



St Hugh's School

Attendance Policy

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 St Hugh's School aims to maximise attendance rates in order to ensure that all students are able to take the fullest advantage of the learning experiences available to them.

Statutory Framework

Under Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act, a pupil is required to attend regularly at the school where they are a registered pupil.

The school is obliged by law to differentiate between authorised and unauthorised absence. A letter or telephone message from a parent does not in itself authorise an absence. Only if the school is satisfied as to the validity of the explanation offered by the letter/message will the absence be authorised (see below). An absence will only be authorised if the school is satisfied that the explanation offered is valid.

This document gives guidance to all staff on the subject of attendance and punctuality in school.

School Officers Responsible for Attendance as follows:- Tracy Millard (overall) Katrina Pawlyszyn/attendance and mentors to co-ordinate weekly monitoring via Attendance & Welfare Learning mentor and the School office

Aims and Principles of Good Attendance

- The school is committed to maximising the achievement of all students.
- There is a clear link between good attendance and educational achievement.
- Regular and punctual attendance is vital if students are to benefit fully from the academic, personal and social opportunities which are offered to them within the school.
- Parents/Carers play an important role in supporting the school and encouraging students to reach good attendance levels.
- A broad and balanced education is dependent on regular attendance at school.
- School will take appropriate action to promote and encourage good attendance.
- A lack of attendance is considered by the school to be a direct consideration where safeguarding all of our students is concerned.

Rights and Responsibilities

Improving attendance at St Hugh's School is the responsibility of everyone in the school community - pupils, parents and all staff.

Pupils

- All pupils are expected to attend school and all of their lessons regularly and punctually.
- Pupils who do experience attendance difficulties will be offered support from staff, usually the Attendance Officer.
- The Education Inclusion Service will be informed if attendance continues to be an issue.

- School expects students to hand any letters regarding absence from parents/carers to the class teacher.

Parents

- Parents are responsible for ensuring that their child attends school regularly, punctually, properly dressed and equipped and in a fit condition to learn.
- To ensure their child is well prepared for the school day with equipment, completed homework etc.
- If a child is prevented for any reason from attending, or is late, parents are requested to notify the school on the first day of absence - by phone call or in writing.
- To contact the teabase teacher or Headteacher in confidence whenever any problem occurs that may keep their child away from school.
- A pupil's absence from school must be considered as unauthorised until a satisfactory explanation is forthcoming from the parent.
- Parents will be informed promptly of any concerns which may arise over a child's attendance.
- Parents should avoid, if at all possible, making medical/dental appointments for their child during school hours.
- To ensure the continuity of their child's education by taking holidays during the school holiday period except in exceptional circumstances
- To produce documentation supporting appointments and absences

Parents whose first language is not English or who have literacy problems will be offered appropriate support from school in matters of communication.

School

- Staff will endeavour to encourage good attendance and punctuality through personal example.
- Attendance is the responsibility of all school staff (not just teaching and pastoral staff).
- Staff will respond to all absenteeism firmly and consistently.
- It is the responsibility of the school to monitor and inform the Education Inclusion Service of attendance related problems.

What parents / carers and students can expect of the school.

- A broad and balanced education that is dependent on regular attendance at school.
- The encouragement and promotion of good attendance.
- Regular, efficient and accurate recording of attendance.
- First day contact with parents / carers when a student fails to attend school without providing good reason.
- Prompt action on any problems notified.
- Close liaison with the Educational Inclusion Service to assist and support parents and students where needed.
- Notification to parents / carers of their child's attendance record through an termly report home.

In addition the Head Teacher reports termly to governors regarding whole school attendance.

Attendance monitoring is part of safeguarding procedures in school and is a whole school accountability.

2.0 USE OF REGISTERS

Morning Registration

2.1 Registers are completed online by staff.

2.2 Registration is the period from 8.50 -9.15 - Registers remain open until 9.30am. Teambase tutors should be in their form rooms or the hall at 8.55 to receive their class. Registers should be marked on time online. Examples of valid explanations for lateness may include:

- Being with another member of staff (who should provide a note in the student planner to this effect).
- Problems with transport provided by the local education authority

2.3 "Getting up late" is not a valid explanation.

2.4 Any pupil who is not present by 9.15am must be recorded as absent, no reason yet provided (N). Pupils who arrive at school after 9.15am must sign in at the office and are recorded on the main attendance register by a member of the school office team

For students that do not arrive within the allocated time, teambase teachers are to complete a slip and pass to the attendance mentor ASAP to follow up

Afternoon Registration

2.5 Afternoon registration takes place at the beginning of period 4 which starts at 1.25pm. Online registers should be completed straight away. Pupils present should be marked present with a /.

