

Attendance Policy

Date last reviewed	July 2024
Committee Responsible	SBA
Designated member of staff	Mr Nicholas Buckman
Date of next review:	2026

STATEMENT OF INTENT

In order to promote and support our children's learning and enable each one of them to achieve their full potential we encourage the children to achieve excellence in all aspects of their work and behaviour. Our organisation of their learning promotes enjoyment, perseverance and self-discipline.

Each student is entitled to the high quality education offered at this school and consistent attendance is an essential part of this process. We expect that students' attendance and punctuality should be as close to 100% as possible. The minimum accepted attendance for this school is 96%. We hope that all parents/carers will recognise the value of attendance and punctuality, not only to take full advantage of the opportunities offered at Hollyfield but also as training for adult life.

Key Objectives

- Ensure that the school promotes and maintains high levels of attendance for all our students
- Provide clear procedures for recording and monitoring attendance
- Provide clear procedures for following up authorised and unauthorised absence
- Provide clear procedures for following up repeated lateness
- Support students returning to school after a period of absence
- Satisfy legal requirements for reporting absence

Promoting High Levels Of Attendance

The school promotes and maintains high levels of attendance by communicating its expectations clearly to all members of the school community through:

- a clear statement in the school prospectus
- an Attendance Officer and head of year
- letters and the weekly bulletin
- the teachers discussing the importance of good attendance with the children
- the promotion of regular attendance and punctuality in assemblies
- having a system of appropriate rewards for groups and individuals who have consistently high levels of attendance and improved attendance
- the deployment of a dedicated Attendance Officer
- running 'First Day Response – Truancy Call'
- parent and students signing the home school agreement

PROCEDURES FOR RECORDING AND MONITORING ATTENDANCE

Completing the Register

The school day starts at 8:30am and students are expected to be in their form rooms at that time. The form tutor will take the register during AM registration. The PM register mark will be taken from period 5 lessons. It is a legal responsibility for these registers to be taken.

If a child arrives late to school, they will be signed in by a senior member of staff and then sent to their form group for registration. The form tutor will amend the register with the minutes they were late and add a late mark.

If a student arrives after registration, they will receive a late mark. They must sign in with the attendance officer.

Pupils arriving more than 50 minutes after the end of registration will receive an unauthorised absence mark (U Code). If a pupil receives 10 U codes over the course of one term, then they are at risk of being issued a Fixed Penalty Notice.

Monitoring Attendance

Attendance will be monitored by several members of staff, this includes Phase Leaders, Head of Year, Student Support Officers, Form Tutors and our Education Welfare Officer. When the school identifies concerns, which are persistent, about individual pupil absences they will escalate interventions and refer to, or consult with the attendance lead.

A number of steps will be taken to improve students' attendance, these are outlined in our school attendance strategy.

Pupil attendance at Hollyfield is categorised into 4 stages:

Stage 1	100% -96%
Stage 2	95.9% - 93%
Stage 3	92.9% - 90%
Stage 4	Below 90% - Persistently Absent (PA)

Collection and the use of attendance data

The efficient and speedy collection of data within Hollyfield school is essential to the development of effective strategies for action. Data collected will be used to monitor:

- Individual absences and lateness at school
- Patterns of absence and lateness and the identification of trends by class, year group and whole school. This will allow weekly, half termly, termly, and whole year comparisons to be made and strategies for improving individuals and whole school attendance planned accordingly.
- Persistent Absence (PA) data (and all attendance information) is collected by Hollyfield School every week. DfE have revised the methodology used to identify pupils with absence rates above 10%. This will classify pupils as persistent absentees if they miss 10% or more of their own individual possible sessions, rather than reaching a standard threshold of absence sessions. Persistent absence includes all authorised and unauthorised absence. The adult responsible for that child will be invited into school for a meeting and attendance monitored. If this does not improve then a referral will be made to the Education Welfare Officer.

