

Hans Price Academy

Attendance Policy

Implementation Date

May 2011

Review period

Annual

Policy last reviewed

May 2016

Person responsible for policy

Assistant Principal

Who this policy applies to:

This policy applies to all students, their parents and staff.

Policy statement

It is the Academy's policy to establish good links and a working partnership with parents in order to establish and maintain good attendance. The Academy is committed to providing high quality inclusive learning opportunities for all students. If students are to reach their full potential, then excellent attendance is crucial.

Aims

- To provide an ethos in which student attendance is valued as a key component of advancing their educational achievement.
- To make attendance and punctuality a priority so that students have the opportunity to make progress and achieve positive educational outcomes.
- To improve the overall attendance percentage of students at the Academy and reduce persistent absence.
- To provide support and guidance to students and parents/carers in matters relating to attendance and punctuality.
- To provide a systematic approach to gathering, analysing and interpreting attendance and punctuality data.
- To provide and regularly review the system of rewards and sanctions.
- To work in an effective partnership with parents/carers.
- To use 'first day' contact as an integral part of the Academy's attendance monitoring procedures.
- To investigate whether there are any Academy or home factors that may affect a student's attendance and put strategies in place to deal with them.

Guidelines

- Maintaining and improving attendance of the Academy and groups of or individual students requires persistent vigilance.
- All staff are aware of the registration process and receive training on attendance regulations. Staff will complete accurate registration processes at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session, and within 10 minutes of the start of every lesson.
- Targets for improved attendance will be agreed annually
- Students will be set an attendance target as part of a PSP, PEP, progress meeting or mentoring sessions as appropriate.

Objectives

- The attendance policy aims to ensure parents/carers and students understand the value and importance of good attendance and its direct link with student achievement, progression and opportunities for future learning and employment.
- To demonstrate the link between good attendance and success in coursework and Exams through statistical analysis with results published in newsletters, assemblies, displays and attendance meetings.
- To promote an Academy culture/ethos that celebrates good attendance and punctuality.

Parents will be informed of Academy term dates and any additional days when students are not expected to attend (i.e. In Service Training days)

Student attendance will be recorded twice during the day - at the start of the morning session and during the afternoon session.

In addition, teachers will take class registers for each lesson.

Students should arrive at the Academy on time. If, for any reason, they are unable to arrive on time they must sign in at reception and sanctions will apply if there is no unavoidable reason.

Attendance figures will be recorded for analysis by the Academy.

Attendance figures will be forwarded to the DFE, as required.

The Academy requires all absences to be explained by a parent/guardian. Students should not be absent from the Academy for reasons other than illness or in exceptional circumstances.

Medical, dental and optician's appointments should not be made during the school day.

Head Teachers are prohibited from granting leave of absence for holidays during term time.

Any requests for absence should be forwarded to the Academy at least one week before the planned absence or as early as possible if unforeseen.

Personal Tutors and College Leaders will look for patterns of absence and lack of punctuality. They will seek an explanation for all absences according to the procedure detailed later.

Parents of students whose attendance is a concern will be contacted by the College Leaders to discuss the reasons for the student's absences and to establish and agree strategies for improving attendance. Where such strategies are tried and attendance does not improve the matter will be referred to the Academy Attendance Improvement Co-ordinator.

The Attendance Improvement Co-ordinator will become involved if:

- attendance is less than 90% in one term.
- The student has more than 5 consecutive days' absence.
- the student has a regular pattern of absence.
- there are more than 10 sessions of unauthorised absence

Students who have more than 10% absence for any reason, even with GP authorisation, may be subject to an Attendance Review Meeting. This will be the first stage in a process which may lead to prosecution (see 4 stages of Intervention – Attendance).

Background information

Hans Price Academy is committed to promoting excellent levels of attendance and punctuality. The Academy believes that only if students attend the Academy regularly and punctually will they be able to take full advantage of the opportunities available to them.

Attendance

- Student attendance must be recorded on the electronic registration system at the start of the morning and during the afternoon sessions. In addition lesson by lesson registers will be taken.

