



ACCESS TO EDUCATION SCHOOL-BASED PROCEDURES

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Review Committee: Board of Governors

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Owner: Headteacher

Introduction

This document is written in conjunction with the following Consortium Academy Trust policies, which are available on the Trust website [The Consortium Academy Trust - Policies](#):

- Attendance Policy
- Behaviour Policy

School based roles

Attendance Team	The attendance team plays a crucial role in ensuring that students attend school consistently, supporting both academic performance and overall well-being. • Attendance Manager • Attendance Administration Officer • Trust Leader – Attendance, Behaviour and Personal Development • pps-office@hessleacademy.com • attendance@hessleacademy.com
Safeguarding Team	The safeguarding team at Penshurst is dedicated to ensuring the safety, welfare, and protection of all students. The attendance team is part of the wider safeguarding team. The role within this team is to create a secure environment where students are safe, have a sense of belonging and are happy. • Designated Safeguarding Lead • Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead • Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead • Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

Rationale

Under the Education Act 1996, parents are legally required to ensure their child attends school regularly and on time. We view consistent attendance (96% and above) and punctuality as essential life skills that directly impact student achievement.

This policy outlines the procedures the school follows to promote excellent attendance and punctuality, as well as the statutory responsibilities of both the school and Local Authority in supporting students. We aim to raise awareness about the importance of good attendance and provide support, such as from the Education Welfare Service, Educational Psychologist, and SEN Support, to address any identified challenges.

Attendance and punctuality will be reflected in any school reference, and the Attendance Officer and safeguarding team will regularly monitor and review attendance procedures.

Aims

At Penshurst Primary School, we aim for the highest possible attendance to support academic success, with 96% set as the benchmark for "good" attendance. We believe that regular attendance is key to unlocking a child's full potential. It supports not only academic progress, but also the development of strong friendships, self-confidence, good routines, and a positive attitude to learning.

Regular attendance aims to help pupils:

- Keep up with their learning and avoid gaps in knowledge
- Build and maintain friendships
- Develop resilience, independence, and responsibility
- Establish consistent routines that support emotional and social well-being
- Prepare for future education and employment

We believe that aspirations and attendance are intricately linked - learners who are present and punctual are best placed to dream big and succeed. Dreaming big begins with being here.



Attendance and Punctuality

Attendance and Punctuality are essential to good academic outcomes, social development, and positive life skills. We provide targeted interventions for pupils with poor attendance and closely monitor those at risk to ensure every child has the opportunity to thrive. Attendance thresholds are set by the Local Authority, with interventions beginning when a child's attendance falls below 95%.. A pupil is considered persistently absent when they miss 10% or more of their possible school sessions.

Promoting Excellent Attendance

- We celebrate pupils achieving 100% attendance with a termly certificate.
- We also celebrate the highest, weekly class attendance in our Friday assembly.
- A weekly text or email is sent to parents to keep them informed about their child's attendance.
- Across the school attendance is shared on Academic Reports sent home to parents and carers to explicitly make the link between academic progress and attendance.
- The school celebrates a HERO award in each Friday celebration assembly, recognising pupils who are Here Every day, Ready to learn, and On time.
- We run Challenge 100 initiatives in selected year groups to reward pupils who achieve 100% attendance.

Recording Attendance

- Learner attendance and punctuality is recorded electronically using Arbor.
- Staff receive regular reminders about accurately marking registers, which are statutory documents for recording both absence and lateness.
- Pupils are recorded daily in the morning session and the afternoon session
- Absence codes used in line with DFE can be found on the [The Consortium Academy Trust - Policies](#):
- Registers will close up to 30 minutes after the main session begins and the register is taken. As a result, learners registering after 9.25am and 1.20pm will be marked as a U and given an unauthorised absence mark for that session.
- At Penshurst Primary School, it is the responsibility of parents/carers to ensure their child arrives on time. The school makes session times clear, and if punctuality becomes a concern, parents will be asked to meet with the Headteacher to discuss any challenges.

Absence Guide

- Day 1 of absence – Inform the school before 9:00am of the reason and expected date of return of your child. Any medical advice given or visits made.
- Parents/carers are asked to contact the school daily with an update of absence.
- Medical evidence may be requested where the school has genuine and reasonable doubt about the reason for absence On day 4 we may need to send an email to parents/carers to pre-warn them that they will need to provide medical evidence on day 5. If they are still off on day 5, then an email is sent requesting this.
- Medical evidence may sometimes be requested to support a child's absence for less than 5 days.
- Medical appointments – if your child is absent due to a medical appointment, you will be required to provide an appointment card or letter from the practice.

Monitoring Attendance - Daily Monitoring

- Parents and carers are frequently reminded of the need to inform the school if their child is legitimately absent on the morning of the first day of absence. This is communicated via the school website, newsletters, and half-termly emails.
- Attendance is checked at least twice daily by the Attendance Team. The Attendance Team will contact the parent/carer on the first day of absence if a message has not been received. If we have not had contact by 3pm, an unauthorised absence email is sent.
- Whenever a learner's absence is recorded as unauthorised, parents/carers will be sent an email explaining that this has been done and providing an opportunity to discuss the absence further. (Appendix 1)
- When a learner has 10 unauthorised absence sessions in a 10-week period a referral may be

made to the Local Authority who will consider issuing a Penalty Notice.

