

Percy Hedley School Attendance POLICY

Policy Name:	Issue date: November 2022	Version No: V2.0
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Policy Control/Monitoring

Approved by: (Position in Organisation)	Head Teacher PHS
Date:	17.10.2022
Accountability: (Position in Organisation)	Head Teacher PHS
Revision Cycle:	Annual
Brief details of amendments made	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Point 5.1.</u> Parental Responsibility Government guidance included within the 'Working together to improve pupil attendance' document states in relation to term time holidays. • <u>Point 5.9.</u> Authorised and Unauthorised Absences Notification of unauthorised absences to child's Local Authority

Equality Impact Assessment

This document forms part of Percy Hedley's commitment to create a positive culture of respect for all staff and service users. The intention is to identify, remove or minimise discriminatory practice in relation to the protected characteristics (race, disability, gender, sexual orientation, age, religious or other belief, marriage and civil partnership, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity), as well as to promote positive practice and value the diversity of all individuals and communities.

As part of its development this document and its impact on equality has been analysed and no detriment identified.

Version Control Tracker

Version Number	Date
V1	November 2022
V2	September 2024

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1. Introduction

Percy Hedley School is committed to providing all pupils with an appropriate and effective education in a safe and happy environment. Each child is welcomed, valued and respected and encouraged to respect themselves and others. We aim to empower all children to gain the essential skills both academic and social that will equip them for life. We believe that education is essential for all.

2. Purpose

To achieve their full potential children, need to attend regularly and punctually. Non-attendance at school for any reason is an important issue that must be treated promptly and seriously. In all cases of non-attendance, it is essential that early action is taken.

The Governors, Head Teacher, and staff school acknowledge that there is a strong correlation between high attendance and pupil attainment. Percy Hedley School adheres to the DfE Guidance on School Attendance and apply the recommendations relating to using pupil registers and attendance codes.

In line with the government policy included within Working Together to Improve School Attendance (August 2024) Percy Hedley school is focusing upon school absence to comply with government agenda and to create and establish a clear culture of children being at school except in the most exceptional of circumstances.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all members of the education community (teachers/tutors, therapists, support staff, parents, pupils/students, and members of the schools/governors).

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4. Definitions

- Authorised Absence. This is an **absence with permission from a teacher or other authorised school representative** - including absences where a satisfactory explanation has been provided.
- Unauthorised Absence. This is absence **without permission** from the school.
- Exceptional Circumstances. **One-off events which are unavoidable**

5. Principles

5.1 Parental Responsibility

Significant adults have a primary role in ensuring the attendance of pupils. Government guidance within Working Together to Improve School Attendance (August 2024) states

“It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school”

Good examples of attendance and timekeeping provide role models for pupils. Parents and carers are notified via the school blog, and parent meetings about the importance of attendance and timekeeping, and their responsibility in ensuring regular attendance and the importance of reporting absences to school.

Parents and carers have a crucial responsibility to notify the school if their child is going to be absent. This may be via:

- Email or a note in the school diary if the absence is known in advance (e.g. medical appointment)
- A telephone call to the school office before 9.30 on the first day of absence if the absence was unplanned (e.g. illness)

Parents and carers have a responsibility to engage constructively with school staff to support the child to attend school. Where a pupil is transported to school by parents and there is a pattern of consistently late arrival school staff will discuss this with parents and seek to offer support to resolve it. Please note, the register closes at 9.45. Anyone who arrives after this time will be marked as unauthorised absence. This will have an impact on their overall attendance.

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If parents and carers would like to request leave of absence for a pupil to have time off during term time they should complete a Leave of Absence form available from the school office and submit at least 5 working days prior to the date of requested leave

The Head Teacher will only authorise leave of absence during term time in exceptional circumstances. If the Head Teacher grants a leave request, it is for the Head Teacher to determine the length of time that the child can be away from school. Leave is unlikely, however, to be granted for the purposes of a family holiday as a norm

Please note that the funding council may be informed if a parent is choosing to take their child out of school for a holiday without permission being granted for absence by the headteacher.

