



HALEWOOD  
ACADEMY

# Attendance Policy



Policy & Procedure Number: 3

Date of Board of Governors Review: March 2021

Review Due: March 2022

School Link: Mr David Day



WADE DEACON  
TRUST

## AIMS

At Halewood Academy we are very aware of the link between good attendance and good learning and progress. Research has shown that the lower the attendance of a pupil the lower the GCSE grade at the end of Year 11. Less than 95% attendance every year in school equals a 1 grade difference across ALL GCSE grades. Therefore, Halewood Academy has a minimum target of 96% attendance for every pupil. Excellent attendance and punctuality are essential for future employment, where an absence rate of 5% or above would be considered a cause for concern.

Therefore, the aims of this policy are –

- To share the responsibility for promoting school attendance amongst everyone in the Schools and the broader school community
- To develop and implement an effective Attendance Policy that touches all aspects of school life, and relates directly to the schools' values, ethos and curriculum.
- To encourage all pupils to reach their true potential and eventually become independent learners who value learning with and from others, i.e. have a positive attitude to life-long learning
- To value application, perseverance, initiative and independence of thought and action, as well as co-operative endeavours
- This Attendance Policy and its implementation is intended to encourage all pupils to attend school regularly by the implementation of specific measures. Examples include -
  - registering pupils accurately and efficiently
  - setting attendance targets for individual pupils and year groups
  - contacting parents the same day when reasons for absence are unknown or unauthorised
  - regularly monitoring pupil attendance and punctuality
  - reporting school attendance to parents via ClassCharts and Schoolcomms, as well as attendance statistics to the Local Authority (LA) and DfE as appropriate

To reinforce good attendance and to encourage improved attendance by using such measures as -

- Informal comments from pupil support and subject staff
- By the more formal issue of attendance certificates in tutor time and assemblies
- By the use of rewards at regular intervals
- Weekly compulsory catch up for pupils who have missed lesson time through absence
- Conversations between pupils and personal tutors, assistant progress leaders and progress leaders when pupils are returning from an absence work/learning
- To monitor and evaluate this policy and its implementation by, amongst other means, rigorously collecting and analysing data about attendance to check our progress against measurable outcomes, e.g. National and LA-level targets

## **RATIONALE**

If a pupil does not attend school or is not taking part in an approved educational activity, they are classed as ABSENT from school. This means that if your child is off school for any reason, even if they are ill or have medical permission to be off school, they will be marked as ABSENT.

100% attendance is 190 days in school.

8 days of absence is 96%.

12 days of absence is 94%.

19 days absence is 90%.

29 days absence is 85%.

38 days absence is 80%.

47 days absence is 75%.

Please note: Even if an absence is authorised, percentage attendance is still affected.

Therefore the following rationale is pertinent -

- Good habits of attendance and punctuality will assist to develop self-discipline and responsibility in preparation for future employment
- Through monitoring attendance, staff can ensure the safety and academic progress of each pupil
- Regular attendance promotes the effective and continuous learning of all pupils
- Regular attendance promotes positive friendships and well-being
- Refer to policies: - Behaviour for Learning, Teaching & Learning and Child Protection policies

## **GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR CHECKING PUPILS' ATTENDANCE**

We ask parents/carers not to keep their child off school unless the absence is absolutely unavoidable. Where this is the case, parents/carers are asked to do the following –

- Contact school on the first morning of absence by 8.30 a.m. to provide a reason for absence
- Contact the school each day of absence until your child returns to school
- Work with the school and any other agency to resolve any difficulties which may affect regular school attendance
- Provide medical verification for any absences exceeding 7 days (14 sessions) or more

Where absence is unavoidable, the school is very happy to ensure that work is provided so that your child does not fall behind in his or her progress. You will need to contact your child's assistant progress leader to arrange this.