2.6 **Registers are legal documents and should never be marked by pupils.**

2.7 Once the register is closed late pupils will be recorded as 'u' unless a relevant reason is given. School registers close at the end of teambase time morning and afternoon.

3.0 ABSENCE - AUTHORISED & UNAUTHORISED

3.1 Procedures for following up absence:

Absence may be initially authorised by a telephone call to the Teambase teacher / office (AO). However, there is an expectation that a note will be written in the student planner

and shown to the pupil's teabase teacher on his/her return. At the end of each week unaccounted absences will be investigated by the office and mentors and referred to KP / Attendance & Welfare mentor if necessary.

- 3.2 If pupils are absent and parents / carers have not contacted the school the Teabase teacher / office will attempt to make contact by telephone. If parents are not on the telephone a letter will be sent direct to the parents that day.
- 3.3 For children who are suspected to be "Missing in Education" we follow the "LSCB Children Missing in Education" guidelines
- 3.4 **Absence should be authorised if:**
- The pupil is ill or prevented from attending by an unavoidable cause.
 - The absence occurs on a day exclusively set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupils' parents belong.
 - The pupil does not live within walking distance of St Hugh's and no suitable arrangements have been made by the Local Authority (LA) for any of the following:
 - The pupil's transport to and from school
 - Accommodation for the pupil at or near school
 - The LA has not facilitated the registration of the pupil at a school nearer to their home
 - The pupil is the child of traveller parents who temporarily leave the area giving reasonable indication of their intention to return.
 - The pupil has a local authority licence to take part in a public performance and the school has given leave of absence.
 - The pupil is attending an interview with either a prospective employer or in connection with an application for a place at an institute of further or higher education or for a place at another school.
 - The pupil is involved in an exceptional special occasion (e.g. a family wedding of immediate family members). In authorising such absences the individual circumstances of the particular case and the pupil's overall pattern of attendance should be considered (immediate family is a parent or grandparent). In such circumstances up to one day will be authorised.
 - **No family holiday can be granted during term time**
- 3.5 **Absence should be unauthorised if:**
- No explanation is forthcoming from parents/carers
 - The school is dissatisfied with the explanation.
 - The pupil is staying at home to mind the house or look after siblings.
 - The pupil is absent for unexceptional special occasions, e.g. the pupil's birthday.
 - The pupil is away from school on a family holiday for a period of time longer than that permitted by the LA or which has not been taken in accordance with the attendance guidelines/head teachers authorisation
 - School will request medical confirmation of absence.

AMENDMENTS TO SCHOOL ATTENDANCE REGULATIONS (2013)

Holidays / Leave of Absence

- From September 2013 the law has changed and there is no longer any entitlement for parents to take children on holiday during term time.

- The Headteacher may only grant leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. An application must be made in advance to the Headteacher by a parent/carer with whom the pupil normally resides. Evidence must be provided at the time of application to support the request. Retrospective consent will not be granted.
- Penalty notices have been introduced under section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 as an alternative to prosecution, for failing to ensure a child's regular school attendance.
- Where a child has at least 10 school sessions (half days) recorded as unauthorised absence due to taking holidays in school term time, a penalty notice may be issued to all parents/carers by the local authority.
- If a penalty notice is issued, each parent/carer will have 21 days from the date of issue to pay £60. After 21 days it will increase to £120 per parent/carer, per child. Failure to pay a penalty notice within 28 days will result in prosecution in the Magistrates' Court under section 444(1/1A) of the Education Act 1996, for failing to secure the regular school attendance of a child.
- Persistent unauthorised absence due to leave of absence in term time may result directly in prosecution

4.0 TRIPS OUT OF SCHOOL / WORK EXPERIENCE

- 4.1 Educational activities (including work experience (W), educational visits (V), link courses (B) or sporting activities) are deemed to be 'educated off site', and they are therefore recorded as in **attendance** but marked accordingly.

5.0 REWARDING, PROMOTING AND MONITORING ATTENDANCE

- 5.1 St Hugh's School will offer an environment in which pupils feel valued and welcomed. The school's ethos must demonstrate that pupils feel that their presence in school is important, so they will be missed when they are absent/late and that follow up action will be taken. Early intervention often prevents more frequent absences.
- 5.2 A varied and flexible curriculum will be offered to pupils. Every effort will be made to ensure that learning tasks and success criteria are matched to pupil's needs.
- 5.3 Parents are reminded regularly (via newsletters, mobile text message, parents' evenings, VLE, school website etc.) of the importance of good attendance.
- 5.4 Good attendance will be praised appropriately:
- 5.5 Pupils with 100% attendance are presented with a Certificate in a Rewards assembly at the end of each term to reward their success; pupils with 100% attendance each week receive a raffle ticket which is entered in the half termly attendance draw to receive a prize.
- 5.6 Attendance is a standing item on SLT and Behaviour & Safety Governors' Subcommittee meetings - with appropriate action taken (termly meetings).
- 5.7 All schools are required by North Lincolnshire Council to submit attendance figures to the Education Inclusion Service no later than 10 days after the start of a new term.

