach to attendance.

3.4 Form Tutors and Class Teachers

Form tutors and class teachers are responsible for recording attendance using the correct codes on BROMCOM on a daily basis and in each session (registration or lesson).

3.5 School Administrative Staff

School administrative staff are expected to take calls from parents about absence and record it on the school system.

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 (registration) and once during the second session (pm registration). 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 keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 08:40 on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 08:45 and will be kept open until 09:00. The register for the second session will be taken at 14:20 and will be kept open until 14:35.

4.2 Unplanned Absence/Illness

If a pupil is too ill to come to school, parents should:

1. **Phone or email the school reception before 8:30am on the day of the illness and leave a message with reception or leave a message on the automated answer-phone**
2. This procedure should be repeated on each day that the illness continues
3. Provide an explanatory note to be given to the pupil's tutor upon the pupil's return to school

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

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

4.3 Planned Absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

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

Pupils who are persistently late will serve an appropriate sanction.

Parents will be alerted to persistent lateness by the tutor or Assistant Head (Pastoral).

4.5 Following up Absence

Where any child we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, the school will:

- Follow up on their absence with their parent/carer to ascertain the reason, by contacting parents
- Ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use

4.6 Reporting to Parents

We will report attendance to parents in the annual school report.

5. Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

5.1 Approval for Term-Time Absence

The Headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to pupils during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the Headteacher's discretion.

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

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 elsewhere

5.2 Holidays in Term Time

Pupils are not permitted to take holidays in term time. The correlation between good attendance and good exam results is very strong and missing lessons will lead to significant underperformance in examinations. In exceptional circumstances, parents may complete a form and send it to the Headteacher, explaining why exceptional provision should be granted. Only in rare and pressing situations will a holiday be sanctioned.

5.3 Absence for Extra Curricular Activities

The High School Leckhampton will encourage pupils' participation in Extra Curricular activities. Pupils will sometimes need time away from school to participate in their chosen field. Examples might include:

- Playing sport for the school, a national or county side
- Performing in a drama production or TV/film role
- Instrumental performance for an orchestra
- A dance or music exam

Parents must always contact the Assistant Head (Pastoral) to request any time off from school for special events. In all situations, professional discretion will be taken and close liaison with the pupil and parents will inform the school's decision. Where an absence is beneficial to the pupil's success in his/her chosen field and unlikely to significantly harm the pupil's education, then special permission will be granted to have time away from school. Pupils will always be instructed to catch up with school work.

5.4 Long Term Absence

Where a pupil has long term absence, due to an independent professionally diagnosed medical condition, the school will work closely with parents and all relevant outside agencies (GP, consultant, counsellor etc.) to ensure a programme is in place to provide appropriate educational provision (within the limits of the school's funding and staffing).

Referrals to Early Help may be sought after to support the family to improve attendance.

5.5 Reducing persistent absence

The Assistant Head (Pastoral) will monitor attendance on a weekly basis. If any downward trend or rapid deterioration in attendance occurs the Assistant Head (Pastoral) will contact parents to arrange a supportive meeting looking to improve attendance.

The school will request a visit from the EWO (Education Welfare Officer) to the parents' house following a half-term of conversations with parents when attendance drops below 90%, as the DfE identifies this as being persistently absent.

The school will do their best to help families remove barriers to attendance and to offer support in conjunction with wider services.

5.6 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.

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 an 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
- Where attendance has been a concern and wider support has not been engaged with

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

6. Strategies for Promoting Attendance

Rewards

Rewards are regularly used to encourage good attendance. The following are some of the strategies used by the school:

1. The promotion of good attendance in assemblies, the tutor programme and PSHE
2. The tutor groups with the highest attendance over 99% will be given a free tutor group breakfast

3. At the end of term assemblies, the list of all pupils with 100% attendance will be displayed on the board and congratulated
4. House assemblies will regularly display names of pupils with 100% attendance and celebrate their success.
5. Attendance display board around the school to promote excellent attendance

7. Attendance Monitoring

The attendance officer at our school monitors pupil absence on a daily basis.

A pupil's parent/carer is expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health (see section 4.2) and each day their child remains ill.

If a pupil's absence goes above 2 days, the school will contact the parent/carer of the pupil to discuss the reasons for this.

If a pupil's absence continues to rise after contacting their parent/carer, we will consider involving an education welfare officer.

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee.

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 board.

The School will:

- Track the attendance of individual pupils
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern
- Monitor and evaluate those children identified as being in need of intervention and support

8. Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by The Headteacher. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

9. Links with other Policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy

Rights Respecting School Statement

The contents of this policy have been reviewed taking into account The High School Leckhampton's responsibilities as a Rights Respecting School. In particular, our commitment to the following articles of the Convention of The Rights of The Child:

Article 28: (Right to Education): *The Convention places a high value on education. Young people should be encouraged to reach the highest level of education of which they are capable.*

Article 29: (Goals of Education): *Children's education should develop each child's personality, talents and abilities to the fullest. It should encourage children to respect others, human rights and their own and other cultures. It should also help them learn to love peacefully, protect the environment and respect other people.*