Absences

- Parents must inform the Academy of the reason for an absence as early as possible on each day that the student does not attend. Parents will be challenged if they fail to inform the Academy of the reason for the absence or if the reason given is unacceptable. Parents/carers cannot authorise an absence, only the Academy can do this. However parents/carers can provide reasons for absence for the Academy to consider.
- Authorised absence is where the Academy has either given approval in advance for a student of compulsory school age to be out of the Academy or has accepted an explanation offered for the absence. All other absences will be treated as unauthorised.
- Parentally-condoned absence can be a problem as it means disruption to a child's education. Academy staff need not accept a parental explanation for a child's absence whether written, telephoned or given in person.
- All absence, authorised or not, counts against the student and Academy statistics.
- If no contact is received from the parents/carers of an absent student, a member of staff will attempt to contact the parent/carer by telephone or text message. If this does not elicit an acceptable explanation, a letter will be sent or a home visit may be made.
- If a student is absent for 3 consecutive days, contact should be made by the College Leader to enquire if this is likely to be an extended absence and medical evidence may be requested. A home visit may also be made.
- The Academy's attendance team will closely monitor attendance and punctuality. If absences continue or if attendance falls below an acceptable level, parents/carers will be invited to a meeting at the Academy. A Pastoral Support Plan will be put in place and a Parenting Contract may be agreed.
- The Academy will work in partnership with parent/carers and students to implement strategies to return students to full attendance. The Academy will decide on what re-integration package can be provided and will liaise with parents and other professionals. If attendance fails to improve or if parents/carers fail to take responsibility for their child's attendance further action may be taken as appropriate.
- Parents may receive warning letters, Penalty Notices (fines) or may face prosecution.
- For any student returning to school after a long absence, the Academy will make provision to allow for successful re-integration and a support plan will be implemented.
- Tutors are asked to look for patterns of absence and lateness and speak to students about this. Such information will be passed to the College Leaders or Attendance Improvement Co-ordinator.
- If the Academy is unable to resolve persistent absence and/or lateness the matter will be referred to the Attendance Improvement Co-ordinator for further action.

Lates

- Any student who arrives late to the Academy should sign in the late book on Reception. Teachers should enter late arrivals in the registers and sanctions will be issued.
- When the lateness is caused by reasons beyond the students' control e.g. the school bus breaks down he/she should be marked late but this should not count towards the sanction.
- Students who are persistently late will be referred to the College Leader who will follow this up with parents.

Requests for leave of absence

All requests for such leave of absence should be referred to the Principal via the Attendance Improvement Co-ordinator. It is the Academy's policy not to grant leave of absence for the purpose of going on holiday as detailed in Government regulations.

- Parents/carers are not entitled to take students on holiday during term time.
- Holidays will not normally be authorised and any such absence will be recorded as unauthorised.
- Every request must be made using the correct Academy form available from the main office. Requests will be considered individually and a decision made by the Principal.
- The Academy may delete from roll a student who fails to return within ten school days of the agreed day unless there is an acceptable reason for the continued absence.
- If a leave of absence is taken after it was declined or if it is taken without applying, a Penalty Notice may be issued to each parent. A Penalty Notice requires the recipient to pay a fine, currently £60 if paid within 21 days or £120 if paid within 28 days. Non-payment of these fines will result in prosecution.

Days of religious observance

- This is absence to take part in any day set aside exclusively for religious observance by the religious body to which the student belongs, including religious festivals. Parents/carers are encouraged to give advance notice and may be asked for evidence. This is considered to be authorised absence. Absence involving travel to another country for religious observance should be kept to a minimum.

Other Reasons for Absence

Exclusions

- Hans Price Academy aims not to externally exclude students.
- Seclusion is used as part of the 'Ready To Learn' behavior plan as a strategy to avoid the need for external exclusions which are detrimental to the education of our students.
- We hope that parents/carers and students will realise that this provision has been put into place to reduce interruptions to learning.

Fixed Term Exclusions

- In situations where exclusion is the only option, a student excluded for a fixed term remains on roll and the absence is authorised.