OTHER ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

Safeguarding/CME

- The School, after they have exhausted their own procedures, will refer to Achieving for Children team including the Child Missing Education (as per the local authority CME guidance)
- CME referrals will also be completed for all pupils who leave Hollyfield school to move to another Local Authority if no application for another school has been made and the school has had no contact from a future proposed school
- Hollyfield school will not remove any pupil from roll unless they have consulted the local authority Education Welfare School Officer
- Any child who has not attended school for 5 consecutive days will be reported to the local authority, whether or not contact has been made with the family if the absence remains unauthorised.

Reporting an Absence

If a parent needs to report an absence for students in Year 7 to 11, they need to call the absence line. The telephone number is 0208 3394500. They then need to select option 1 for Years 7 to 11. For 6th form, parents need to call 02083394507. A message must be left which includes the name of the child, form and reason for absence.

Illness

If a child is genuinely ill, they should remain at home and you should notify your school. Your child should be taken to the doctor to confirm the symptoms. The school office or a doctor can provide some guidance on the amount of time that common illnesses, particularly contagious ones such as chicken pox, require a child to be absent.

If a child has viral sickness and diarrhoea, they should only return to school 48 hours after the symptoms have subsided. If your child has a lot of medical absences, you will be invited into school to talk about the absences and may be referred for additional support.

Appointments

Whenever possible, dental, and other appointments should be made outside of school hours. We do appreciate that hospital appointments are not always flexible, and emergencies occur. School must be notified prior to the appointment and if you have an appointment card or letter please bring this into school.

Other absences

Some absences are allowed by law, for example if a child is ill or there is a family crisis such as a funeral. These are authorised absences. However, there are other times when pupils are absent for reasons which are not permitted. These are known as unauthorised absences.

Unauthorised absences include going to the shops; looking after younger children; sleeping in; hair appointments; birthdays; lack of uniform or PE kit; a parent feeling unwell, or children not wanting to come to school.

Whilst a child may be absent from school because they are ill, sometimes they might also be reluctant to attend school. Information for parents and carers on ERSA (Emotionally Related School Avoidance) can be found [here](#). Any problems with regular attendance should be discussed with the school as soon as possible so that a shared plan can be agreed that maintains their attendance and enables them to achieve. If you have any concerns please contact either your child's Tutor, Head of Year, the Attendance Officer or Student Support Officer.

If extended leave is taken, the school can withdraw your child's place, and this will cause further disruption to your child's education.

Exceptional circumstances leave

- You do not have the right to take your child out of school during term time
- By law parents and carers MUST ask the Headteachers permission for exceptional circumstances leave
- If you request exceptional circumstances leave you may be required to attend a meeting in school
- Unauthorised absence may result in the issue of a Penalty Notice*

Religious observance

Children are only allowed to take 1 day per religious observance and no more than 2 days per academic year. School should be informed beforehand if you intend to keep your child away from school for a religious observance.

Good attendance

Good or improving attendance is recognised and rewarded in Hollyfield school. Please speak with your child's individual tutor regarding reward schemes for good attendance.

Poor attendance

All schools will complete their stage 1 and 2 actions in line with this policy and procedure. Continued poor attendance could result in a child or family being referred to the Education Welfare Officer. The EWO will visit you at home and do an assessment of the reasons for poor attendance. This could result in further action being taken if attendance fails to improve.

Punctuality

Poor punctuality is not acceptable; students arriving late are disruptive to other students learning.

The school day starts at 8:30am and students are expected to be in their form rooms at that time. If a student arrives late, they will be issued with a 15 minute detention at lunchtime. Failure to attend this will result in a 30 minute detention at the end of the day.

If a student arrives more than 50 minutes after registration, they will be marked as an unauthorised absence. If a student receives more than 10 incidents of unauthorised absences during the term, parents maybe issued a Fixed Penalty Notice.

Help with problems

If you have any problems with attendance or any other matter such as a parent being ill or family difficulties, please come and talk to us.

We have a range of support that may be offered through schools for example, the Attendance Officer or other members of Pastoral support Team. Please contact the school directly if you would like to discuss how we can support you.