Government guidance included within the 'Working together to improve pupil attendance' document states:

Granting leaves of absence

37. *All schools can grant a leave of absence when a pupil needs to be absent from school with permission. All schools are expected to restrict leaves of absence to the specific circumstances set out in regulation 11 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 and schools maintained by a local authority and special schools not maintained by a local authority must do so.*

Exceptional circumstances: *All schools can grant a leave of absence for other exceptional circumstances at their discretion. In the case of schools maintained by local authorities and specific school not maintained by local authorities, it must be requested in advance by a parent who the pupil normally lives with. Schools are then expected to consider each application individually take into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request. If a leave of absence is granted, it is for the school to determine the length of the time the pupils can be aware from school.*

38. *Generally, the DfE does not consider a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance.*

Parents and carers must inform the school immediately if they or the named emergency contacts have a change of address, phone number or email address. In case of emergency we must be

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able to contact the parents, carers or a third named person. Parents and carers must provide this information when they first register their child and keep information up to date.

It is parents' legal responsibility to ensure that their child receives an education and school will endeavour to work with parents and the local authority to support this. In instances where this proves unsuccessful, the school will adhere to guidance as outlined in the government publication, 'Working together to improve school attendance'

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5.2 School Procedures and Responsibilities

Morning registers close at 9.30am except on days of particularly inclement weather, when the Head Teacher will declare when the school register should close.

Afternoon registers close 5 minutes after the start of the afternoon session.

The register will be completed by the class teacher or delegated to a specific member of the class team. Class teachers and leaders will carry out ongoing monitoring of both attendance and punctuality.

If a child is absent from school with no reason given, or if a pupil does not return when expected to, the following procedure will apply:

On the first day:

- 1. A member of the class team will contact the office to check if a call and reason has been received. If no contact has been made a call parents or carers will be made to seek an explanation.*
- 2. If no contact can be made by 12.00, the emergency contacts will be called. If no contact can be made with any emergency contacts by 1.30, staff will visit the home. They may knock on neighbours. If staff are unable to get a reply from the home the child will be reported as missing from education and a DSL will inform social services and the local authority.*

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Where a reason for absence is sought and given, the register will be amended to reflect this. However, a late arrival after the register has closed will be recorded as an unauthorised absence.

If a child returns to school where no contact has been able to have been made during the absence, the parents or carers will receive a letter from the Head Teacher reiterating the school procedures for pupil absence.

If a parent contacts the school to say a child is ill and will be off for 4 days or more the school will do a “Safe and Well” check after the third day. This may be via telephone, video call or home visit. Where possible staff will communicate directly with the child.

If a child is admitted to hospital, with appropriate consent, a member of staff will contact the hospital to liaise with them about the child’s care, treatment and return to school.

The school will record and monitor where pupils arrive late at school because of difficulties with organised transport (taxi or minibus). Where patterns of consistent late running by contractors occur school will liaise with parents and local authority SEND transport to resolve the issue.

When classes go off site during school time details must be recorded in the school office.

5.3 Children Out of School for Long Periods Due to Ill Health

Where a child is out of school for long period due to ill health, staff will work with the family and medical professionals to offer support, maintain contact and to continue to deliver education through alternative means if this is in the best interests of the child. This may be through a combination of contact by phone, home or hospital visits, provision of relevant schoolwork and virtual contact with school staff and peers. On the advice of medical professionals school will endeavour to make reasonable adjustments to support a child back to school as soon as practically possible.

5.4. School Refusal

In instances where a pupil is refusing to attend despite parents’ best efforts, the school Wellbeing Team and / or family support worker will be involved. They may seek to work in collaboration with external agencies such as CYPS, CAMHS and social services to support the child to access

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education The Head Teacher will consider cases individually and decide on the most appropriate code to record this on the register.

5.5. Child Protection Concerns

If there are any Child Protection concerns these will be discussed with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) on the first day of absence, or subsequently if new concerns arise. The DSL will decide on the appropriate steps.

5.6. Monitoring and Evaluation

The Senior Business Manager is responsible for monitoring attendance within school on a weekly basis. Leaders will support individuals to improve their attendance where frequent or long-term absences are identified. A plan to improve school attendance will be made and a date agreed for its review.

Any absences of concern are reported immediately to the DSL.

The Senior Leadership Team review school attendance on a half termly basis to review overall attendance and identify any patterns of concern.

If no progress is made the local authority will be notified. This may result in a review of school placement.

The Head Teacher is responsible for monitoring overall attendance and will report each term to the Local Advisory Group (formerly the Governing Body).

5.7. Recording Absences

AUTHORISED AND UNAUTHORISED ABSENCES

It is for the school, not the parent, to decide whether to authorise any absences. The school will not authorise absences in the following circumstances:

- Where no parental explanation is given.

