

ATTENDANCE POLICY (STUDENTS)

Principles

- Under the Education (Students Registration) Regulations 1995, all students should have equal opportunities to benefit from the education to which they are entitled.
- At The Hamble School we are aiming for all students to achieve a minimum of 96% attendance over an academic year. A student is classed as Persistently Absent if their attendance is less than 90% over the previous twelve months.
- It is all our responsibility to ensure the curriculum we offer encourages students to attend on time and to implement strategies to discourage truancy and irregular attendance.
- We believe a whole school approach will maintain good attendance and decrease persistent absence.

Daily Attendance Procedures

Students are registered at the start of the school day and should be in their classroom by 8.30am, otherwise they will be deemed to be late.

The student entrance is locked promptly at 8:30am and students who arrive late must enter the school site using the late gate. The Attendance Officer will sign the students in late and set them a breaktime detention.

If pupils arrive to tutor without a late slip or stamp, then their tutor will send them back to the late gate for a slip.

Students who arrive late after tutor time has finished (or during tutor time), will need to sign in at Student Wellbeing Support (SWS). The registers are closed at 9.00am and students arriving after this time will be marked 'U' for an unauthorised absence. This will affect their overall attendance figures. Students who are regularly late (before 9.00am) for 10 sessions or more will then receive unauthorised absences for their lateness. This could lead to a fixed penalty notice being issued to parents/carers.

Registration is completed electronically through Class Charts at the start of every period by the tutor/class teacher.

A student will be either marked present or absent on the register. Any non-attendance at this point is checked and followed up by the Attendance Officer.

Reporting an absence

Parents/Carers are encouraged to report their child's absence through the Class Charts system using the attendance feature on their parent log in. This is then seen by the attendance officer who will authorise or un-authorise the absence and acknowledge to the parent the absence has been recorded.

If a parent is unable to report an absence through Class Charts, they are advised to report the absence through the email address attendance@thehambleschool.co.uk.

All COVID absences should be reported on the online form and updated when your child's situation changes.

Non-attendance

Once non-attendance has been checked, contact is made with parents/carers to ensure they are aware of the student's non-attendance and establish the reason for this. A text and email is left for the parent/carer via In-Touch. If contact is not made regarding the child's absence, a 'reason for absence' letter is sent with a warning that a failure to respond will result in the absence being marked as unauthorised. In the case of Safeguarding concerns, the relevant authorities will also be notified that contact cannot be made with the parents or carers of a student. If a student is found in class and did not have a good reason as to why they did not register, a late mark is manually put into class charts.

Students who are late to tutor time will be given a break-time detention with the Attendance Officer. Students who do not attend their break-time detention will be issued with a lunchtime detention on the same day. Lateness to lessons will be followed up by the teachers in the relevant department. The Year Head will issue a Head of Year detention for the following Monday if the student does not arrive to the break or lunch time detentions. Persistent lateness of three lates in a week will be followed up by the relevant Year Head or the Attendance Officer with a Leadership Detention the following Friday.

Attendance records are kept up-to-date daily, with the exception of students for whom no reason for absence has been given. These will be addressed on a weekly basis through follow up by the Attendance Officer. Reasons for absence letters are sent to parents if previous contact has not been successful. If parents do not respond within 2 weeks of receiving the letter, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

After second registration, the signing out book is checked for any students who have legitimately left site. This is recorded in SIMS.

Any letters/notes handed to tutors or Reception regarding student absence are copied and then passed to the Attendance Officer for logging on SIMS; students who are signing out need to show their signed note at SWS in order to be signed out.

On day 1 of an unreported absence, the truancy call system is used to establish a reason for absence. On day 2 of an unreported absence a call is made by either the attendance officer or pastoral admin staff to establish a reason for absence. On day 3 of any reported absence a home visit will be carried out to check on the safety and wellbeing of the child.

Attendance during COVID-19

Shielding advice for all adults and children was paused on 1 August 2020 which means that even the small number of pupils who will remain on the shielded patient list can also return to school, as can those who have family members who were shielding.

