

Attendance Policy



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ATTENDANCE POLICY

1. Principles
2. Practice

1. Principles

- Our learners are often those who have become acutely dis-engaged from learning and as such are often those who have extremely poor records of attendance.
- Regular and punctual school attendance is of paramount importance in ensuring that all children have full access to the curriculum. Valuable learning time is lost when children are absent or late. Children should be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. Permitting absence from school without a good reason is an offence by the parent.
- We have a commitment to actively pursue each pupil's attendance by a system of daily phone calls home.
- Children are sometimes reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between Releasing Potential, the parents and the child. If a child is reluctant to attend, we will endeavour to be as flexible as possible in order to encourage their participation, e.g. home visits, considering a one-to-one programme. It is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and may make things worse.
- We understand that absence from school may be a factor in a range of risks to the child, and we take our responsibility to monitor and follow up on unauthorised or persistent absences very seriously as part of our safeguarding policy.

2. Practice

- Releasing Potential uses the attendance codes set out by the DfE
- Releasing Potential sometimes takes students home who are not emotionally able to manage the day at school. In these cases, the absence will be recorded as 'authorised' ". Judgements are made by SLT on a case-by-case basis in terms of whether a student taken home due to challenging behaviour is recorded as 'unauthorised' . In individual cases where a student has damaged school property and or been violent (verbally/physical), the absence will be recorded as 'suspension'. Where a student is taken home early for any reason, parents are informed immediately. If a parent is not at home when the student arrives, staff will wait with them where the parent has communicated, they are on their way back to the property. If the parent/carer has not been contactable and is not at home the member of staff will seek guidance from the duty SLT member. Where consent has been permitted from the parent/carer (and the student is over the age of 12) they can be left unattended after gaining safe access to their home.
- Every half-day absence has to be classified by RP, **not the parents**, as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of each absence is always required.

This includes:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- Truancy before or during the school day
 - Absences which have never been properly explained. Children who arrive at school after the register has closed will get a late mark Releasing Potential works to maintain good working relationships with parents and carers and to this end will arrange welfare visits when unauthorised absence continues for more than 3 consecutive days, or a pattern of unauthorised absences is identified Parents/carers are to report absences by 9.30am to the school attendance phone on 07920 234663. Absences can also be emailed to: attendance@releasingpotential.com
 - Parents/carers will also be informed by school if their child is absent where it has not been reported. This will be carried out by school admin or SLT responsible for attendance.
 - Registers are updated twice daily on a MIS cloud-based system and for CLA students a report is sent weekly to ASSET (virtual school)
 - Authorised absences are sessions away from school for a reason such as genuine illness of the pupil or unavoidable cause.
 - Unauthorised absences are those which RP does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given.
 - Post 16 students can self-report absences on a case-by-case basis

Process for managing absence

Day one

- The school identifies that a child is not in school.
- If home has not informed school, school admin telephones the child's home to seek reasons for the absence and reassurance from parent/carer that the child is safe at home. This will occur for every day absent.
- If there is no answer the staff member making the call should consider, with the Safeguarding Lead, the degree of vulnerability of the child.
- If the parent answers and the child is not with them, the staff member should advise the parent to contact all people and places the child is known to be in contact with
- If a child is missing staff should contact the local police station to inform them

Assessing a child's vulnerability: immediate response

Staff should ask themselves the following questions:

- Is there good reason to believe that the child may be the victim of a crime?
- Does the child have a formal child protection plan?
- Is the child in care?
- Is there a person present in or visiting the family who poses an ongoing risk to children or who is suspected of harming child?
- Is there a history of family mobility?
- Are there immigration issues?
- Have parents been subject to proceedings in relation to attendance?
- Is there a history of poor attendance?
- In which age range is the child? Younger children are more at risk.
- Is this sudden or unexpected behaviour?
- Have there been any past concerns about the child associating with significantly older young people or adults?
- Has the child been a victim of bullying?
- Are there health reasons to believe the child is at risk?
- Has the child gone missing with their family?
- Are there cultural or religious reasons to believe the child is at risk e.g. forced marriage or rites of passage planned?
- Have there been past concerns about this child and family which together with the sudden disappearance are worrying, e.g. known history of drug or alcohol dependency within the family, known history of domestic violence?

