



Secondary Schools Student Attendance Policy

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Aim

To raise levels of achievement by ensuring the highest possible levels of attendance, punctuality, and involvement in the schools. Priory Rise School have a school level attendance policy. This policy refers to The Hazeley Academy and Shenley Brook End School.

All schools are required to have a member of the senior team who is designated as their Attendance Champion. At the Hazeley Academy this is **Mr S Healy, Deputy Principal**, and at Shenley Brook End School, Miss **S Arkison, Assistant Headteacher**.

The Attendance Champions oversee attendance, and they work closely with Progress Leaders/ Pastoral Leaders, Year Leaders/R2L staff, Attendance Officers, Teachers, Tutors, Support Staff and the Safeguarding Teams to ensure that this is seen as everyone's business.

Purpose

Five Dimension Trust (5DT) will endeavour to provide an environment where all students feel valued and welcome. For a child to reach their full educational achievement a high level of attendance is essential. We will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to students and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance and to remind parents/carers, that it is their responsibility to ensure that their children receive their education.

The Academy/School attendance is subject to various education laws and this attendance policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by The Department for Education.

This policy will contain within it the procedures that we will use to meet our attendance targets.

Objectives

- To keep an accurate and up to date record of attendance.
- To inform parents of attendance and punctuality issues.
- To identify causes of non-attendance and take action.
- To improve attendance and punctuality of individuals, groups, and the Academy/School.

The Law

Under Section 7 of the Education Act 1996, parents are responsible for making sure that their children of compulsory school age receive full-time education. Parents have a legal responsibility to

ensure their child's regular attendance at the school/academy where they are registered. For educational purposes the term parent is used to include those that have parental responsibility and/or those that have the day-to-day care of the child.

If a child of compulsory school age who is registered at school, fails to attend regularly then the parent is guilty of an offence under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996. Part VI Section 444 contains the details of when an offence is committed if a child fails to attend school.

Children are expected to attend Five Dimension Schools for the full 190 days of the academic year, unless there is a good reason for absence. Parents/guardians of registered students have a legal duty under the 1996 Education Act to make sure that their child attends on a regular and full-time basis.

There are two types of absence:

- ☐ Authorised (where absence is approved)
- ☐ Unauthorised (where absence is not approved)

Every half-day absence from school must be classified by the school (not by parents) as either authorised or unauthorised.

Our procedures are applied fairly and consistently to all students and specific information relating to the following can be found in Appendix A and B:

- ☐ Leave of Absences during term time
- ☐ Persistent absenteeism
- ☐ Lateness
- ☐ Definitions of authorised and unauthorised absences and approved educational activities

Post Covid, the DFE have made it clear that national figures for school attendance have been impacted and still yet to recover to Pre covid figures. All schools are expected to encourage excellent attendance and where this is not the case, schools are expected to intervene quickly to bring about improvements. We rely on excellent home-school communication and an expectation that students will attend every day. For the avoidance of doubt regular attendance is defined as 100%.

A register of students will be taken by a tutor/teacher at the start of the day, for each lesson and during the afternoon session.

All students will be registered (absent or present). Late comers must report to the main reception for their attendance to be recorded.

Shenley Brook End School grounds are accessible from 8am and students are expected on site by 8.25am, the school gates will close at 8.30 and students are expected to be in their tutor group by 8.35 each day. After this time students access the school via reception and students who arrive after this time will be marked as late.

Sixth form students are expected to enter the building via the sixth form entrance using their swipe card.

The Hazeley Academy is accessible at 8.20am and students are expected to be on site by 8.35am. After this time the main entrances are closed and students who arrive after this time are late.

Students arriving after the closure of the morning register will be officially marked absent (unauthorised) for the morning session, although their presence in school will be recorded. For medical reasons (with evidence), students' absence will be authorised as medical.

Parent and carers are expected to contact the school's attendance officer by using the school absence line or the dedicated attendance email address as early as possible on the morning of the first day of absence – indicating the likely period of non-attendance and then to call each additional day thereafter.

Shenley Brook End School

Key stage 3 & 4 - 01908 524897

attendance@sbe5d.com

Text message on 07551318736

Key stage 5 01908 520264

6attendance@sbe5d.com

Hazeley Academy

Key stage 3,4,5 - 01908 555633

Attendance@haz5d.com

Where the school has not been contacted regarding an absence, the school will attempt to contact the parent/carer through text or email in the first instance. If there is no response the absence is unauthorised.

Where a student is known to have attendance concern the school will make contact on each day of absence.

