



# Holbrook Academy

## Attendance Policy

<b>Date Approved</b>	8 <sup>th</sup> November 2023
<b>Signed</b>	H Butler Chair of Governors
<b>Minuted</b>	Q&M Committee 8 <sup>th</sup> November 2023

*This policy takes account of the Academy's public sector equality duty set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. It can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required. It applies wherever staff or volunteers are working with students even where this is away from the Academy, for example at an activity centre or on an educational visit.*

Member of staff with responsibility for this policy.	Sarah Watson
Governor with responsibility for this policy.	Q&M Committee
Policy review date	Summer 2024
What is the purpose of this policy?	To create a robust, definitive and collaborative approach to attendance to ensure the best outcomes for children and families
What are its headline targets? (using quantitative and qualitative measures)	In line with National and Local attendance data
How is this policy to be judged as successful?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High levels of engagement</li> <li>• Persistent absence (PA) reduces and is in line with national and local data</li> </ul>

## Contents

1. Introduction	3
2. Roles and Responsibilities	3
3. Attendance : Roles and Responsibilities	5
4. Penalty Notices	7
Appendix A : Coding for Registers	8
Appendix B : Parental Guidance	9
Appendix C : A Guide for Students	13

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 Holbrook Academy is committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all of its students. To ensure this, regular school attendance—and good punctuality will enable our students to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available within our school. High attainment depends on good attendance.
- 1.2 The whole school community – students, parents and carers, teaching and support staff and school governors – have an important role to play in encouraging and enabling our students to attend school so that they can achieve their full potential.
- 1.3 Parents are responsible for making sure that their children of compulsory school age receive a suitable full-time education. This can be by regular attendance at school, at alternative provision, or otherwise (home schooling). (Section 7 of the Education Act 1996)

## **2. Roles and Responsibilities**

- 2.1 All staff (teaching and support) at Holbrook Academy actively promote and support excellent attendance and punctuality by providing a safe environment in which students are keen and eager to learn. Students should feel valued members of the community and look forward to attending school every day. Staff should also set a good example in matters relating to their own attendance and punctuality.
- 2.2 To promote and ensure excellent attendance and punctuality the Attendance Officer, Family Liaison Officer (FLO) and Acting Deputy Headteacher (DHT), will meet weekly to ensure the Attendance Policy is consistently applied throughout the school. The Family Liaison Officer and Acting Deputy Headteacher (DHT) will also meet regularly with the Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) assigned to the school to address attendance issues by meeting with students, parents/carers and other outside agencies as appropriate. These people will share up to date attendance information and issues with the Form Tutor, Heads of Year, Pastoral Team and Senior Leadership Team (SLT). The school community (teaching and support staff, students, parents & carers) will also be informed regularly of the school's current attendance data. The governing body will be informed of attendance figures via a report on a termly basis. These strategies will help to ensure that attendance issues are identified in the initial stages and support is implemented promptly.

### **2.3 Registration**

The school is required to mark the register twice a day; once at the start of the day and once during the afternoon session. Teachers are responsible for completing the attendance registers using the codes prescribed (see Appendix A).

#### **AM Registration**

- Students should be in their Form Room by 8.30am Form Tutors should save registers by 8:35am.
- Any student arriving after 8.36am without a valid reason will be marked on the Class Charts register by the form tutor as "L" and add minutes late to the late box. Then the Form Tutor will apply a C2 -exceptionally late - which will apply 2 negative points and a 30 minute lunch time detention.
- A student who is in the building but does not go to form time will receive a C3 for Truancy logged by SLT/Behaviour Team and receive 3 lessons in Isolation including Break and Lunch time the next day.

- After 9.00am, the student is marked as a U. If there is no valid reason why they are late (this does not include daily traffic) the Attendance Officer will mark them on the register on Class Charts and apply a C3 - Truancy with 6 negative points and an SLT detention.

