



THE HARBOUR SCHOOL

Attendance Policy

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Date approved	21.06.2021
Approver	LGB
Signature	Carol Tompkins-Owen
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Abbreviations:

CPOMS: Child Protection Online Management System: a school information system used by The Harbour School to record, monitor and action all areas of safeguarding and pastoral care.

EHCP: Education, Health and Care Plans

ILP: Individual Learning Plan

LGB: Local Governing Board

NEET: Not in Employment, Education or Training.

SENCO: Special Education Needs Co-Ordinator

SIMS: School Information Management System: a school information management system, currently developed by Capita and used by The Harbour School to record attendance.

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Rationale: Intent

In order for pupils to reach their full educational achievement good attendance is essential. The Harbour School is committed to providing a needs-led provision of the highest quality, where all pupils feel valued, safe, happy and welcome. We use relational based approaches to engage and build a sense of trust and belonging.

As a Special School for pupils with Social, Emotional and Mental Health developmental needs (SEMH), and/or medical needs, we are aware of the barriers which prevent high levels of attendance. Parents, carers, pupils, staff and other adults work collaboratively to support and promote good school attendance and punctuality.

Pupils with good attendance:

- are happy and safe
- make good progress in social and emotional learning, academic learning and towards EHCP outcomes
- are able to self-regulate more successfully and engage in learning
- are prepared for the next stage of education, training or employment
- have improved outcomes and are less at risk of harm, NEET or anti-social behaviours

School attendance is subject to Government Law. Our school policy and procedures are written to following these laws and guidance:

School attendance: Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities August 2020

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/907535/School_attendance_guidance_for_2020_to_2021_academic_year.pdf

Aims of the Policy

- To promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent and chronic absence
- To ensure every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled; and, to act early to address patterns of absence
- To support parents to perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age who are registered at school attend regularly
- To ensure consistent approaches in promoting good attendance
- To ensure consistent procedures in recording, monitoring and targeting attendance
- To acknowledge that the needs of the individual must be understood and strategies developed to promote positive attendance
- To understand the impact of low attendance on pupil progress, outcomes and safeguarding
- To ensure that Government and LA Law and Guidance is followed

Implementation

The Harbour School promotes good attendance by:

- using relational and trauma informed approaches to promote good attendance
- creating a curriculum which is engaging, relevant and personalised
- using PACE to support regulation to enable pupils to be successful in school.
- identifying individual pathways to inform progress
- teaching the social and emotional aspects of learning
- setting attendance targets in every Individual Learning Plan
- identifying barriers to good attendance
- planning together and with others to overcome barriers
- creating a culture of ambition, success and achievable, high expectation

The School Local Governing Body (LGB) supports the school in ensuring that:

- regular attendance is a whole school approach
- aspirational but achievable targets are set for school attendance
- attendance is regularly reviewed by the LGB
- the LGB feel confident to be able to challenge and support the Head teacher
- an action plan is in place to improve attendance
- the Head teacher provides strong leadership and that the senior leaders are champions of school attendance

Leadership and Management

The Head teacher, Senior and Middle Leaders use attendance data effectively to:

- understand the links between attainment and attendance across the school
- identify pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent
- identify pupils who are persistently absent
- promote good attendance at all opportunities
- identify the attendance of vulnerable groups and/or minority groups
- identify approaches needed to improve attendance and how this impacts on reducing absence

The Head teacher, Senior and Middle Leaders regularly review the effectiveness of:

- strategies to reduce persistent absence
- reintegration support following periods of absence
- how well the attendance escalation process is understood by all from day one of absence
- how and when they request legal sanctions

- the planning of transition and reintegration
- procedures to remove pupils from roll in accordance with guidance
- support for hard-to-reach pupils
- how allegations of peer-on-peer abuse are managed, so as to minimise the impact on attendance

Safeguarding and Attendance

All staff receive regular safeguarding training and understand the risk to children who have low attendance.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

Keeping children safe in education is statutory guidance that schools and colleges in England must have regard to when carrying out their duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all practitioners should make sure their approach is child-centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.

Supporting Parents

The Harbour School supports parents by:

- promoting high expectations of what their children can achieve
- using relational and restorative approaches
- ensuring parents understand that regular school attendance helps to keep their child safe
- ensuring that parents have information on the impact of attendance on their child's learning and life chances
- ensuring parents are regularly reminded of their responsibilities
- ensuring parents know the school's first day of absence procedure
- ensuring parents know who to speak to in school if they have a concern
- encouraging parents to engage with the school community

Working with Others

The Harbour School works with others to:

- provide support for persistent and chronic absentees
- secure Team around the Child arrangements to address absence if required
- share information and support the work of social workers
- access specialist services
- explore activities and opportunities that help to engage hard to reach pupils
- reinforce messages about the importance of regular school attendance and life chances
- help to establish links with employers and training providers
- ensure that regular attendance at school is understood by all in their community
- identify needs and barriers to attendance

Management and Recording of Attendance

The Harbour School has clear, known and understood processes for the management and recording of attendance, the school:

- uses SIMS to register pupils and record daily attendance
- measures individual, class, campus and school attendance data using SIMs
- uses CPOMS to record and evidence remote learning
- uses CPOMS to record safeguarding issues which may impact attendance
- uses CPOMS to record any remote learning and evidence the use of a B code
- alerts any wider team around the child of any attendance concern
- Identifies early indicators of low attendance
- holds accountability and performance review meetings with a focus on attendance for everyone
- Follows statutory National and Local requirements

Procedure

Registers

Registers provide the daily record of attendance of all pupils. They are legal documents that may be required in a Court of Law, for example as evidence in prosecutions for non attendance. The register should be marked using the codes as advised by DfE

One school day is marked as two sessions – am and pm. On each occasion we must record whether every pupil is present, attending an approved educational activity, absent or unable to attend due to other exceptional circumstances.