- Parents/carers have a duty to ensure that their child is not present in a public place in Academy hours during the first 5 Academy days of exclusion. Under the regulations parents/carers may be prosecuted or receive a penalty notice from the local authority if the child is present in a public place on the specified dates without reasonable justification.

Permanent Exclusions

- Permanent exclusions are rare but during the period of appeal or review the absence will be authorised or alternative provision will be made.

Students' rights

All students at Hans Price Academy have the right –

- to be able to fully participate in all of the Academy's activities, both within and beyond the curriculum
- to be assisted in identifying the causes of problems and be helped to remedy them.
- to be monitored and supported in their attempts to attend
- to receive praise for their efforts and improvements made
- to be helped to catch up with any work missed through illness or non-attendance
- to have full access to the National Curriculum and to have work provided for them in cases of exclusion

Students' responsibilities

It is the responsibility of students :

- to register on time at the start of the Academy day
- to sign in at reception if late for whatever reason
- to bring a note from home explaining the reason for any absence
- to arrive promptly and with all necessary books and equipment ready to learn for the start of each lesson.

Involvement of Parents/Carers

Good links and a working relationship with parents is an important pre-requisite to good attendance.

Home/Academy agreement

The Academy will make it clear to parents/carers why students need to attend regularly, what action will be taken by the Academy when students are absent, how parents/carers are expected to notify the Academy of their child's absence and, in particular what are to count as valid reasons for absence.

The Academy will arrange for parents/carers of students with unsatisfactory attendance to be fully involved in the setting of attainment goals. Parents will be kept fully informed of improvements made by their children (or failure to improve). Parents/carers will be involved in the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP) or Pastoral Support Plan (PSP) if attendance is an issue.

Rewards and Incentives

- Awards will be given to celebrate excellent /improved attendance and punctuality.
- Rewards and incentives are regularly reviewed and may be changed.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Assistant Principal is responsible for :

- implementing the Academy's attendance policy and ensuring that the policy is notified to all staff and complied with at all levels
- ensuring that the policy is made available to all staff appointees and to parents/carers who request to read it
- ensuring that the policy is regularly reviewed and, where necessary, revised.
- leading strategies to improve attendance
- line management of College Leaders and Attendance Improvement Co-ordinator

The College Leaders are responsible for :

- attendance of students within their Colleges
- communicating with parents/carers in the event of unauthorised absence, lateness or attendance concerns
- regularly liaising with the Academy Attendance Improvement Co-ordinator
- rewards and sanctions for attendance and punctuality in each College
- arranging meetings with parents and carers to discuss attendance concerns

The Attendance Improvement Co-ordinator is responsible for:

- day to day management of attendance procedures and supporting data
- monitoring student attendance and suggesting appropriate intervention
- communicating with staff to promote improvements in attendance
- attending regular attendance meetings and keeping accurate records
- producing attendance data and analysis as required
- issuing correspondence to parents/carers and initiating casework and legal processes
- dealing with children missing education and requests for home education
- promoting whole school rewards and initiatives
- keeping abreast of up-to-date legislation and changes in procedures and ensuring best practice
- supervision of the Attendance Support Worker and Attendance Administrator

The Attendance Support Worker is responsible for:

- carrying out home visits and supporting parents/carers with appropriate intervention
- supporting students with identified needs specific to raising attendance

The Attendance Administrator is responsible for:

- supporting the Attendance Improvement Co-ordinator with data input and retrieval and ensuring accurate record keeping

Personal Tutors are responsible for :

- ensuring the accuracy of their Learning Family registers
- discussing attendance concerns with their Learning Family students
- ensuring that they report any attendance and punctuality concerns, to the Attendance Improvement Co-ordinator or College Leader
- promoting attendance initiatives and encouraging full attendance at every opportunity

Teachers are responsible for :

- ensuring the accuracy of their class registers
- notifying any attendance and punctuality concerns to their Subject Leader, Attendance Improvement Co-ordinator and/or College Leader
- taking appropriate action to counteract lateness
- issuing catch-up work for students who have been absent
- identifying any student in danger of or actually missing out on the benefits of a fulltime education

All Staff are responsible for:

- supporting and implementing the attendance policy
- using every opportunity to support and encourage excellent attendance