## PM Registration

- Any student arriving after 1.08pm without a valid reason will be marked on Charts Class by the class teacher as “L” who will then add minutes late to the late box. They will then apply a C1 - 3-5 minutes late which will apply 1 negative point.
- After 1.11pm the teacher will register a student as missing to On Call and upscale when they arrive to a C2 -exceptionally late - which will apply 2 negative points and a 30 minute lunch time detention.
- If a student hasn't arrived by 1.30 and they are on site the student will receive a C3 for Truancy logged by SLT/Behaviour Team and 3 lessons in Isolation inc Break and Lunch the next day.
- If a student arrives on site after 1.15pm The Attendance Officer will mark them on the register on Class Charts. A sanction will be applied only if appropriate.

## 2.4 Categorising absence

- i) A mark will be made in respect of each student during registration. Any child not present at the time of registration will be marked as **N, reason for absence not yet provided**. Where a reason for an absence is given and accepted as legitimate by the school at a later stage, the register will be amended and the appropriate code inserted. The decision as to whether the absence is authorised/unauthorised rests ultimately with the headteacher.
- ii) If no explanation is received by the school following home contact, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.
- iii) As a school, Holbrook Academy recognises that attendance has an impact on a child's attainment and also safeguarding. The school recognises that inappropriate authorisation of absence can be as damaging as unauthorised absence to a child's education and well-being; and potentially send a message to parents/carers that any reason for school non-attendance is acceptable, placing the child in a potentially vulnerable situation and at risk from harm. If absence is frequent or continuous without medical evidence, staff at Holbrook Academy will challenge parents/carers about their child's absence and offer support, if needed, to improve attendance. A note or explanation from home for a child's non-attendance will not always mean the absence is authorised. The decision to authorise an absence will always rest with the school.
- iv) Absence will be authorised in the following circumstances:
  - a) where leave of absence has been agreed in advance, eg:
    - A student is to participate in an approved performance in which a licence has been granted by the Local Authority;
    - A student is involved in an **exceptional** special occasion;
    - In **exceptional** circumstances permission is granted for a family holiday in which parents have sought permission in advance;
  - b) where the school is satisfied the student is too ill to attend;
  - c) where the student has a medical appointment (although parents are requested to make the appointments outside of school hours wherever possible, or return to school promptly after the consultation);
  - d) where there is an unavoidable cause for the absence which is beyond the family's control, eg extreme weather conditions.

- e) the student is entitled to home-school travel and no transport has been arranged by the local authority;
  - f) the absence occurs on a day of religious observance by the religious body to which their parents or the student belongs;
  - g) The student is of no fixed abode, his/her parents are engaged in trade in which he/she travels, the student has attended school as often as the nature of the trade permits and, having reached the age of eleven, he/she has attended 200 sessions in the preceeding twelve months;
  - h) In other exceptional circumstances (eg a family bereavement) and for a limited time.
- v) Except in the circumstances described above, absences will be unauthorised. Some examples of reasons for **not** authorising absence would be:
- No explanation given by parent/carer;
  - Attendance is below 92% and, if requested, no medical evidence has been provided
  - The school is not satisfied by the explanation given;
  - The student is shopping during school hours;
  - The student is absent for unexceptional reasons, e.g. a birthday;
  - The student is absent for a family holiday without prior permission;

The 8<sup>th</sup> session (each day consists of 2 sessions) of unauthorised absence may trigger a penalty notice to be issued

## 2.5 Approved Educational Activity

Where a student is engaged in an approved educational off-site activity, the school will check his/her attendance on a daily basis before entering the appropriate code in the register.

## 2.6 Class registers

In order to track students' whereabouts throughout the day, subject teachers will take a class register near to the beginning of a lesson to record absence and lateness. Any sudden absences can then be picked up and reasonable measures can be put in place to locate the student. Teachers alert the office and/or SLT of any 'AWOL' students and follow safeguarding procedure.

