



Attendance Policy

Hylands School

	Date	Review frequency/comments
This issue	June 2021	Reviewed every year (and any changes to the information occurring should be updated as soon as possible).
Reviewed By	Mr. P Vik	
Ratified by Governing Body		
Next review date	June 2022	



Principles

Hylands School was built to serve the community in which it is placed. Accordingly, we are a comprehensive, community school with a clearly defined catchment area and cater for pupils of all abilities.

Hylands School believes that every member of the school community has a right to an education free from intimidation and fear. Failure to act gives a silent but powerful message that bullying is appropriate and acceptable.

Introduction to Attendance at Hylands

At Hylands School we believe that our students should have the best experiences and opportunities that inspire their love of learning, that challenges them both academically and personally so that they can achieve their aspirational goals and become successful members of the local and global community. As our school vision this underpins everything we do and we believe that in order to achieve their full potential, students need to be in school every day. Pupils need to attend school regularly to benefit from their education. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind. Children with poor attendance tend to achieve less in both primary and secondary school.

Excellent attendance is the key to enabling our students to maximise the educational opportunities available to them and ultimately go on to be successful. We promote school attendance by providing an engaging and stimulating environment for our students that encourages this love of school and learning. We hold the highest expectations of our students and encourage them to take personal responsibility for their learning and success both at Hylands and within the wider community. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind and all internal and national data shows that students that regularly attend school are far more likely to achieve well at GCSE and at A level.

We value all members of our school community and their individual circumstances. We will work with families to identify reasons for unsatisfactory attendance and support them to resolve any difficulties they may be experiencing. It is expected that the whole school community and parents / carers will work together to achieve good attendance. Attainment is strongly linked to attendance, and research has shown that if pupils are to achieve their full potential, they must attend school regularly.

This attendance policy should not be viewed in isolation as it supports, and is supported by all other aspects of school life. It should be read in conjunction with the school safeguarding, Antibullying, Behaviour as SEN policies.

At Hylands we take a whole school approach to ensuring the good attendance of all of our students. Every member of our community including staff, students and parents/carers has a responsibility to promote good attendance, enabling students to fulfill their potential.



Attendance and the law

Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil's absence or late arrival disrupts teaching routines and so may affect the learning of others in the same class. Ensuring a child's regular attendance at school is a parental responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

Under the 1996 Education Act, parents and carers are responsible for ensuring their children attend school regularly and punctually. Failure to do so could result in legal action being taken against them by the Local Authority.

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2013, require schools to take an attendance register twice a day, once at the start of the morning session and again during the afternoon session. The register must record whether the student was

- Present
- Absent
- Present at approved educational activity
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

Legal Sanctions

Penalty Notices:

Penalty Notices will be considered when:

- A student is absent from school and the absence has not been authorised by the school.
- A pupil has accrued unauthorised absence following written warning to improve.
- A Penalty Notice gives each parent the opportunity to discharge themselves of their legal responsibility if a £120 fine is paid within 28 days, reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days of the date the Notice was issued.
- Failure to pay the Penalty Notice may result in a prosecution under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.
- Penalty Notices will be used in accordance with Essex County Council's Penalty Notice Protocol.

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.

Roles and Responsibilities

Parental Responsibility

Parents have a legal duty to ensure that their children attend school regularly and arrive on time. Regular attendance is essential to the all-round development of the child and they should be allowed to take full advantage of educational opportunities available to them in order to make good progress in their learning. Poor attendance undermines their educational attainment and progress and, sometimes, puts pupils at risk by encouraging anti-social behaviour.

It is the parents' responsibility to contact the school on the first day their child is absent. This is a safeguarding requirement so that all parties know that your child is safe and their whereabouts is known. Parents should regularly update the school and inform the school when their child is returning.

Pupils are expected to arrive by 8.30 am at the very latest. All pupils that arrive late must report to the school attendance office where the reason for lateness is recorded. Late pupils will be sent directly to their form or their first lesson.

Parents will:

- Perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age who are registered at school attend regularly.
- Talk to their child about school and education. Take a positive interest in their child's work and educational progress.
- Instill the value of education and regular school attendance within the home environment.
- Encourage their child to look to the future and have aspirations.
- Contact the school if their child is absent to let them know the reason why and the expected date of return. Follow this up with a note where possible.
- Try to avoid unnecessary absences. Wherever possible make appointments for the doctors, dentists etc. outside of school hours.
- Ask the school for help if their child is experiencing difficulties.
- Inform the school of any change in circumstances that may impact on their child's attendance.
- Support the school; take every opportunity to become involved in their child's education, form a positive relationship with school and acknowledge the importance of children receiving the same messages from both school and home.