## PROCEDURES

- Where a parent/carer has not contacted the school when a pupil is absent, the school will contact home that morning via telephone to establish the reason why
- If a pupil is absent and the Attendance Manager is unable to contact parents the Assistant Progress Leader will make a home visit for specific identified target groups if necessary
- If absence continues or a pattern is seen to be developing the Progress Leader, SLT link and the Attendance Manager should be alerted
- The EWO will work with the school (Assistant/Vice Principal, Progress Leader, Assistant Progress Leader and Attendance Manager), pupils and parents/carers to improve attendance using a range of different strategies when a pupil's attendance falls below government guidelines and causes concern
- If truancy is detected the parents/ guardian should be informed via a telephone call or letter
- Where the school based strategies are deemed inadequate in combating truancy or poor attendance the Educational Welfare Service should be informed by the Attendance Manager with the Assistant Progress Leader's knowledge
- A pupil is deemed late if they are not present at registration when the school starts at 8.45am
- Pupils who achieve 100% attendance each term will be rewarded in line with school rewards policy
- Pupils who have completed a whole academic year without absence will be acknowledged and celebrated
- If your child is absent from school through illness the absence will be authorised with a phone call or email from parents on the day they return to school. If your child is being monitored by the Educational Welfare Service or by the Attendance Manager at Halewood Academy, electronic copies of medical verification must be provided in order for the absence to be authorised
- Routinely, absences of 14 sessions or more will not be authorised unless medical verification is provided in the form of an appointment card, prescription counter foil, doctor's note or packaging for medication. Electronic copies are requested where possible. Please note that any evidence must be dated to support the date of absence
- Parents and carers are asked to contact the school on the first morning of absence by 8:30am either by phone or email and contact each day the absence continues
- At any point during an absence the Assistant Progress Leader may visit in order to satisfy safeguarding regulation and offer support where necessary.

### School Support Systems for Promoting Regular Attendance

In order to ensure good attendance from all our pupils we have a graduated support system as outlined below:

Stage	Attendance Thresholds	Actions
Excellent	96%-100%	Rewards:  100% attendance certificates half-termly  Prize drawers half-termly  Bronze, silver and gold medals

		Letters sent each half-term
		Weekly rewards for 100% attendance
<b>Stage 1</b>	<b>Below 96%- 94%</b>	Form Tutor Support
		Form tutor interview - proforma completed
		Pupil voice through attendance proformas and interviews
		Parent/carer informed
		Letters sent out half-termly
		Home visits daily when absent
<b>Stage 2</b>	<b>Below 94%- 90%</b>	Assistant Progress Leader support- weekly meetings
		Interview- proforma completed
		Parent/Carer informed by meeting or phone
		Pupil voice – as above
		Barriers to learning identified
		Attendance target set and reviewed weekly
		Letters home half-termly
		Education Penalty Notice warning letters
		Attendance report
		EWO one off visits or letters
<b>Stage 3</b>	<b>Below 90%</b>	For cases 85% or below- EWO caseload with some intervention below 90%-85%
		All absences to be unauthorised unless covered by medical evidence
		School issue Education Penalty warning notice
		School attendance service issue cautions
		School Attendance Service issue Education Penalty Notice
		Action plan for improved attendance agreed with parent/carer and school attendance service
		Multi-agency referral if required
<b>Stage 4</b>	<b>Attendance does not improve- statutory proceedings.</b>	Block prosecution
		EWO casework stage 4

Education Penalty Notice issued

Court process- prosecution

Education Supervision Order

## **PROCEDURES TO PROMOTE ATTENDANCE, PUNCTUALITY AND TO COMBAT TRUANCY**

Truancy from School: Is staying away from school for any reason other than:

- Illness of the pupil
- When the parents have obtained the school's prior permission by requesting
- Leave of absence and this has been approved by the designated member of staff.

The schools' Behaviour for Learning Policy will be followed in cases of truancy.

- The investigation of absence and truancy is the responsibility of the Attendance Manager who will report to; Assistant Progress Leader, Progress Leader, SLT Link and the Form Tutor.