## 3. Attendance: Roles and Responsibilities

### Students

- To be aware of the importance of regular school punctuality and attendance. If they are having difficulties that may prevent good attendance, they should speak to their form tutor;
- To attend lessons on time, ready to learn.
- To follow school procedures if late to morning registration, by signing in at the office;

### Parents/carers (See Appendix B – Parental Guidance)

- Ensure their children attend school regularly;
- Ensure that an absence form is completed or evidence is provided in advance of any planned absences
- Ensure that medical evidence is provided to confirm absence as a result of illness if requested by the school
- Ensure the school has accurate phone contact numbers;
- Support their children's attendance by keeping requests for absence to a minimum;
- Not expect the school to automatically agree any requests for absence, and not condone unjustified absence from school;

- To notify the school on every day of absence, using the Schoolcomms or leaving a message on the absence line;
- Ensure their children arrive on time, properly dressed & with the right equipment for the day.

#### **Form Tutor**

- Mark registers accurately in tutor time and subject lessons;
- To raise any unusual attendance patterns/periods of absence and discuss with the student and/or parent/carer if required
- Report at least half termly to the form group both the class's attendance record and individual student attendance records.
- Undertake a structured conversation through a Student Attendance Form (SAF) usually regarding absence rates between 95-93% as requested by the Attendance Team

#### **Attendance Officer**

- To ensure first day response operates for any student who is absent for no known reason;
- To ensure all registers are complete and follow up where necessary;
- To update the Provision Map, have weekly meetings with the Acting Deputy Headteacher, provide half-termly attendance data to form tutors and record information relating to individual cases on the Attendance Tracker and Attendance systems.
- To communicate current attendance to parents/carers of students whose attendance drops below 95% to build improved attendance.
- To support the Acting Deputy Headteacher in appropriate contact with parents/carers to address specific attendance concerns
- Support with the issuing of Attendance Rewards

#### **Family Liaison Officer**

- To encourage an active partnership between children/parents/carers/Academy by working creatively and positively with parents/carers to achieve maximum involvement in their child's education.
- To work to maintain positive and productive relationships between home and Academy.
- To encourage parents/carers to understand the importance of their role in their child's education.
- To contribute to making all the Academy's policies and practices meaningful to parents/carers.
- To empower parents/carers to have confidence in their own ability to deal with issues that relate to their own children.
- To monitor and track attendance at school events and explore ways of encouraging parents/carers to attend Academy functions eg parents evenings.
- To be a point of contact and a source of information for parents/carers about the range of support agencies which are available to support them as well as signposting.
- To liaise with the EWO to implement a plan of action to address the key issues;
- To support students at school with medical conditions.
- To make home visits as and when required
- To keep accurate records and data which can be used to influence future planning.
- To use information regarding attendance and punctuality to follow up issues promptly.
- Support with the issuing of Attendance Rewards

#### **Acting Deputy Headteacher**

- To liaise weekly with the Family Liaison Officer and Attendance Officers to discuss any students who are raising a concern and create an action plan to tackle attendance issues
- To support tutors and Heads of Year with any students whose attendance is causing a concern
- To analyse weekly and termly attendance data and monitor the action plan ;

- To ensure parents have attended meetings with the school if their son/daughter's attendance has dropped below 90% and that strategies to support the family have been implemented and external agencies have been contacted if required;
- To provide a termly attendance update for the SLT and governing body
- To monitor punctuality to lessons and follow up any punctuality issues, ensuring parents are informed;
- To monitor and act upon any incidents where students are signing in at the office and not attending registration on a frequent basis for no valid reason.
- To praise individual students and form groups by rewarding high attenders in celebration assemblies.

#### **Educational Welfare Officer**

- Liaise with the Family Liaison Officer concerning students and discuss course of action;
- To follow escalation process with student and families giving cause for concern and to meet with parent/carers and Family Liaison Officer as appropriate;
- Set targets with families whose children have an attendance below 90% and possible 'Fast Track' cases may be opened. Details can be found on the County website.

#### **Governors –**

To ensure that their functions relating to the conduct of the school are exercised with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who are students at Holbrook Academy.

## **4. Penalty Notices**

Suffolk's Education Attendance Service can issue Penalty Notices in the following situations where unauthorised absence occurs:-

4.1 A student has been identified as having unauthorised absence and a referral is made to the Education Attendance Service. The school will make a referral once 8 unauthorised absence marks have accrued.