- Encourage routine at home, for example, bed times, home work, preparing school bag and uniform the evening before.
- Not keep their child off school to go shopping, to help at home or to look after other members of the family.
- Avoid taking their child out of school during term-time, where this is unavoidable, and only in exceptional circumstances send a written leave request to the Head in good time.

As a whole school responsibility, every member of staff irrespective of role has a responsibility to ensure the attendance of our student.

The Governing body will:

- Ensure that the importance and value of good attendance is promoted to pupils and their parents.
- Regularly review the school's Attendance Policy and ensure the required resources are available to fully implement the policy.
- Ensure that the Registration Regulations, England, 2013 and other attendance related legislation is complied with.
- Agree school attendance targets and, where appropriate, link these to the Performance Management of Senior Leadership within the school.
- Monitor the school's attendance and related issues through termly reporting at Governing Body Meetings.
- Ensure that attendance data is reported to the Local Authority or Department for Education as required and on time.
- Ensure that there is a named senior manager to lead on attendance.
- Ensure that the school has clear systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all students, including those who are educated off-site.
- Ensure that there are procedures for collecting and analysing attendance data frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence.
- Ensure that data is understood and used to devise solutions and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions.

The Leadership Team will:

- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to students and their parents.
- Form positive relationships with students and parents.
- Ensure that there is a whole school approach which reinforces good school attendance. For example, good teaching and learning experiences that encourage students to attend and achieve.
- Monitor the implementation of the Attendance Policy and ensure that the policy is reviewed regularly.
- Ensure that staff are aware of the Attendance Policy and are able to address attendance issues.
- Ensure that the Registration Regulations, England, 2013 and other attendance related legislation is complied with.



- Ensure that there is a named senior manager to lead on attendance and allocate sufficient time and resource.
- Return school attendance data to the Department for Education as required and on time.
- Report the school's attendance and related issues through termly reporting to the Governing Body.
- Ensure that systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all students, including those who are educated off-site are implemented.
- Ensure that attendance data is collected and analysed frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence. Interpret the data to devise solutions and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions.
- Ensure that all the above priorities are shared with and reinforced by all relevant school staff.
- Develop a multi-agency response to improve attendance and support students and their families.
- Use the standard documents to support a move to legal proceedings should that be necessary.

The attendance officer will:

- Promote good attendance and effectively and proactively resolve all issues arising from attendance
- Ensure the school carries out its statutory obligations with regard to attendance including working alongside other professionals and agencies as appropriate.
- Establish the reason for non attendance, make assessments and agree a plan for facilitating a return to school using appropriate strategies within specified timescales
- Work with parents and carers to ensure the attendance of their children in line with school and government expectations
- To advise the school and parents/carers on strategies to promote the regular and punctual attendance of students and assist with the implementation of the strategies.
- To liaise with the local authority as appropriate and necessary.
- Ensure attendance and lateness records are up to date
- Contact parents/carers on the first day of absence by text/ phone call if no reason for absence has been provided.
- Ensure the appropriate attendance code is entered into the register

The Pastoral Support Managers will:

- Assist in the delivery of pastoral welfare support to students
- Provide a programme of support for students with poor attendance
- Remove barriers to good attendance
- Work with parents and carers to ensure the attendance of their children in line with school and government expectations
- Liaise with students and parents/ carers on a regular basis regarding attendance the support that is being put in place.
- Liaise with other professionals in school and external agencies



- Complete School based meetings

The form tutor will:

- Complete the register accurately everyday at 8.30 am for their form.
- Be vigilant and monitor attendance and punctuality of students in their Form.
- Carry out pastoral welfare checks for students who are regularly absent
- To discuss attendance issues/ concerns with the student.
- To inform the relevant members of staff if they have any attendance concerns i.e. the attendance officer or the students PSM/ Head of Year.
- Be the first port of call for students as well as their parents/ carers to discuss any queries or concerns they may have.

Teachers will:

- Plan and deliver exciting and engaging lessons.
- Upon their return, set any missed work due to student absence as homework to ensure they have no gaps in their learning.
- Discuss attendance and absences with students on a regular basis
- Be vigilant and aware of any patterns in attendance as well as the potential causes for poor attendance e.g. bullying.
- Liaise with the appropriate members of staff to discuss any concerns they may have.
- Deliver differentiated lessons that support the learning needs of all students
- Clearly communicate expectations regarding attendance.
- Support in the celebration of good attendance in line with the school rewards policy.
- Report internal truancy to the appropriate staff members.

Students will:

- Regularly attend school and all of their lessons on time, maintaining an attendance figure of at least 98%.
- Be in school by 8:25am to then arrive in their tutor base or lesson to register at 8.30am as part of morning registration and for Period 4 for the afternoon registration.
- Take responsibility for arriving to school on time by completing a same day 30-minute after school detention if they are late.