Parents and carers will be contacted where attendance or lateness is unsatisfactory or where the student's non-attendance has not been satisfactorily explained.

Persistent non-attendance or lateness and unsatisfactory explanations of absences will be monitored closely, and communications sent home. Meetings in school and intervention will take place to provide support and seek attendance improvement.

There is no automatic entitlement in law to take time off in school time to go on holiday. Absence from school for annual holidays is strongly discouraged because of the adverse impact the absence could have on a student's education. As such, holiday requests will be classified as unauthorised absence and may attract sanctions such as a Penalty Notice and/or Fixed Penalty Notice fine. If an absence during term time is unavoidable due to exceptional circumstances, for example on compassionate grounds then parents and carers must inform the Headteacher, giving ample notice, as soon as the dates are known. In making a decision the school will consider the circumstances of each application individually, including any previous pattern of absence / lateness in term time.

Unauthorised absences for holidays, poor punctuality and general non-attendance may incur a Fixed Penalty Notice, a Fixed Penalty Notice fine, or prosecution (Anti-Social Act 444(1) 2003) from the attendance team at Milton Keynes City Council.

Attendance will be reported to parents and carers on the students termly report, and can be accessed through the Arbor account.

Rewards

Good attendance is recognised and may be regularly celebrated in a number of ways within 5D schools, for example:

- Children with 100% attendance each term will be rewarded by the Academy through the use of praise, congratulatory home-school communications or awarding certificates during end of term assemblies/lead lessons
- Incorporating our whole school rewards system of House points/ flight miles. students will receive House points/flight miles per week for 100% attendance each week.
- The students' annual reports to parents report on attendance and the Personal Tutor comment reflects either excellent and good attendance or concerns along with strategies on how these might be addressed.
- Attendance & Punctuality inter form competition through lead lessons and Progress Leaders.
- School Comms to reward and recognise excellent attendance such as 100%.
- Termly prize draws for students with 100% attendance.
- Praise conversations with the form tutor, year leader and Progress Leader/ Pastoral Leader.

Support and Intervention

In order to support students who do not meet the 5D's expectations regarding attendance and punctuality, a number of intervention strategies could be employed, such as:

- Discussions with Form Tutor
- Year leader, Progress Leader/Pastoral Leader, Senior Leadership Team (SLT), student and parent meetings.
- Academy sanctions, such as detentions and longer school day to catch up work missed
- Learning Mentor/ Year Leader support.
- School counselling, wellbeing, and Therapeutic support
- Support and intervention from Matron/ Welfare Officer
- Attendance Interviews
- Letters sent home.
- Home visits, conducted by school staff
- Involvement in intervention groups such as attendance or personal organisation group work.
- Fixed penalty notices - for low attendance or unauthorised absence such as holidays in term time.
- Involvement with the Local Authority Senior Attendance Officer (Legal Interventions) through a PACE interview (Police and Criminal Evidence Act)

Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996 provides that a parent commits an offence if his or her compulsory school age child who is a registered student fails to attend school regularly. For the avoidance of doubt regular attendance is defined as 100%. This can result in the Academy offering the parent the opportunity to enter a parenting contract following a student's truancy under section 19 of the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003 (with The Board of Directors).

- Fixed Penalty Notices

Section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 empowers designated LA officers, Head Teachers, and the Police to issue penalty notices in cases of unauthorised absences from school. The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2004 came into force on 27th February 2004 and have recently been amended by the Department of Education in guidance issued in February 2024.

A Penalty Notice may be issued in the following circumstances:

If a minimum of **10 sessions** or **5 school days** of unauthorised absence are taken during the current term for:

- Overt Truancy
- Parentally condoned absences
- Holidays taken in term-time.
- Truanting lessons despite being at school
- Persistent late arrival at school (after the AM Register has closed)

Parenting orders or penalty notices can also be issued by the Local Authority Senior Attendance Officer (Legal Interventions) or 5D schools.

All schools are required to consider a fine when a child has missed 10 or more sessions (5 days) for unauthorised reasons.

From August 2024, the fine for school absences across the country will be **£80 if paid within 21 days, or £160 if paid within 28 days.**

In the case of repeated fines, if a parent receives a second fine for the same child within any three-year period, this will be charged at the higher rate of £160. This is regardless of the school attended.

Fines per parent will be capped to two fines within any three-year period. Once this limit has been reached, other action like a parenting order or prosecution will be considered.