The school will be following the Local Authority's guidance on this. If a referral is made for a Penalty Notice, this will result in a fine of £60 per parent/carers. If this is not paid before 21 days, the fine will increase to £120 per adult/carers for each child. Carer can be a step parent and/or carer.

## Appendix A – Coding for Registers

Attendance code	Meaning of code
/ or \	Present in school during registration / = am \ = pm
L	Late arrival before the register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity - approved by school
D	Dual Registered - at another educational establishment .The main examples of dual registration are pupils who are attending a pupil referral unit, a hospital school or a special school on a temporary basis.
J	At an interview with prospective employers, or another educational establishment
P	Participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational visit or trip with the school or another organisation approved by the school
W	Work experience
C	Leave of absence authorised by the school in exceptional circumstances.
E	Excluded but no alternative provision made
H	Holiday authorised by the school. Application must be made in advance and the head teacher must be satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances based on the individual facts and circumstances of the case which warrant the leave.
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointments)
M	Medical or dental appointments
R	Religious observance
S	Study leave - only Year 11
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence
G	Holiday not authorised by the school or in excess of the period determined by the head teacher.
N	Reason for absence not yet provided
O	Absent from school without authorisation
U	Arrived in school after registration closed
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances This code can be used where a pupil is unable to attend because: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school site, or part of it, is closed due to an unavoidable cause; or</li> <li>• The transport provided by the school or a local authority is not available and where the pupil's home is not within walking distance; or</li> <li>• A local or national emergency has resulted in widespread disruption to travel which has prevented the pupil from attending school.</li> </ul>
z	Pupil not on admission register

In Class Charts Attendance, teachers also use the following to identify where a student is located:-

- Hub,
- Iso
- SSC
- AWOL



## **Appendix B – Parental Guidance**

### **A GUIDE FOR PARENTS/CARERS**

Attending school is important to ensure students are able make the most of their education in order to reach their full potential. If you raise a child's attendance you raise their academic chances. As a parent/carer, you are legally responsible for ensuring that your child receives a suitable education. Failure to ensure that your child attends school punctually and regularly may lead to legal action being taken against you.

#### **Legal action to enforce school attendance**

Local councils and schools can use various legal powers if your child is missing school without a good reason. They can give you:

- a Parenting Order
- an Education Supervision Order
- a School Attendance Order
- a fine (sometimes known as a 'penalty notice')

You can be given one or more of these but the council does not have to do this before prosecuting you.

#### **Parenting Order**

This means you have to go to parenting classes. You will also have to do what the court says to improve your child's school attendance.

#### **Education Supervision Order**

If the council thinks you need support getting your child to go to school but you are not co-operating, they can apply to a court for an Education Supervision Order.

A supervisor will be appointed to help you get your child into education. The local council can do this instead of prosecuting you, or as well.

#### **School Attendance Order**

You will get a School Attendance Order if the local council thinks your child is not getting an education.

You have 15 days to provide evidence that you have registered your child with the school listed in the order or that you are giving them home education. If you do not, you could be prosecuted or given a fine.

#### **Fine**

Your local council can give each parent a fine of £60, which rises to £120 each if you do not pay within 21 days. If you do not pay the fine after 28 days you may be prosecuted for your child's absence from school.

#### **Prosecution**

You could get a fine of up to £2,500, a community order or a jail sentence up to 3 months. The court also gives you a Parenting Order.

See: <https://www.gov.uk/school-attendance-absence/legal-action-to-enforce-school-attendance>

Please be assured that if your child suffers from diagnosed on-going ill health, the Academy will work with you and appropriate external organisations to provide support and education provision whilst your child is unable to attend school.