Legal Sanction

Prosecution: Where intervention fails to bring about an improvement in attendance, the Local Authority will be notified and legal action in the Magistrates' Court may be taken. The school will provide the Local Authority with evidence required for a prosecution under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 and will appear as a prosecution witness if required by the court. This is to ensure that parents realise their own responsibilities in ensuring attendance at school and most importantly about returning children to education.

- Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 states that if a parent fails to ensure the regular school attendance of their child if he/she is a registered pupil at a school and is of compulsory school age, then they are guilty of an offence.
- A parent found guilty of this offence can be fined up to £2500 and or be imprisoned for a period of three months.

- Alternatives to Section 444 prosecution are Parenting Contracts, Penalty Notices or an Education Supervision Order.

Penalty Notices (Anti Social Behaviour Act 2003) can only be issued in the case of unauthorised absence. These will be issued by the Local Authority and maybe considered when:

- A pupil is absent from school for the purpose of a holiday in term time and the absence has not been authorised by the school
- A pupil has accumulated at least ten sessions of unauthorised absence and further unauthorised absence has occurred following written warning to improve .
- When a pupil is in a public place during school hours, without reasonable justification, during days one to five of a fixed term or permanent exclusion.
- A child has been referred to Education Welfare and casework is in progress but the parents are not supporting the school or engaging with Education Welfare to bring about improved attendance and no other legal sanctions are underway.
- Where parents are unwilling to sign a contract offering support and attendance is below 90% over a five week period without justification.

Penalty fine of £60 (if paid within 21 days), rising to £120 (if paid after 21 days but before 28 days have elapsed). Failing to pay the fine will result in prosecution and being summoned to appear at the Magistrates Court.

Penalty Notices will be used in accordance with Achieving for Children Penalty Notice Protocol.

Supporting Students During An Extended Period Of Absence And When They Return To School Following A Period Of Absence

The school will support children in the following ways:

- when a child has extended absence liaising with parents/carers and subjects teachers to arrange for appropriate work to be sent home by the admin staff..
- the form tutor prepares the other children in the class for the child's return
- the Head of Year/SSO/Phase Leaders or Admin staff inform teaching staff and asks for appropriate work to be set
- the SSO/Head of Year/Phase Leader liaises with the child's parent to ensure there are no issues
- catchup sessions/gap analysis when students return to make sure they can catch up
- students may spend a proportion of time in our Restart centre to adjust into school life. If this is the case, the school will contact you to discuss this.
- the school may refer the student to the Virtual School if necessary, therefore allowing sstudent's to continue with their school work

KEY STUDENTS

The daily attendance of Students on CP/CIN plans will be monitored by our Attendance Officer and reported to the Safeguarding lead. If there is no reason given/repeated absence, the safeguarding lead will contact the relevant professionals.

Key students with pastoral issues will be referred to the pastoral team before being sent home for medical reasons. This is to support the student and their family.

ELECTIVE HOME EDUCATION

Parents/carers 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.

A child is of compulsory school age from the school term after his/her 5th birthday until the last Friday in June of the academic year in which they reach the age of 16. Additionally, the Government has now raised to 18 the age at which a young person must participate in education or training, which can include home education.

There is no requirement for parents/carers to obtain consent from the school or Achieving for Children to educate their child at home but they are required to put their intentions in writing to the Headteacher and the Education Welfare Service. We would always request a meeting so that we could ensure that parents or carers were fully aware of all the implications and consequences of such a decision.

If you are considering this, please refer to the AfC Elective Home Education guidance

LEGAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE PUBLICATION OF ATTENDANCE INFORMATION

Reporting to Parents/carers

On every written request parents/carers receive details of their child's attendance and punctuality. This information includes the possible attendance, the number of authorised absences (and therefore by deduction the actual attendance) the number of unauthorised absences and the number of lates.

DfE

Each half term the school completes an absence return which includes the school statutory roll, the number of school sessions, the number of authorised absences, the number of unauthorised absences and the number of students with unauthorised absence.

