

PERRYFIELDS HIGH SCHOOL

"Together We Achieve Excellence"



Attendance Policy

Title: Attendance Policy			
Publication Date:	March 2013	Authorised by:	Governors
Revision:	1.2	Date Authorised:	May 2017
Last Review:	May 2017	Review Due:	May 2020

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Attendance Policy

Perryfields High School

Perryfields High School believes that all pupils should attend school regularly giving pupils the best opportunity to achieve to the highest possible level. As a school we strive to work with pupils, parents and agencies in order to improve all students' attendance so that they reach their full potential.

Perryfields High School takes into account the regulations in the:

- Education Act (1996)
- The Education (Students' Attendance Records) Regulations (1991)
- The Education (Student Registration) Regulations (1995 amended 1997)
- Social Inclusion: Student Support, DfES Circular 10/99)

The Law

If you are a parent of (or are responsible for) a child aged between 5 and 16 who is registered at school, this information explains your responsibilities for making sure he or she attends school regularly.

By law (Education Act 1996), all children of compulsory school age (between 5 and 16) must get a proper full-time education. You are responsible for making sure this happens, either by registering the child at a school or by making other arrangements which provide an effective education.

If your child is registered as a pupil at a particular school, that school must give permission for your child to be absent. If your child does not go to the school at which he or she is registered, the local authority can take legal action against you.

Aims

The aims of this policy are:-

- To strive to improve the school's yearly attendance target
- To reduce the number of authorised and unauthorised absences
- To foster links with the Attendance Service, parents, feeder primary schools and the local community in order to improve attendance
- To develop strategies to help pupils improve attendance and develop support mechanisms for those with attendance issues
- To ensure that pupils achievements and progress are not undermined by attendance issues

Parental Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of parents, by law, to ensure that their child attends school every day unless there are legitimate reasons for them not doing to. Failure to do this could result in parental prosecution.

The Education Act 1996 states that ***“ensuring your child’s regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.”***

School Responsibility

The school is responsible for encouraging good attendance and ensuring that appropriate systems and strategies are in place to improve and monitor it. It is also responsible for working closely with pupils, parents and agencies particularly when poor attendance is an issue, and identifying when pupils may be at risk. The school recognises that rewarding good attendance is essential.

Pupils are responsible for making sure that they attend school every day and that they obtain registration marks at the appropriate times. They are also responsible for being at school and in lessons on time.

Within Perryfields there is specific staff who promote and support the attendance of pupils, alongside the whole staff. These are:

- Liaison Governor
- Assistant Head Teacher
- Associate Headteacher
- Attendance Coordinators
- Attendance Administrator
- Learning Mentor Team
- Educational Welfare Manager (EWM)
- Inclusion Manager
- Personal Tutors
- Heads of Family (HoF)

In addition to the working partnership with the Attendance and Prosecution Service, there are other organisations that we work with to promote and support attendance at Perryfields. These are:

- Krunch (mentoring service)
- School Health Service
- West Midlands Police
- Youth Offending Team
- Connexions
- Sandwell Young Carers
- Drugs Education, Counselling and Confidential Advice (DECCA)

- Sweet Project
- Children and Adults Mental Health Service (CAMHS)
- Barnardo's (Family Support)

Registration

In accordance with the legal guidelines (Education [Pupil Registration] Regulations 1995) pupils are registered twice a day. These are at the start of Periods 1 and 5. This data can then be made available to interested parties for their scrutiny, eg Local Authority (LA), Department of Education (DfE).

Registers must also be taken at the beginning of all lessons by the relevant subject teacher.

See Appendix 1 and 2.

Promoting Regular Attendance

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility – parents, students and all members of school staff.

Understanding Types of Absence

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by parents), as either **AUTHORISED** or **UNAUTHORISED**. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required, preferably in writing.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason such as ill health, medical / dental appointments which *unavoidably* fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been granted. This type of absence can lead to the school using sanctions and or legal proceedings. This includes:

- Parent/Carer not contacting the school as to the reason why the student is absent from school
- 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 too late to get a mark
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed
- Religious observance which is not specified in an academic diary may not be recognised by the LA.

Whilst any child may be absent because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If your child is reluctant to attend, 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 usually makes things worse.

Persistent Absenteeism (PA)

A student becomes a '**Persistent Absentee**' (**PA**) (from September 2015) when they miss 10% or more schooling across the academic year for any reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we require parents' fullest support and co-operation in order to tackle this.

We monitor all absence thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and you will be informed of this immediately by letter or telephone.