It is worth noting that a number of educational establishments and employers routinely request absence and punctuality reports for our students.

Dealing with poor attendance

Where a pupil has declining or poor attendance below 96%, we carry out a system of support and intervention work to prevent attendance dropping any further. As attendance begins to decline your child form tutor and pastoral support manager will work to identify barriers to good attendance and help remove them.



If attendance continues to decline or drops below 96% then letters may be sent to communicate our concerns regarding the frequency of absence. If attendance continues to decline will further & more formal letters may be sent out and it may also be necessary It may be necessary to call a face to face/ telephone school based meeting (SBM).

If attendance continues to decline or is irregular then a Legal Action Warning Letter is sent to parents. The school may also request medical evidence for any future absences, which will otherwise be classed as unauthorised and can lead to the issuing of penalty notice or the initiation of prosecution proceedings. Medical evidence can be one of the following: a medical appointment card, letter from a health professional, doctor's note, a copy of prescription or letters concerning hospital appointments.

Where there is no significant improvement in attendance the school will refer to the Local Authority for a penalty to be issued which may then also lead to prosecution

Persistent absenteeism

A pupil is defined by the Government as a '**persistent absentee**' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level will cause considerable damage to any child's education and we need a parent/carer's fullest support and co-operation to tackle this.

We monitor all absence, and the reasons that are given, thoroughly. If a child is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark we will inform the parent/carer. PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully. We also combine this with academic tracking where absence affects attainment. All our PA pupils and their parents are subject to a school based meeting and the plan may include: allocation of additional support through the School Nurse, Local Attendance Adviser, Home School Liaison Worker, Local Authority, Family Solutions or Social Care. We may also use circle time, individual incentive programmes, individual targets and participation in group activities to support us in raising attendance.

Categorising absence

Where students of compulsory school age are recorded as absent, the register must show whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised. Absence can only be authorised by the Head and cannot be authorised by parents. All absences will be treated as unauthorised unless a satisfactory explanation for the student's absence has been received. The Head teacher is not obliged to accept a parent's explanation. A letter or telephone message from a parent does not in itself authorise an absence. If absences are not authorised, parents will be notified.

Authorised absences are morning or afternoon sessions away from school for a genuine reason such as illness (although you may be asked to provide medical evidence for your child before this can be authorised), medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause.



Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been given. This type of absence can lead to the Local Authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings which may include issuing each parent with a Penalty Notice for £120, reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days or referring the matter to the Magistrates Court whereby each parent may receive a fine up to £2500 and/or up to 3 months in prison. If you are found guilty in court you will receive a criminal conviction.

Unauthorised absence includes, however is not exhaustive:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily e.g. because they had a late night or for non-infectious illness or injury that would not affect their ability to learn.
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Children who arrive at school after the close of registration are marked using a 'U'. This indicates that they are in school for safeguarding purposes however is recorded as an absence for the session.
- Oversleeping
- Inadequate clothing/uniform
- Shopping trips
- Looking after other children or children accompanying siblings or parents to medical appointments
- Their own or family birthdays
- Holidays taken during term time without leave, not deemed 'for exceptional purposes' by the Headteacher- may result in school applying to the local authority to issue a penalty notice or if you have previously been issued a Penalty Notice, the school may request a direct prosecution by the local authority.
- Day trips
- Other leave of absence in term time which has not been agreed

Parents must advise the school by telephone, text or email by 8:30 am on the day of absence and provide the school with an expected date of return. This should be followed up with medical evidence should a child have visited a doctor/dentist etc. This can be in the form of an appointment letter/card or a copy of a prescription.

- **Illness** Parents may be asked to provide medical evidence to allow the Head to authorise absence where appropriate. This will usually be in the form of an appointment card, prescription etc.
- **Medical/Dental Appointments** Parents are advised where possible to make medical and dental appointments outside of the school day. Where this is not possible, students must attend school for part of the day. Parents must show the appointment card to school.
- **Other Authorised Circumstances** This relates to where there is cause for absence due to exceptional circumstances, e.g. serious family illness or bereavement. Excluded (No alternative provision made)
- **Exclusion from attending school** is counted as an authorised absence. The school will make arrangements for work to be sent home.



Covid-19 pandemic

Hylands will implement all DfE policies and guidelines relating to

attendance during the Covid-19 pandemic. From September 2020 the expectation is that all pupils will attend school and the Pupil Attendance Policy will be reinstated and implemented.

If parents or students have concerns about attendance during the pandemic they should speak to the school office in the first instance. The school's risk assessment refers to attendance and the steps that the school will take to promote attendance at the current time.