Whilst the occasional day of absence may not seem to have much impact, the table below illustrates the cumulative effect on lost learning hours as overall attendance declines:

% Attendance	Daily attendance	Days absence	Learning hours lost (5½ hours per day)
100%	190 days	0	0
99%	188 days	2	11
98%	186 days	4	22
97%	184 days	6	33
96%	182.5 days	7.5	41¼
95%	180.5 days	9.5	52¼
94%	179 days	11	60½
93%	177 days	13	71½
92%	175 days	15	82 ½
91%	173 days	17	93½
90%	171 days	19	104½
89%	169 days	21	115½
88%	167 days	23	126½
87%	165 days	25	137½
86%	163 days	27	148½
85%	161.5 days	28.5	156¾
84%	159.5 days	30.5	167¾
83%	158 days	32	176
82%	156 days	34	187
81%	154 days	36	198
80%	152 days	38	209

### 1. When does my child need to be in School?

Your child should be at school in good time for registration. The morning register will be called promptly at **8.30am** and the afternoon register at **1.05pm**.

### 2. What happens if my child is late?

Registration closes at **9.00am** in the morning and **1.15pm** in the afternoon.

*Students who arrive late but before the register closes will be counted as present but will be coded as L for lateness and dealt with according to the Academy's Behaviour and Rewards Policy.*

*Any student arriving after the register has closed and has been 'sent' will be marked absent with code U, or with another absence code if that is more appropriate.*

*A student is late if they arrive to form after 8.35 and before 9.00 and to lesson 4 after 1.05 and before 1.15*

Except in special circumstances -

If your child arrives after registration has been taken, without good reason, he/she will be marked late. Students who arrive after registration should report to the school office, and sign in

Special Circumstances does not include everyday morning rush hour traffic. It is the responsibility of parents/carers to ensure their child arrives at school on time every day.

### 3. Does the School need letters explaining my child's absence or is a phone call acceptable?

We expect a parent/carer to send a message via the Schoolcomms or telephone the school on every day of absence. If you do not phone us, we will endeavour to phone you as soon as we can. If we cannot contact you we will send you a text message.

If we do not receive a response from the first priority contact details you have provided for your student we may telephone the other contacts you have provided in order to ensure that the whereabouts and safety of your child is known. If we are unable to make contact other agencies may be informed as appropriate. If no explanation is given for an absence a letter asking for confirmation of the reason for the absence with a deadline will be set for your reply and the letter will inform you of this. If you fail to reply by this date or the explanation you give is unsatisfactory, we will not authorise the absence, and this will be shown on your child's end of year report. Any unauthorised absences will be shared with the Academy's EWO.

### 4. What reasons will the school accept for absences?

- i. where leave of absence has been agreed in advance, eg:
  - A student is to participate in an approved performance in which a licence has been granted by the Local Authority;
  - A student is involved in an **exceptional** special occasion;
  - In **exceptional** circumstances permission is granted for a family holiday in which parents have sought permission in advance;
- ii. where the school is satisfied the student is too ill to attend and medical evidence is provided if requested;
- iii. where the student has a medical appointment and evidence is provided in advance (although parents are requested to make the appointments outside of school hours wherever possible, or return to school promptly after the consultation);
- iv. where there is an unavoidable cause for the absence which is beyond the family's control, eg extreme weather conditions.
- v. the student is entitled to home-school travel and no transport has been arranged by the local authority;
- vi. the absence occurs on a day of religious observance by the religious body to which their parents or the student belongs;
- vii. The student is of no fixed abode, his/her parents are engaged in trade in which he/she travels, the student has attended school as often as the nature of the trade permits and, having reached the age of eleven, he/she has attended 200 sessions in the preceding twelve months;
- viii. In other exceptional circumstances (eg a family bereavement) and **for a limited time**.

Except in the case of illness, you should ask for permission for your child to miss school well in advance, giving full details and appointment letters. In cases of recurring absences through illness you will be asked to produce a medical certificate.

### 5. What is unacceptable?

The school will not authorise absence for day trips, visiting relatives, shopping, birthdays or looking after brothers or sisters, etc.

### 6. Will the School contact me if my child is absent?

The school operates a first day response to absences: we will phone you if we have not heard from you. This is because we believe it is our responsibility to ensure your child's safety as well as their regular school attendance.