PA students and their parents will be subject to a **Parental Contract**. The Contract will be issued by our Educational Welfare Manager and monitored daily and if attendance fails to improve during this time a referral will be made to the Attendance and Prosecution department.

Parenting Contract can be found at [gov.uk Parenting Contract](#)

This is a voluntary written agreement between you and either the local council or the school's governing body. Between you, you agree to find ways to improve your child's attendance.

If you refuse to make a contract or you don't stick to it, it can be used as evidence if the local council decides to prosecute you.

Pupils identified as a being Persistently Absent are targeted by the schools EWM and HOF. Action plans for these students will be put in place, monitored and reviewed. Pupils who are identified as a PA and whom do not improve will be reported to the Local Authority.

Pupils who are persistent absentees or in danger of falling into the category of persistent absentees will be targeted in the following ways:

- Regular meetings between the schools EWM and Heads of Family
- Discussions with the pupil
- Targeted first day absence calls
- Liaison with parents, including letters home, telephone calls and meetings
- Discussion with the schools HOF when attendance falls below 95%.
- Request to parents to provided Medical evidence- if this is not provided, absences will be recorded on our registers as unauthorised.
- Referral by our EWM to the Attendance and Prosecution Service when attendance is below 90% and absences have been unauthorised.

Illness

From time to time students can be absent from school through illness. **With this in mind during any one term students who have accrued more than 5 days with illness or those who have illness lasting more than 3 consecutive days will need to provide doctors notes to cover addition absences.** If in such case hospitalisation or medical appointments are the reason allowance will be made.

It is a Government requirement that we notify parents when their child's attendance falls below 95% and we will continue to inform parents until the child's attendance has improved.

When informing the school of the students non-attendance, parents need to provide a valid reason for absence e.g. gastroenteritis, migraine, flu etc. Perryfields High school will not accept UNWELL or ILL- these choices of words are non-descript and should not be used.

Absence and underachievement can have a detrimental impact on social development, especially were pupils are not able to participate fully in the school community.

Absence Procedures

If your child is absent you must:

- Contact the school as soon as possible on the first day of absence;
- Send a note in on the first day they return with an explanation of the absence – you must do this even if you have already telephoned us.

Leave of Absence in Exceptional Circumstances

From September 2013, by law, all holidays in term time (now called leave of absence in exceptional circumstances) must be agreed by the Associate Head teacher, 6 weeks before the holiday is taken. Parents/carers do not have a right to take their children out of school during term time and may be fined for taking holidays without the school's consent.

Exceptional circumstances **do not include** family holidays, visiting relatives or friends, spectating at sporting or other events, looking after unwell family members, babysitting younger family members, birthdays or shopping.

As part of a revised School policy we will make a referral to the Attendance & Prosecution Service for pupils who take unauthorised leave of absence. Such a referral may lead to a Fixed Penalty Notice being issued.

Penalty notices, when issued, tells the parents/carers to pay a fine of £60 (if paid within 21 days) or £120 if paid within 28 days.

Taking holidays in term time will affect your child's schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents to help us by refraining from taking holidays during

term time. Remember that any savings you think you may make by taking a holiday in school time are offset by the cost to your child's education.

Truancy Call

This is an automated text messaging service. After registers have been taken at the specified time, Truancy Call will be activated. A call/text message will be sent to every parent where there is an unexplained absence.

IT IS VITALLY IMPORTANT THAT REGISTERS ARE DONE IMMEDIATELY AT THE START OF EACH REGISTRATION SESSION.

This service is also used to send messages to remind parents of important days and times, particularly for exams.

Monitoring Attendance

It is the role of all members of staff to encourage and acknowledge good attendance. Any problems relating to a pupil's attendance should be reported to the appropriate Head of Family. Form groups and individuals will be monitored on a weekly and termly basis by Form Tutors, the Head of Family, EWM, AHT and Attendance Coordinators.

Lateness

Poor punctuality is unacceptable. If your child misses the start of the day, they can miss work and time with their class teacher receiving vital information for the lesson ahead. Late arriving students also disrupt lessons, which can be embarrassing for the child, inconvenient for the teacher and distracting for other students. This can also encourage absence.

How we manage lateness:

The school day starts at **8.45am**: We expect your child to be in class at that time by the latest.

Registers are marked at the start of each lesson - your child will receive a late mark if they are not in lesson by that time.

At **9.15am** the registers will be closed. In accordance with The Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006, if your child arrives after that time and cannot give a valid reason, they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site, but this will **not** count as a present mark and it will mean they have an **unauthorised absence** on their attendance record. This may mean that you could face the possibility of a referral being made to the Attendance and Prosecution service, if the problem persists.