A parent prosecuted and attending court because their child has not been attending school, could receive a fine of up to £2,500. Other penalties that may be imposed include a community order or a jail sentence. The court could also impose a parenting order.

APPENDIX A

Leave of Absences during term time

Five Dimension Trust Schools are not permitted to and will not authorise any leave of absence during term time except for **exceptional circumstances**. Government regulations, as stated in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013, remove a Headteacher/Principal's right to authorise leave of absence during term time and make direct and specific reference to not authorising holiday.

5DT schools will only grant leave of absence in **exceptional circumstances** that are not related to holidays. For example, participation at a high level in a representative sport or on compassionate grounds. The exceptional circumstances must be made clear in a letter/email to the Headteacher/Principal at least two weeks before the first day of intended absence. This request must be approved in advance for the absence to be authorised.

It should be noted that students who are absent from school for longer than 20 consecutive days and deemed as 'missing education' can be legally removed from the school roll and reported missing to the Local Authority.

A student's absence during term time can seriously disrupt their continuity of learning. Not only do they miss the teaching provided on the days they are away, but they are also less prepared for the lessons building on that after their return. There is a consequent risk of underachievement which we, and you, must seek to avoid.

<i>Attendance Percentage</i>	<i>Days missed</i>	<i>Sessions missed</i>	<i>Weeks missed</i>
100%	0 Days missed	0 sessions	(0 weeks)
95%	9.5 Days missed	19 sessions	(1.5 weeks)
90%	19 Days missed	38 sessions	(3 weeks)
85%	28.5 Days missed	57 sessions	(4.5 weeks)
80%	38 Days missed	76 sessions	(6 weeks ½ a term)

Persistent Absenteeism (PA)

A student becomes a "**persistent absentee**" when they miss 10% or more schooling across the year for **whatever reason**. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we require parents' support to tackle this. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards or beyond this mark is given priority. All PA cases are automatically made known to the local authority Senior Attendance Officer (Legal Interventions).

Lateness

The Hazeley Academy

Doors to enter the academy are open from 8.20am onwards. The day begins at 8.40 am and all students are expected to be in the academy building by 8.35am. After this time the student entrances are locked.

Every "Late" will be followed up with an "L" in the planner and a next day 30-minute detention.

Any child arriving late should enter the school via the main entrance reporting to Reception. The student, or parent/carer if accompanied, should give a reason for the lateness and this will be recorded on the "daily late sheet" which will be added to the child's register.

Shenley Brook End

Doors to enter the school are open from 8.25am onwards. The perimeter gates are locked at 8.30am, students arriving after this time should enter site through reception. The day begins at 8.35am and all students are expected to be in the form room by 8.35am. Students who arrive through reception from this time are considered 'late'.

Students that are late to school twice in a week are issued a 40-minute detention.

Any child arriving late should enter the school via the main entrance reporting to Reception. The student, or parent/carer if accompanied, should give a reason for the lateness and this will be recorded on the "daily late sheet" which will be added to the child's register.

For all schools, registers for the morning session closes 30 minutes after the start of the school day. Any student arriving after that time without good reason will have their lateness recorded as a "U", which has the same effect as an unauthorised absence.

Parents are legally obliged to ensure that students arrive on time. Students arriving late, with a mitigating reason, such as attendance at a medical appointment or for Safeguarding/Child Protection reasons should put a note in the school planner/learning passport and contact the form tutor in the first instance.

Where persistent lateness occurs, that is when the school's morning registers are closed, (9.30am) further action may be taken in the form of a **Fixed Penalty Notice** issued by the local authority Senior Attendance Officer (Legal Interventions).

Minutes lost each day	Days lost per school year
5 minutes	3 days
10 minutes	6.5 days
15 minutes	10 days
20 minutes	13 days
30 minutes	19 days

Being late 10 mins every day for one year is equal to 33 hours - approximately 6 days!

APPENDIX B

CATEGORISATION OF ABSENCE

Any student who is on roll but not present in the school must be recorded within one of these categories:

1. Unauthorised Absence
2. Authorised Absence
3. Approved Educational Activity

1. Unauthorised absence

This is for those students where no reason has been provided, or whose absence is deemed to be without valid reason.

2. Authorised absence

This is for those students who are away from school for a reason that is deemed to be valid under the Education Act 1996.

3. Approved Educational Activity

This covers types of supervised educational activity undertaken off site but with the approval of the school.

Note: Students recorded in this category are deemed to be present. This would include:

- Work experience placements
- Field trips and educational visits
- Sporting activities with the school