## **PUNCTUALITY**

The school day starts promptly at 8.45am. Note that pupils who are not present in the school building before the 8:45am bell will be marked as late. Pupils who are marked as late will receive a resolution meeting. This meeting will be used to discuss the reason for being late and what support can be offered to improve the pupils' punctuality. A message will be sent home informing parents/carers of the late mark and subsequent correction. Where a pupil has a record of lateness to school the resolution meeting will be escalated to 40 or 60 minutes. Pupils who fail to attend an after school late resolution will be dealt with in line with the school's Behaviour Policy.

## **FORM TUTORS**

Form Tutors and Progress Leaders must enforce this policy. If a pupil is absent without explanation when the register is called, a member of the Attendance Team should contact the parents the same day wherever possible. Where no reply is received, a further message or email should be sent from The Attendance Team to the parents requesting an explanation for the pupil's absence. Form Tutors will conduct a "return to school" meeting with the pupil on the first day of return.

## **SUBJECT TEACHERS**

When a pupil is missing from their lesson for no apparent reason subject teachers should inform the Attendance Manager and Assistant Progress Leader who will follow the procedures outlined under General Guidelines and Procedures, so that the pupil's absence can be further investigated. Subject teachers should monitor their class registers to check for patterns of irregular attendance. Subject teachers can also contribute to the reduction of unauthorised absence by delivering interesting and engaging lessons and insisting on punctuality for themselves, colleagues and pupils.

## **POLICE**

Under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 the police now have powers to remove truants found in public places and to return them either to their schools or a place of safety designated by the LA.

## **INTERNAL TRUANCY**

- Is either, registering and then leaving school, or, missing particular lessons
- A register should be marked by the class teacher in every lesson. The Attendance Manager will send staff a notification informing of any registers that have not been completed. This will be monitored by The Attendance Team throughout the day.
- All incidents where pupils receive an absence mark during the day should be checked with the subject teacher. An email, or a message via SIMS will be sent to class teachers to check any pupils not marked present in lessons where they should be.
- The Form Tutor should check the register from the previous day to see if there were any incidences of absent marks for lessons. If internal truancy is discovered, then the Form Tutor should take this up with the pupil; inform the Attendance Team and Assistant Progress Leader.
- Persistent offenders will be sanctioned in-line with the Behaviour for Learning Policy.

## **ASSISTANT PROGRESS LEADERS SHOULD**

- Liaise with the Attendance Team and Form Tutors, to ensure that the system is working and organise a full year attendance check on a daily basis, where it is deemed appropriate. Look for patterns of non-attendance, internal and external truancy in consultation with the Attendance Team and SLT link for the year group

## **ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES**

- All children of compulsory school age should receive suitable education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. If a child is registered at school, parents have the legal responsibility for ensuring that their child attends regularly. In addition to statutory obligations parents have all signed the Home-School Agreement; a section of which describes the agreed responsibilities of the parents

## **THE PARENTS' RESPONSIBILITIES**

Parents are to help fulfil their important role in their child's education, and to be as informed as possible in any communications or discussions with teachers, parents and are therefore requested to -

- Ensure their child attends school regularly and punctually
- To notify the School if their child cannot attend for any reason with a phone call or email to the school by 8:30am on the first day of absence and every subsequent day of absence, this is for the child's safety as well as administrative reasons
- To work with the School and Education Welfare Service to resolve/alleviate any attendance problems or protracted absence during term time. Leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances
- Take an interest in their child's school work

## **PUPILS**

- Pupils are actively encouraged to attend school regularly and to arrive punctually at school and at the start of lessons
- Pupils should inform staff if there is a problem that may lead to their absence, E.g. bullying, racism, personal issues etc.
- Pupils will pass on absence notification from parents to their tutor where appropriate and attend a return to school meeting with their Form Tutor

## **LOCAL AUTHORITY (LA) & EDUCATIONAL WELFARE SERVICE (EWS)**

Prosecution - the LA has a statutory responsibility to ensure that a parent of a child of compulsory school age is registered at a school and attends regularly. If a parent fails to do this the LA may bring prosecution under the Education Act (1996). As a parent you are legally responsible for ensuring that your child attends school regularly and is punctual. If you fail to ensure this you are committing an offence under the Education Act (1996) which may lead to a fine of up to £2500 and/or a prison sentence. You may find yourself issued with a penalty notice.