Late Detention

If your child is in Years 7-11 and has been late to school, he / she will be expected to attend a '30 minute Whole School detention which will be issued and taken on the day of the lateness.

If lateness doesn't improve pupils will be placed on a series of punctuality reports. If the issue continues the pupil will receive a SLT Detention and could then receive a home visit from the Education Welfare Officer or an Assistant Head Teacher and be placed on punctuality contract. At any point parents/ carers may be asked to meet with the relevant Head of Family.

Parents are also welcome to approach us at any point if you are experiencing problems with ensuring your child arrives to school on time.

Returning to School after a Prolonged Absence

If a student has had a significant length of time off school then the Head of Family, AHT and Inclusion Manager have responsibility for ensuring that a pupil has a smooth transition back into education. This will be arranged through the Inclusion Centre.

Rewards

SLEUTH POINTS – Sleuth points are awarded regularly by the form tutor:

1 positive point for every day punctual

1 negative point for each day late

ATTENDANCE VOUCHERS– end of 'breakfast/break' vouchers are awarded to pupils who achieve 100% attendance for that term. Pupils who achieve 100% attendance for the school year are invited to afternoon tea with the Head Teacher towards the end of the Summer Term.

Praise Postcards are also sent home to pupils for significant improvement in attendance.

Attendance Roles and Responsibilities

Personal Tutor

- Take statutory registers when required
- Receive absence notes and make them available to the Attendance Coordinator
- Code absences appropriately and pass letters to the Attendance Coordinator
- Comment appropriately on annual reports
- Encourage pupils to attend school on a regular basis
- Keep pupils who have been late back after school
- Watch for poor attendance and/or patterns of absence and inform Head of Family/Attendance Coordinators/ Educational Welfare manager (EWM)
- Monitor the attendance of students and set realistic targets
- Closely monitor the attendance of pupils who are 95% and above.

Class Teacher

- Take statutory register during the first 15 minutes of period 1 and 5
- Inform the Attendance Coordinator/HOF/EWM of any concerns
- Take registers for all lessons, including those used for cover
- Code absences appropriately
- Encourage pupils to attend school on a regular basis
- Inform HOF, EWM and the Attendance Coordinator of any concerns with pupil attendance

Head of Family/ Assistant Head of Family and Senior Pastoral Staff

- Monitor attendance in their family group
- Closely monitor pupils who are below 95% attendance and Persistent Absentees and meet with the schools EWM
- Monitor Personal Tutors regarding attendance
- Ensure that absences are being coded appropriately as quickly as possible
- Monitoring 'o' and 'u' codes that this could lead to a referral to the Attendance and Prosecution service.
- Liaise with parents/carers regarding attendance issues (praise and concern)

- Comment appropriately on annual reports
- Work closely with the Educational Welfare Manager regarding targeting pupils and rewards
- Encourage pupils to attend school regularly and punctually by celebrating their achievements
- Address issues where registers are not taken
- Meet with the Associate Headteacher, Educational Welfare Manager and parents if there is concern over parents taking pupils out of school when they have poor attendance
- Meet with the Associate Headteacher, Educational Welfare Manager and parents should parents request an extended holiday
- Organise work for pupils taking extended holidays
- Alert the Associate Head teacher and schools EWM if the pupil has not returned by the agreed date

Associate Headteacher

- Monitor all aspects of attendance, Truancy Call, holidays and persistent absence
- Submit all persistent absence information to the LA
- Monitor all staff, including Form Tutors
- Attend the Behaviour and Attendance network meetings
- Ensure that the school meets its attendance targets
- Work closely with the Administrator, Coordinators, HOF, EWM, AHT and Pastoral Officer
- Liaise with the Governing Body regarding attendance

Attendance Coordinator

- Ensure that register folders are maintained with up to date paper registers in the event that the electronic system fails
- Enter this information in such an eventuality
- Receive telephone messages from parents
- Administer Truancy Call
- Collect absence notes from each form teacher
- Enter appropriate codes for absence and lateness
- Generate attendance information for annual reports
- Provide Form Tutors, HOF and EWM with appropriate attendance data and information
- Work closely with EWM
- Issue standard letters to parents regarding the attendance, holidays and punctuality
- Print out weekly attendance figures
- Provide Form Tutors with attendance returns for coding absence
- Print out and store paper copies of registers on a monthly basis
- Provide HOF and EWM with appropriate attendance data
- Provide copies of any letters sent out to parents for the EWM and HOF
- Liaise with Associate Head teacher and EWM- regarding pupils taking holidays
- Provide information for AST, EWM and HOF regarding pupil lateness
- Send letters to parents of pupils who are late and evidence has not provided e.g. dental cards, doctor's appointment cards, and medical letters.