If the answer to any of these is yes, the LA children's social care should be informed and reporting to the Police should be considered.

If the School can obtain no information about the child or family on Day One, and there is reason to believe the child is at risk of harm, the LA children's social care should be informed and reporting to the Police should be considered.

If the judgement reached on Day One is that there is no reason to believe the child is at risk of harm, then the school may well delay further action.

Day Three

- If the school has enough information to judge that the child is not at risk of harm, however the child has not attended for 3 days and the absence is unauthorised, a welfare visit home is to be made by a member of the pastoral team.

Day Seven

- If the School has enough information to judge that the child is not at risk of harm, however the child has not attended for 7 days, and the absence is unauthorised, a meeting request with the parent by a member from the pastoral team and the member of SLT responsible for attendance should be made.

Day Ten

- If the School has enough information to judge that the child is not at risk of harm, however the child has not attended for 10 days, and the absence is unauthorised. Or if there is a concern for the child's welfare a meeting request should be made by a member of SLT responsible for attendance. If attendance has fallen below 83% a letter will be issued to the parent/carer.

Two weeks +

- If the School has enough information to judge that the child is not at risk of harm, however the child has not attended for 2 weeks, and the absence is unauthorised. A meeting request should be made by a member of SLT responsible for attendance. If attendance has fallen below 50% an Individual Attendance Plan will be put in place.
- The legal intervention team (LIT) should also be considered. This may lead to prosecution/fine.
- Or if there is a concern for the child's welfare the LA education welfare service and or LA child protection advisor should be informed.

Child missing from school for more than four weeks

- If a child continues to be missing from school for four weeks and the Local Authority has exhausted enquiries and has been unable to locate the pupil and her/his family, the child can be removed from the school roll and details of the child uploaded to the DfES Lost Pupil Database.
- If concerns remain in relation to the safety of the child, the LA education welfare service should continue to pursue reasonable enquiries and missing person activity. The DSL will follow up with the education welfare service to acquire updates for our files.

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Attendance Action Plan

Time scale	Attendance profile	What needs to be done	Who by/who with
<u>Day 1</u>	Any absence without reason.	First day of absence Text/phone call home to parent/carer , this will occur for every further day absent	School office. Attendance welfare text/phone call sent to parent/carer. <i>(School office will notify tutor/keyworker)</i>
<u>Day 3</u>	No response from parent/carer or concern.	Welfare visits to home	Pastoral team member to visit home to see if student will attend. <i>(Record on CPOMs under attendance & welfare contact)</i>
<u>Day 7</u> (including weekend)	Further unauthorised absence without reason. Further unauthorised absence with concern for reason. Concerned for students' welfare.	Request meeting on school site/home visit What support can be offered?	Pastoral team and SLT responsible for attendance <i>(Record on CPOMs under attendance & welfare contact)</i>
<u>Day 10</u> (including weekend)	Further unauthorised absence. Concern for students' welfare. Attendance below 83% .	Request meeting with parent/carer Agree further actions with parent. Attendance letter to parent to inform their child has dropped below 83%.	Pastoral team and SLT responsible for attendance <i>(Record on CPOMs under attendance & welfare contact)</i>
2 weeks + (including weekend)	Further unauthorised absence. Concern for students' welfare. Attendance below 50 % .	Meeting – Individual Attendance Plan put in place. Consider Early help services and a LIT referral. This may also result in a fine/prosecution. If a child continues to be missing from school for 4 weeks and the Local Authority has exhausted enquiries and has been unable to locate the pupil and her/his family, the child will be uploaded to the DfES Lost Pupil Database.	SLT responsible for attendance <i>(Record on CPOMs under attendance & welfare contact. Individual Attendance Plan uploaded to student document vault)</i>

Hampshire Legal intervention Team advice line – 01252 814828

LIT referral – [Hampshire's Legal Intervention Team \(LIT\) | Hampshire County Council \(hants.gov.uk\)](#)

Hampshire Education Welfare Services – 0300 55 1384

West Sussex Education Welfare Services – 01403 222 6450