Penalty Notice - the LA in conjunction with the School may issue a Penalty Notice if a child has 14 or more unauthorised sessions where the pupil's attendance is causing concern and, or below 95%, if the pupil has been excluded from school and is found in a public place during the first 5 days of exclusion, late after the register has closed or has holiday in term time. The Penalty Notice is £60 per child for each parent. The fine is to be paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice. Failure to pay the fine will result in the fine being doubled to £120 to be paid within 28 days of the initial notice. Non-payment of fines can lead to prosecution under the Education Act (1996).

## **THE GOVERNING BODY**

The Governing Body is legally responsible for many aspects of school management including the attendance register and so it is registered with the Data Protection Registrar under the Data Protection Act 1998. However, the Principal manages the day-to-day running of the School and in so doing takes responsibility for the day-to-day implementation of this policy. The School will ensure that the register is marked with the standardised codes.



## **INITIATIVES TO IMPROVE ATTENDANCE RATES**

The School has considered initiatives that are best for the School and always takes into account a pupil's individual circumstances, e.g. setting reward schemes such as electronic certificates for 100% attendance or effort to attend. Other helpful initiatives include:

- Implementing first day contact with parents of children who are absent from school without prior knowledge. It is hoped that this sends a clear signal to pupils and parents that absence is a matter of concern and will be followed up
- Live up to date attendance information for all staff via SIMS
- Use of rewards to celebrate exceptional attendance
- Having a senior member of staff responsible for attendance
- The introduction of breakfast clubs
- A pupil's attendance will be considered when applying for pupil leadership positions such as Students Leaders, Head/Deputy Prefects AND Junior Leadership Team. Exceptional attendance is compulsory for these roles.

## **CHILDREN MISSING FROM EDUCATION (CME)**

A child going missing from education, particularly repeatedly, can be a warning sign of a range of safeguarding issues. This might include abuse or neglect, such as sexual abuse or exploitation or child criminal exploitation, or issues such as mental health problems, substance abuse, radicalisation, FGM or forced marriage.

There are many circumstances where a child may become missing from education, but some children are particularly at risk. These include children who:

- Are at risk of harm or neglect
- Are at risk of forced marriage or FGM
- Come from Gypsy, Roma, or Traveller families
- Come from the families of service personnel
- Go missing or run away from home or care
- Are supervised by the youth justice system
- Cease to attend a school

Children who have failed to take up a school place or who have been unexpectedly absent from school for 10 or more consecutive school days are potential Children Missing from Education. We will follow our procedures for unauthorised absence and for dealing with children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of going missing in future. This includes informing the local authority if a child leaves the school without a new school being named, and adhering to requirements with respect to sharing information with the local authority, when applicable, when removing a child's name from the admission register at non-standard transition points.

Staff will be trained in signs to look out for and the individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns which may be related to being missing, such as travelling to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage.

If a staff member suspects that a child is suffering from harm or neglect, we will follow local child protection procedures, including with respect to making reasonable enquiries. We will make an immediate referral to the local authority children's social care team, and the police, if the child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or in immediate danger.

## **CATEGORIES OF AUTHORISED ABSENCE**

For all absence known in advance pupils should be encouraged to give advance notice and to supply evidence in electronic form where possible, such as dental appointment cards, a letter of invitation for interviews, etc. In all cases form tutors should consider criteria such as the nature the parent gave advance notice; the pupil's overall attendance pattern, etc.

Illness, medical and dental appointments - pupils should be encouraged to make appointments out of school hours. A pupil receiving medical treatment on site should be marked 'present'. If the authenticity of illness is in doubt, schools and EWOs can consult the School Health Service, or the pupil's GP and medical verification may be sought.

Interviews with prospective employers, or for a place at another school (including entrance examinations) - if the interview takes place during Year 11 and the School is satisfied it is linked to future education or employment prospects, absence can be recorded as 'approved educational activity'.