If we are concerned about aspects of your child's attendance or punctuality we will contact you by phone, text and/or letter to discuss the best way forward.

### 7. Can we take family holidays during term-time?

The school strongly discourages parents/carers from taking their child out of school for a holiday.

Family holidays should be taken during school holidays. If, in exceptional circumstances, you need to request permission for your child to accompany you on an annual family holiday during term time, you should put your request in writing to the Headteacher, at least six weeks in advance clearly stating the reason why the holiday cannot be undertaken in school holiday time. Financial / economic reasons, availability of accommodation, ease of travel would not be considered acceptable reasons to grant leave of absence. If the request is due to the limited times a parent is able to take holiday from their place of work, then written evidence of this should be obtained from the employer.

The Headteacher has the right to refuse permission and absence for holidays will not normally be authorised unless:-

- The holiday is a single, annual, family holiday which cannot be taken in school holiday time.
- The number of school days missed by such a holiday will not exceed 4.
- The attendance of the child/children has exceeded 95% in the previous 12 months.
- The child/children will not miss major public exams eg GCSEs, or be absent during the important final preparation time for the examination.

If students miss work as a result of a holiday taken in term time, it is expected that responsibility for catching up on missed work lies with the child and parents/carers not their teachers.

Occasionally some students need to undertake an extended trip overseas. In this situation, parents should contact the Headteacher as soon as possible to discuss the arrangements.

### **8. What can I do to encourage my child to attend School?**

Make sure your child gets enough sleep and gets up in plenty of time each morning. Ensure that he/she leaves home in the correct clothes and properly equipped. Show your child, by your interest, that you value his/her education. Your child will bring home a school planner each evening. Please ensure you look at it with your child and sign it each week for tutorial time. Chat to him/her about school and ensure h/she feels happy and challenged and let us know if you feel they have stopped enjoying coming to school.

### **9. My child is trying to avoid coming to School. What should I do?**

Contact the Family Liaison Officer immediately and openly discuss your worries. Your child could be avoiding school for a number of reasons i.e difficulties with school work, bullying, friendship problems, family difficulties. It is important that we identify the reason for your child's reluctance to attend school and work together to tackle the problem. We may involve other agencies to help and support you and your child.

In some cases you may find it helpful to discuss the circumstances of your child's difficulties with an Education Welfare Officer. The school may also refer you to an Education Welfare Officer who works with staff and families if difficulties with attendance arise. The Education Welfare Service is based at: Endeavour House, 8 Russell Road, Ipswich, IP1 2BX

## **Appendix C : A Guide for Students**

### **1. Attending regularly and on time**

Regular attendance will help you make the most of the opportunities here at Holbrook Academy. It will help you:

- keep up with your school work and get the best results you can;
- get a place at sixth form / college (we share details about your attendance as part of the transition process).
- get a job – employers like people who are reliable.

Remember, your attendance at school is very likely to be checked by a prospective employer and is on your school reports.

### **2. Absences**

Acceptable reasons for absences include:

- illness
- emergency dental / medical appointments (please make routine appointments after school or during the holidays)
- day of religious observance
- family bereavement
- attending an interview for a job, college, university, etc.
- selection for a national event/competition/training etc.

Looking after your brothers and sisters, birthdays, general trips such as shopping are NOT reasons to be absent from school.

You will also need a note from your parents/carers, a completed request for absence form or copy of appointment letters to explain ALL absences from school including arriving late. If you are unable to provide written evidence or the explanation is unsatisfactory, the absence will count as unauthorised and will be shown on your end of year report.

### **3. Need help?**

Problems with your school work? Are you being bullied? Are your friends giving you a hard time? Are things difficult at school? Are things difficult at home?

You may feel that missing school is the answer. It is not – it may even make things worse. TALK TO SOMEONE – your Form Tutor, Behaviour Manager, the School Nurse, another member of staff, your parents/carers. We can also organise time with the counsellor or a mentor.

We can only help you if we know there is a problem so talk to us and we will be able to help and support you.