Parental reasons for their child's absence may include:

- underlying health concerns within the family/those living in the home
- deep mistrust of government handling of Covid-19
- BAME families who fear they are more vulnerable
- Travellers who have felt vulnerable throughout the Covid-19 pandemic
- Extended holidays abroad and worried about covid-19 increased risk on flights back to UK
- There may be other similar scenarios, so the list is not inclusive.

The Attendance Officer, Heads of Year or Senior Leadership link for each year group will make communication home for a child who cannot attend for instances in relation to COVID-19. They will then deem if necessary, once communicated with the Headteacher, if the absence of the child is authorised and deemed a 'exceptional circumstance' which is authorised and therefore work provided.

If the absence is unauthorised, issue a Penalty Notice Warning (template available in SIMS). If the Penalty Notice Warning is not successful in returning the child to school, then a Penalty Notice can be issued by following existing guidance.

Parents may opt to EHE. Please see additional guidance on EHE and flexi-schooling.

Finally, it is possible DFE guidance will change and we will update this advice accordingly.

Absence for off-site activities

A list of students on off-site activities is handed to the Attendance Officer and a copy is left at Reception.

Absence for reasons other than illness

Administration staff help by informing the Attendance Officer immediately of any imminent absences through fixed term exclusion.

A list of students and days that they regularly attend an alternative provision or a work placement is given to the Attendance Officer by the relevant staff member.

Tutors and Year Heads keep the Attendance Officer informed of any student anomalies, students who have truanted and any other factors.

Weekly

A report is produced for tutors showing the attendance for their students for the previous week. Tutors will award reward points for those students who have achieved 100% attendance.

A weekly attendance analysis is printed, showing an accurate attendance percentage for the previous week for each Tutor Group and Year Group. This information is displayed on notice boards in Athens block. This analysis is shared with the Year Leader and Leadership Team in the school to ensure that attendance is closely monitored and concerns are acted upon with expedience.

Holidays

Holiday forms are available from SWS and Reception. The completed holiday form is handed in to Reception, and goes to the Headteacher for authorisation. A letter stating whether the request has been approved or not is sent home to the parent/carer. Except in the most exceptional circumstances, holidays in term time will not normally be approved and, if taken, will constitute unauthorised absence.

A school can change an authorised absence to unauthorised if a child has been absent from school due to illness but, on their return to school, there is evidence they have been on holiday.

Sickness

Parents of students who are regularly absent (less than 93% attendance) will be asked to provide medical evidence to cover absences. This needs to be in the form of a sick note, medical appointment letter/card or a doctor's letter. This information will be recorded on SIMS and placed into the student's file. Without this information, the school is obliged to record the absence, and subsequent absences, as unauthorised. Unauthorised absences may lead to a Fixed Penalty Notice.

Dealing with unauthorised absence

Parents and carers have a legal duty to ensure that their children attend school. The Hamble School takes steps to engage and support parents in improving their children's attendance. These include:

- Telephone contact
- Meetings with the Attendance Officer and/or Year Leader
- Provision or signposting of external support agencies
- Rewards and sanctions
- Tutor attendance records
- Attendance reports

If we are unsuccessful in engaging the family of a child who is not attending, we instigate a formal process to encourage attendance. This consists of:

- A system of warning letters to advise parents of attendance concerns
- FPN Warning/Issued
- Referral to the Attendance Legal Panel

At any stage, we welcome families re-engaging with the school to improve the situation.

Locality Team

Referrals to the Locality Team follow when all attempts to address the attendance or welfare problem in-house have been unsuccessful. Once a referral has been made, close liaison between the Attendance Officer and the Locality Team continues. The result of this liaison could be the involvement of Children’s Services, the issue of a Fixed Penalty Notice or the Prosecution of the Parents.

Rewards

Students are rewarded regularly for good attendance and punctuality. Attendance rewards are awarded each half term in the celebration assembly. Rewards are given for 100% attendance and for those students who work hard to improve their attendance. All students who achieve 100% attendance each half term are entered into a prize draw. Ten students from each year group are drawn. Prizes may include breakfast, fast pass, afternoon tea and ice cream. Rewards are also given for the best tutor group attendance and also the most improved attendance of each tutor group.

Title of Policy	Attendance Policy (Students)
Review Cycle	1 Year
Policy reviewed by	SPK
Committee responsible	Learning & Achievement
Statutory/Discretionary/College	Statutory
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