Monitoring Attendance - Longer Term

- The Attendance Manager and Headteacher/Assistant Headteacher will review attendance for pupils at regular intervals and analyse weekly attendance patterns and trends.
- Pupils with 90%-95% Attendance, a monitoring letter and attendance certificate will be sent to parents/carers. (Appendix 2).
- If attendance drops below 90%, a cause for concern letter will be issued (Appendix 3).
- The monitoring of the 90% or lower learners will continue at regular intervals.
- Attendance support plans will be created when necessary.

Support Plan Meeting:

- If attendance does not improve, a support plan meeting with a senior leader will be arranged.
- The reasons for absence will be discussed, and support offered.
- Medical evidence may be requested on days 4 and 5 of absence where clarification is necessary to accurately record the absence

Referral to Education Welfare Service:

- If attendance remains below 90% after interventions, the Attendance Manager will refer the case to the Education Welfare Service.
- The service will compile the case for the legal team (Local Authority responsibility).

The school acknowledges that some groups of pupils (PPG/SEN for example) may have barriers to achieving a regular attendance pattern, in the Senior Staff monitoring we will take particular note of tracking attendance of these groups of pupils.

Absence from school for Exceptional Circumstances - Information for Parents

- Under the Education Act (1996), parents must ensure their child attends school regularly.
- Headteachers have discretionary power to authorise absences in exceptional circumstances, but this is not an entitlement.
- Absences will only be authorised in line with the East Riding Behaviour & Attendance Partnership Policy and if deemed not detrimental to the child's education.
- Term-time holidays are no longer authorised by law. [Holidays during term-time and authorised absence from school](#)
- If an exceptional absence is approved, parents are responsible for ensuring their child catches up on missed work, as the school is not obligated to provide it.
- Unauthorised absences will be recorded and may result in legal action, including a Penalty Notice or Magistrates' Court proceedings.
- Under the Anti-Social Behaviour Act (2003), schools and local authorities can address poor attendance and unauthorised absences, including those not approved by the Headteacher or without a valid explanation.
- Penalty Notices may be issued as a deterrent for issues such as truancy, persistent lateness, and unauthorised term-time holidays. Depending on the circumstances, parents may receive a warning or Notice to Improve before a Penalty Notice is issued. A warning is not required in every case
- More information regarding penalty notices can be found on the East Riding of Yorkshire website [Attendance in School](#)

Appendix 1

Unauthorised Absence Letter

Dear parent / carer

We regret to inform you that ~~Student(s) Full Name~~ has a recorded unauthorised absence today.

As you are aware the school closely monitors absences from the school as repeated unauthorised absence may result in legal action under the Education Act 1996.

It is therefore important that ~~Student(s) First Name~~ does not receive further unauthorised absences.

Please do not hesitate to contact us on attendance@hessleacademy.com should you wish to discuss this matter further.

Yours faithfully

Hessle High School and Penshurst Primary School
Tranby House
Heads Lane
Hessle
East Yorkshire
HU13 0JQ

t: 01482 648604

e: office@hessleacademy.com

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Appendix 2

Monitoring Letter

As you will be aware from the attendance information emailed to parents/carers each half term. Penshurst Primary is committed to improving achievement through attendance of all registered pupils. Any pupil whose attendance is falling or shows a clearly deteriorating pattern will be monitored, and as a parent I am sure you will agree that your child must attend the school regularly to ensure that the maximum benefit is obtained from the education provided.

We enclose a copy of your child's school attendance record as the current attendance percentage has triggered the first stage of the school enforcement procedure. You will see that the attendance is XX% which is below our minimum expectation of 95%.

We will continue to monitor your child's attendance, and, with your cooperation, we anticipate a gradual improvement. If you have any questions or require support, please do not hesitate to contact us at **attendance@hessleacademy.com**.

Persistent Absentee Letter

Dear Parent/Carer,

Good attendance at school is not only valuable—it is essential. Regular school attendance is closely linked to children's academic progress, mental health, and social wellbeing. DfE research shows a clear association between higher attendance and better attainment.

As you may be aware, the Department for Education (DfE) reduced the Persistent Absence (PA) threshold to 10% from September 2015. This means that any student missing 10% or more of school sessions in an academic year is classified as persistently absent.

We are writing to inform you that **Student(s) First Name** has been identified as a persistently absent student. Their current attendance for this academic year is
Report Field: Statutory/Roll Call Attendance (Present) this academic year .

We will continue to monitor **Student(s) First Name**'s attendance and are hopeful that improvements will be made. However, if attendance does not improve sufficiently, you may be invited to attend a meeting so we can work together to support **Student(s) First Name** in improving their attendance.

If we are already working with your family to support attendance, please consider this email for your records. Additionally, if **Student(s) First Name** usually maintains good attendance and has recently experienced illness or other unavoidable absences, we expect their attendance to improve naturally without further intervention.

If you have any questions or require support, please do not hesitate to contact us at attendance@hessleacademy.com