Educational Welfare Manager (EWM)

- Develop strategies with Heads of Family to improve the levels of attendance particularly focussing on those between 85% - 90%
- Meet with Associate Head (Mr Lee) and Line Manager (Mrs Cammies) with regards to Attendance and Welfare issues on a fortnightly basis.
- Work proactively with pupils whose attendance and/or lateness is causing a concern, especially those near to the PA benchmark.
- Meet with parents and pupils to discuss concerns and develop strategies to improve these issues.
- Meet with parents and pupils when attendance fails to improve and complete Parental Contracts.

- Liaise closely with the Attendance Coordinator, HOF's and the Attendance and Prosecution Service to ensure pupils attend school regularly and punctually.
- Monitor Parental Contracts and refer to the Attendance and Prosecution service if attendance and/or lateness doesn't improve.
- Display attendance figures on the notice board and plasma screen
- Liaise closely with parents regarding attendance and punctuality issues
- To be involved in appropriate staff training
- Submit a regular item in the school Newsletter

Inclusion Manager and Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO)

- To provide suitable support and an appropriate curriculum to allow pupils to engage in education who have attendance issues
- Liaise with HOFs, EWM and AHT appropriately

Learning Mentor Team

- To work with pupils who have attendance issues to raise their self-esteem and self-confidence
- To identify the cause of poor attendance and help pupils overcome any difficulties to learning, thus allowing pupils to participate fully in school
- Liaise with AHT and SENCO

Liaison Governor

- To work with the Attendance Coordinators and other members of staff to monitor and evaluate the procedures in place, in order to improve the annual attendance figure and reduce the absence rate.

APPENDIX 1 – Registration Procedures

Morning and Afternoon Statutory Registration

- All registers should be done by 9.00am. Afternoon registration should be taken by 1.15pm. Registers will close at 9:15 and 1:45 an unauthorised code 'U' will be used after this time.
- Registers must be taken electronically
- All registers should be taken for each lesson
- Pupils arriving late during the morning but before register are closed should report to Reception where a member of SLT will register the student. If a student arrives after registers are closed these students should receive a unauthorised late mark and slip from Mrs Cole (attendance coordinator)
- The register should be taken in silence to avoid errors. The register is a legal document and therefore needs to be accurate; it can be subject to close scrutiny by various authorities
- Pupils should be marked absent or present. Marks should not be left blank
- If a pupil is away and the reason has been authorised, the appropriate code should be entered by the Administrator
- No pupil should be given an unauthorised mark 'O' without first consulting the Head of Family, Attendance Administrator or the schools EWO(Mrs Hinkinson)
- Cover staff should take a register electronically through Lesson Monitor

Lesson Times

All staff are required to keep an accurate record of the pupils in their lessons using Lesson Monitor for the following reasons:

- Monitoring of classwork and homework
- Health and Safety, e.g. fire evacuation
- To reduce incidents of truancy

APPENDIX 2 – Procedures for marking absences

Morning and Afternoon Statutory Registration

- If a pupil is absent from registration they should be marked absent
- If the absence is known and/or has been explained by a parental note/telephone call, one of the following codes should be used:

B	Educated off site	Present
V	Educational Visit	Present
I	Illness	Authorised
M	Medical Appointment	Authorised
E	Fixed Term Excluded	Authorised
C	Other acceptable circumstances e.g. bereavement	Authorised
H	Family Holiday	Authorised
W	Work Experience	Authorised
R	Religious observance	Authorised
F	Extended Family Holiday	Authorised
G	Family Holiday Not Authorised	Unauthorised Absence
J	Interview	Present
L	Late before register closes	Present
N	No reason given	Unauthorised Absence
O	Unauthorised Absence	Unauthorised Absence
P	Approved sporting activities	Present
S	Study Leave	Authorised
T	Traveller absence	Authorised Absence
U	Later after register has closed	Unauthorised Absence
Y	Enforced Closure	

APPENDIX 3 – Holiday Procedures

Holiday forms should be collected and returned to the Associate Headteacher who will then consider the following:

1. Whether there are special or exceptional circumstances as stated by the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) guidelines justifying a holiday being taken in term time.
2. The length and timing of the holiday.
3. The pupil's overall attendance
4. Whether a previous holiday has been taken therefore exceeding 10 days.

APPENDIX 4 – Procedures Flow Chart