Dual Registration - where a pupil is dual registered at two institutions, e.g. a mainstream school and a Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) or special school, the pupil is registered as having an approved education activity while they are attending the other institution. A similar situation arises whilst traveller children are traveling; during this time they should enrol with another school. N.B. Distance learning packs for Traveller children are not acceptable alternatives to attendance at school.

Public performances - the Local Authority must license a pupil aged 5 – 16 to take part in a public performance. Licensed participation should therefore clearly be treated as authorised absence.

Birth of a child to a pupil - A pupil who becomes pregnant should be allowed up to 18 weeks' authorised absence to cover the time immediately before and after the birth of the child. This period of time will include two 6 week periods of tutoring to support the pupil.

Approved educational activities off-site - the following activities show when the approved educational activity category can be used:

- Field trips and educational visits, in this country and overseas
- Participation in or attendance at approved sporting activities
- Interviews with prospective employers, schools or for a place at a further or higher education establishment
- Link courses, whereby pupils attend an FE college for part of the time
- Pupils receiving part of their tuition off-site at another location while remaining under overall supervision of the home school, i.e. a flexible arrangement short of formal dual registration. This can include special tuition for children with medical issues that remain on the school roll that receive home tuition.

## **EMPLOYMENT**

While children are of compulsory school age, they may not be employed full-time. They are; however, free to undertake a range of part-time jobs. All children of compulsory school age who choose to work part-time must be registered with the Local Authority. For further details, contact your local Education Welfare Service. Please note that any part-time job must not be during school hours.

## **EARLY LEAVING**

A child enrolled in a school remains on the register until the last Friday in June in the year of their 16th birthday.

## **LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

### **AIMS**

The aim of this policy is to set out the way in which the School monitors and promotes the attendance and punctuality of its pupils. The School is committed to maximising the potential of every child and good attendance and punctuality are essential to this aim. We feel this will be achieved, with the support of parents/carers by ensuring that leave of absence is not taken in school time. Absence during term time for any reasons interrupts the continuity of teaching and learning and disrupts the educational progress of pupils.

### **THE LAW**

From 1 September 2013 The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 amends the 2006 regulations and makes clear that Head Teachers may not grant leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

### **LEAVE OF ABSENCE DURING TERM TIME**

- The School will not routinely grant permission for leave of absence to be taken in term time and discourage parents/carers making an application for leave except in "special or exceptional circumstances".
- The School will only consider leave of absence for one period of absence within an academic year.
- The School will not grant permission except when special/exceptional circumstances exist for leave to be taken in term time:
- During transition time when a pupil is settling into school.
- During preparation time for examinations, including mock exams, course work deadline.

### **SPECIAL AND EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES**

If a pupil is meeting the schools expected attendance of 96%, the Principal or person designated by the Principal may consider that the following circumstances are "special" or "exceptional".

- To allow a pupil to return to their country of origin for family, religious or cultural reasons
- Unavoidable circumstances e.g. the parent/carer has inflexible leave allocation and this has been confirmed by evidence from the employer

- A family member is seriously ill
- There has been a death or significant trauma in the family and leave may promote the child's well-being.

### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

Parents/carers may be required to attend an interview with the designated member of staff to discuss their request for term time leave.

Parents/carers will normally be notified of the outcome of their application for leave in term time within 10 school days of the date of the application.

When leave of absence during term time is agreed by the school, the absence will be recorded as 'H' on the school attendance register. This will mean that the absence has been recorded as authorised absence on the school attendance register.

If the leave of absence during term time is not agreed by the school, but the pupil is absent on the requested dates, the absence will be recorded as 'G'. This will mean that the absence has been recorded on the school attendance register as unauthorised.

Where a pupil is taken out of school for leave of absence during term time without the prior permission of the school, the parent/carer of the pupil may be issued with a £60.00 Penalty Notice per parent per child. If the notice remains unpaid after 21 days the penalty increases to £120.00. If the notice remains unpaid after 28 days the Local Authority will commence proceedings under section 444(1) of the 1996 Education Act in the Magistrates Court.