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- For extended visits overseas where no approval has been given.
- For holidays in term time (unless there are exceptional circumstances.)
- For leisure days out.
- Where it is believed a parent is condoning an unnecessary absence.
- In other cases where it is deemed there is no reasonable explanation.

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Classified for statistical purposes as not a possible attendance		
Q	Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements	Access arrangements failed to be set up
Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available	and/or transport normally provided not available
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel	Disruption caused by a local, national or
Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed	Pupils can not be practically accommodated in another part of the
Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed	Example – Adverse weather
Y5	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention	Example – Police detention, remanded to
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law	Prohibited by any legislation relating to the transmission of infection or
Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause	An unavoidable cause not covered by one
The student is counted as absent, Unauthorised.		
G	Holiday not granted by the school	holiday
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason to yet established before the register has closed. If no reason is provided in a reasonable
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason established or the school is not satisfied with the reason provided
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Follows L code after the register has closed after a reasonable amount of
The student is counted as present, at approved educational activity		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	College course/Home Tutoring etc
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Attending a place other than school for an educational visit or trip arranged by or on behalf of the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Attending a place other than school for an approved educational sporting activity
W	Attending work experience	Attending a place for approved work experience provided under arrangements
B	Attending an other approved educational activity	Attending for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience. Examples include – attending taster days at other schools,
The student is counted as absent, Authorised.		
J1	Absent for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for an admission to another educational institution	Granted absence for an interview or admission to another educational institution
S	Absent for the purpose of studying for a public examination	Granted absence to study
C1	Absent for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Granted absence to undertake employment (Paid/Unpaid) during school hours
M	Medical appointment	Absence for the purposes of attending
C2	Absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable	Example dual-registration, part-time unregistered alternative provision or flexi-
C	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstances	Assessed case by case. At schools discretion. Examples – Pregnant
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	The child is travelling with their parents
R	Religious observance	in the course of their trade or The student is absent on a day designated by the religious body
I	Illness (Not medical or dental appointment)	The pupil is unable to attend due to illness. (Both physical and mental)
E	Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made	Pupil permanently excluded and no alternative has been made. Name still on the admission register.
Counted only for statistical purposes		
D	Dual registered at another school	Main examples of dual registration – attending a referral unit, a hospital school
X	None-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school	Under/over compulsory school age
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Enables school to set up the register in advance of pupils joining the
#	Whole school closure	Known and planned in advance (Hall terms/days between terms/school used as a polling station etc)

5.8. Authorised and Unauthorised Absences

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It is for the school, not the parent, to decide whether to authorise any absences. The school will not authorise absences in the following circumstances:

- Where no parental explanation is given.
- For extended visits overseas where no approval has been given.
- For holidays in term time (unless there are exceptional circumstances.)
- For leisure days out.
- Where it is believed a parent is condoning an unnecessary absence.
- In other cases where it is deemed there is no reasonable explanation.

5.9. Leave of Absence

Head Teachers can only grant leave of absence during term time when there are exceptional circumstances. The Head Teacher will determine if the request for an absence in term time is exceptional and will consider each request on a case-by-case basis. Some of the reasons we may consider as supporting an application for an absence in term time are:

- Respite at Children’s Hospice or similar
- Forces Personnel on leave from a foreign posting
- Significant family events or circumstances
- Religious festivals (maximum of 2 days per school year)

Where absence from school can be considered an “exceptional circumstance” and the pupil has an acceptable level of school attendance a request may be granted. If a request is made for longer than 10 consecutive days parents/carers will be contacted to discuss the request. Similarly, if multiple short breaks are requested that add up to 10 days parents/carers may be contacted to discuss the matter before a decision is made.

When unauthorised leave is taken, the school will notify the relevant local authority SEND team of the absence, guidance with the Working Together to Improve School Attendance (August 2024) states:

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“Attendance returns: providing the local authority with the names and addresses of all pupils of compulsory school age who fail to attend school regularly or have been absent for a continuous period of ten school days where their absence has been recorded with one or more of the codes statistically classified as unauthorised (G, N, O, and/or U)”

6. Monitoring and Compliance

Overall responsibility for the operation of the procedure lies with the Chief Executive, supported by Heads of Education Services. The effectiveness of the procedure will be formally reviewed and monitored as a minimum on a bi-annual basis to ensure that it continues to meet the requirements of The Foundation, the specific service area and that it reflects best practice and statutory legislation as appropriate

7. Associated Policies & References

[Working together to improve school attendance](#)

[Securing good attendance and tackling persistent absences](#)

[Children missing education](#)

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