Leave of Absence during term time

Under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006 (as amended 2013), only the school (and not parents/carers) can authorise an absence. Where the reason for a pupil's absence cannot be established at the time the register is taken, that absence shall be recorded as unauthorised. If a reason for absence is provided by the parent/carer, the Headteacher may decide to grant Leave of Absence which would be authorised using the relevant code appropriate for the absence.

Applications for a Leave of Absence must be made at least **two weeks in advance** using the Leave of Absence form available from the main reception or downloaded from our website. The request must be made by the parent or carer with whom the child normally resides. If a Leave of Absence is taken without prior permission from the school, or where the request for leave was not agreed, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. This may result in the Local Authority issuing a Penalty Notice, in line with the Essex Code of Conduct (£120 per parent, per child / £60 if paid within 21 days). Parents/carers who choose not to pay the fine(s) within relevant timeframes could face legal action in the Magistrates Court

Where a parent/carer claims there are exceptional circumstances, to request a Leave of Absence, a letter must be completed and sent to the Attendance Officer who will liaise with the Headteacher who is the only person who can authorise absence. Family circumstances will be considered together with academic progress and attendance procedures.

In the event of unauthorised leave or a term time holiday being taken, Hylands may request an Unauthorised Leave of Absence Penalty Notice to be issued by the Local Authority in accordance with the Code of Conduct available on the Essex County Council website.

Celebrating good attendance

We believe that students should attend school because of the benefits it brings them with regard to both personal and academic development. We also believe that students with outstanding attendance should be recognised and celebrated. We do this by:

- Offering verbal praise on a daily basis
- Issuing weekly reward logs for 100% attendance in a given week
- Issuing the highest attending form in each year the tutor attendance trophy
- Sending formal recognition letters home to parents/ carers



- Issuing 100% badges for each term and cumulatively across the year
- Holding a yearly attendance trip

Lateness and punctuality

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If a child misses the start of the day they can miss work and do not spend time with their class teacher getting vital information and news for the day. Late arriving pupils also disrupt lessons and the learning of others, can be embarrassing for the child and can also encourage absence. Good time keeping is a vital life skill which will help our children as they progress through their school life and out into the wider world.

Evidence shows that lateness can have a significantly negative impact on learning. The table below shows the lost learning hours as a result of being late every day.

	Lost learning time per week	Lost learning time per month	Lost learning time per term	Lost learning time per year
5 minutes a day	25 minutes a week	1 hour 40 minutes a month	5 hours a term / 1 full day	16 hours 15 minutes / over 3 days
10 minutes a day	50 minutes a week	3 hours 20 minutes a month	10 hours / 2 full days	32 hours 30 minutes / over 6 full days
15 minutes a day	1 hour 15 minutes a week	5 hours / 1 full day	15 hours / 3 full days	48 hours 45 minutes / over 9 full days
20 minutes a day	1 hour 40 minutes a week	6 hours 40 minutes / over 1 full days	20 hours / 4 full days	65 hours / 13 full days

As parents and carers you can support your child by:

- Encouraging them to get into and stick to routines
- Ensuring they set an alarm and get up in plenty of time to get ready and get to school.
- Encouraging them to get their uniform ready and pack their bags the night before
- Ensuring they go to sleep at a suitable time
- Setting clear boundaries regarding the use of mobile phones, games consoles and computers later at night.

If your child arrives late to school without an appropriate reason they will be set a same day or next day after school detention. All after school detentions will be held on a Monday, Wednesday



or Friday and will last for 30 minutes. They will be held in the year group detention rooms. As parents and carers you will receive a call from a member of the attendance team to inform you of the late detention.

Deletions from the Register

In accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2013, students can be deleted from the register when one of the following circumstances applies:

- The student has ceased to be of compulsory school age.
- Permanent exclusion has occurred and procedures have been completed.
- Transfer between schools.
- Pupil withdrawn to be educated outside the school system.
- Failure to return from an extended holiday after the school has tried to locate the student.
- A medical condition prevents attendance and return to the school before ending compulsory school age.
- In custody for more than four months.
- 20 days continuous unauthorised absence and the school has tried to locate the pupil.
- Left the school but not known where he/she has gone after the school has tried to locate the student.
- Death of a student

Children Missing Education

No child should be removed from the school roll without consultation between the School and the Inclusion and Attendance Service when appropriate. Please see the circumstances below: -

Where a child is missing from education, Local Authority guidance will be followed, by completing a Child Missing Education referral for the following circumstances: -

- If the whereabouts of the child is unknown and the school has failed to locate him/her.
- The family has notified the school that they are leaving the area but no Common Transfer Form (pupil file) has been requested by another school.