Statistics on attendance are compiled for all schools in North Lincolnshire for each term and a copy is returned to the school.

- 5.8 Pupils who have been absent for whatever reason for an extended period of time will (when appropriate) have individually tailored reintegration programmes prepared for them.
- 5.9 The school is required by law to set an attendance target. This has been set annually.
- 6.0 The school has a robust Early Help process in place, especially where attendance is concerned. Specific outcomes linked to attendance are incorporated into the individuals' Early Help plan, where attendance is deemed to be an issue.

Procedures for following up Absence

- Absences must be explained by parents on the first day of any absence. Notes, letters and telephone message slips should be retained by the attendance officer for recording purposes.
- On the third day of any unexplained absence the attendance officer will telephone the parents/carers or the contact names. Failure to respond to this by parents will result in the involvement of the Educational Inclusion Service.
- Parents of any child deemed as vulnerable or of Child Protection concern, may be contacted by the attendance officer earlier than the third day of absence. Follow up home visits may also be conducted by the attendance officer and/or Education Welfare Officer should no contact be made by telephone.
- When pupils return to school after a period of absence they should bring a note detailing the reason for the absence.
- If a pupil is persistently absent (or late) and the school's efforts to effect an improvement have been unsuccessful, the situation will be referred to the Education Inclusion Service during their consultation visit.
- Notes from parents will be kept by the attendance officer in the attendance file. All telephone messages regarding absence/lateness are to be recorded on the telephone message chart and/or in SIMS attendance records.

6.0 SANCTIONS

Truancy

- 6.1 If a pupil absconds their parents should be notified by telephone ASAP. Police are to be informed regarding the running pupil and their vulnerability. A parent (where possible) must escort the child back to school and they should be sent back to class. KP should be notified and will deal with the issue. They should try to ascertain the underlying reason for the action so as to prevent it from reoccurring. Example causes may be...
- Poor relationship between a member of staff and pupil;
 - In response to bullying or poor peer relationships;
 - In response to anxiety about work.

If a child refuses to return to school and does not go home then the police are informed. Staff will monitor the student if they are in the near vicinity, but if they move further afield, the police /parents/ social workers/ carers are informed. Staff will

work with the agencies involved to keep parents informed of up to date information, under safeguarding. Staff **will not** follow the child / run after them in the interim as this can only escalate the situation.

Lateness

- 6.2 Pupils who are late and miss morning registration must sign in at the school office - the receptionist will record appropriately. SLT will periodically monitor pupils signing in at the office.

7.0 REGISTER CODES

- 7.1 The only register codes which should be entered by teachers are / (present) or N (absent) no reason yet provided or L Late. All other marks will be entered by the office. If a teacher finds a mark e.g. B has already been entered against a student's name, it should not be altered unless the pupil is present in the room. For reference, the following marks may appear in the register.

/	Present AM
\	Present PM
B	Educated off site (not Dual registered)
C	other exceptional circumstances (bereavement, agreed special occasions)
D	Dual Registration
E	Excluded
G	Family holiday (where permission is not granted)
H	Family Holiday (for which permission has been granted i.e. pre-authorised)
I	Illness
J	Attending Interview, e.g. with prospective employer or for college placement
L	Late (before registers closed)
M	Confirmed illness/Medical and dental appointments/sickness
N	No reason yet provided for absence
O	Unauthorised circumstances/truancy
P	Approved sporting activity
R	Day of religious observance for the religious body to which parents belong
S	Approved study leave
T	Traveller - child travelling
U	Late (after registers closed)
V	Educational visit
W	Work Experience
X	Only staff should attend (non-compulsory school age absence)
-	All should attend/No mark recorded

8.0 EVALUATION

- 8.1 Attendance is discussed weekly by KP and Attendance & Inclusion mentor responsible and fortnightly with SLT weekly figures to SLT meeting. Using figures provided by the AO statistics on attendance are compiled by North Lincolnshire Authority. Each term a copy is sent to school. These figures will be analysed by AO and discussed in Line

Management Meetings with SLT, with responsibility for attendance and presented to SLT Meeting. If trends are identified appropriate action will be taken.

8.2 The policy will be reviewed regularly.

Attendance Statistics

All schools are required by North Lincolnshire Education Authority to submit attendance figures to the Education Welfare Service no later than 10 days after the start of the new term.

Statistics on attendance are compiled for all schools in the North Lincolnshire area for each term and a copy is returned to the school. The statistics are presented to the Special Needs Sub Committee.