Registers are closed 45 minutes after start time of morning and afternoon sessions.

Safeguarding

Should a pupil need to leave school early, the departure time and reason why is recorded on SIMS and in a hardcopy book in the school reception. A high-risk procedure is followed should a pupil leave school without permission. If parent/carers are not contactable the pupil will be reported missing to the police.

Reduced School Hours

Some pupils may require a support package including a reduced hours timetable. Portsmouth City Council guidance is followed and the plan is reviewed every six weeks.

First Day of Absence

It is the parent/carer's responsibility to inform school of the reason for a pupil's absence as soon as possible through the absence line. If no contact is made by the parent/carer the campus attendance officer will contact home by telephone. If no reply, a voice mail will be left and a text sent. Actions and any information collected will be recorded on SIMS.

Second and subsequent days of Absence

The campus attendance officer will monitor the absence and make contact as appropriate.

Coding of Absence

Although it is the parent/carer's responsibility to notify school of any absence, it is at the school's discretion how this absence is coded in relation to authorised or unauthorised absence.

Authorised Absence

Absences will be authorised if appropriate evidence is provided to the school. This could include copy of an appointment letter for a medical appointment, a completed reduced

timetable agreement lodged with the Local Authority, evidence of remote learning recorded on CPOMS, appropriate dialogue with parent/carer regarding sickness. All evidence will be kept in the pupil file.

Unauthorised Absence

Absences for which we do not have evidence or a valid explanation, or for which we have not been given sufficient notice to approve will be unauthorised. This includes all requests for holidays during term time.

Parents/carer's should be aware that ten or more unauthorised absences over a term may result in them receiving a Fixed Penalty Notice.

Fixed Penalty Notices

The Harbour School may contact the Local Authority if a pupil has 10 or more unauthorised absences in any one term, with a view to issuing a Fixed Penalty Notice. This will be considered in a needs led, individual basis. The Penalty Notice is issued individually to each parent/carer who fails to ensure their children's regular attendance at school. The penalty is £60 per parent/carer per child if paid within 21 days rising to £120 if paid within 28 days. Non-payment of the Fixed Penalty Notice may result in prosecution in the Magistrates Court. If proved guilty, the parent/carer will receive a criminal record.

Continuing Absence

A school attendance support meeting can be arranged for pupils who are not meeting their ILP attendance target and/or for all pupils who are absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive days. Pupils with their parent/carers will be invited as will relevant members of any Team around the Family. The meeting will identify barriers to attendance and a plan to support increasing attendance will be agreed. This may include a referral to Early Help (where there is no social care involvement already in place). A review date will be set for no later than 6 weeks during which the plan will be monitored by the Attendance Officer and may be referred to the School Attendance Team. Any referrals will include details of the action that the school has taken to try to make contact and promote good attendance of the pupil.

Leave of Absence Request

The DfE advice document on school attendance (August 2020) makes it clear that applications for absence during term-time must be made in advance. Schools may not give retrospective approval. The Head teacher may consider authorising up to 10 days absence per year for compassionate reasons only.

Managing admissions, transition and reintegration

Schools make referrals to The Harbour School through the Local Authority inclusion support panels (ISP). Referrals are overseen by the SENCo

The Registration System

The School will use SIMS to register and monitor attendance

Pupil attendance codes (not for nursery schools) 2020 to 2021 academic year – valid for use from 01 August 2020:

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
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	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	Gypsy, Roma and 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	Untimetabled sessions for non-compulsory school-age pupils	Not counted in possible attendances
X	not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19)	(This code is not counted as an absence in the school census)
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

Registers by law must be kept for at least 3 years, and electronic back-up copies are made regularly. These need preserving for at least three years.

Entries in paper registers must be in ink.
All corrections must be visible (no correcting fluid).

The Law

The Education Act 1996 Part 1, Section 7 states:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable-

[a] To his age, ability and aptitude and

[b] To any special needs he may have.

Either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

For educational purposes the term parent is used to include those that have parental responsibility and/or those that have the day-to-day care of the child.

The legislation that appertains to children who are of compulsory school age and are registered at school is contained within this Act.

Part V1 Section 444 contains the details of when an offence is committed if a child fails to attend school.

Register and Admission Roll keeping.

The legal requirements are found in:

The Education [Pupil Registration] (England) Regulations 2006

Additional Guidance:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/complete-the-school-census/find-a-school-census-code#exclusion-category>

<https://www.gov.uk/school-attendance-absence>