



## Attendance Policy

**Policy No: SPA2/14**

**Policy Leader: Assistant Principal Behaviour  
and Inclusion**

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**Relevant legislation:** The Education Act 1996 The Children Act 1989 The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 The Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003 The Education and Inspections Act 2006 The Sentencing Act 2020 The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 The Education (Parenting Contracts and Parenting Orders) (England) Regulations 2007 The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007

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## Section 1

For a child to reach their full educational achievement, a high level of college attendance is essential.

The government expects schools and colleges to:

- Promote good attendance and punctuality
- Reduce absence, including persistent absence
- Ensure every student has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Act early to address patterns of absence

Parents are expected to perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age who are registered at school, attend regularly.

Students are expected to be punctual to college and their lessons.

The governors and staff of The Henry Cort Community College are committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all our students and endeavour to provide an environment where all students feel valued and welcome. Parents and students play a part in making our college so successful. Every child has a right to access the education to which he/she is entitled. Parents/carers and all college staff share the responsibility for supporting and promoting excellent college attendance and punctuality for all.

It is our duty to consistently strive to achieve a goal of 100% attendance for all students. Every opportunity will be used to convey to students and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance. Students consistently achieving excellent attendance should receive acknowledgement and rewards in line with the college reward policy and those falling below required expectations will trigger actions in line with the attendance policy.

For your child to take full advantage of the educational opportunities offered it is vital your child is at college, on time, every day the college is open unless the reason for the absence is truly unavoidable. The routines children develop around attendance and punctuality at college are the same as the expectations of any future employer in the world of work. High attainment, confidence with peers and staff and future aspirations depend on good attendance.

Good attendance is important because:

- Statistics show a direct link between under-achievement and attendance below 95%
- Regular attenders make better progress, both socially and academically
- Regular attenders find college routines, college work and friendships easier to cope with
- Regular attenders find learning more satisfying
- Regular attenders are more successful in transferring between primary, secondary and higher education, employment or training

<b>Attendance Grade</b>	<b>% attendance</b>	<b>Days attended</b>	<b>This equates to</b>	
			<b>Lessons missed in a year</b>	<b>Lessons missed over 5 years</b>
Outstanding	100	190	zero	zero
Good	97-99	188	10	50
Expected	96+	184	30	150
Requires improvement	Below 96	179	55	275
Action required	92	175	75	375
Persistent absence	Below 90	<171	>95	>475

**These attendance expectations are set out by both the Department for Education and Hampshire School Attendance policy. It is important for parents/carers to note the difference between absence that is authorised and absence that is unauthorised and the subsequent measures schools are required to put in place as a result. For example, 10 unauthorised sessions (5 school days) in a 100-day period equates to 'persistent absence' and 'can' lead to a Penalty Notice being issued. Please refer to Section 5 regarding 'types' of absence for more guidance.**

### **Students Moving to a new address and/or School**

Parents must notify the college immediately if they intend to change the address where they live or school the student attends in order for the college to register this with the Local Authority within a 5-day period.

Any changes to contact telephone numbers should be notified to the college immediately.

## **Section 2**

### **2.1. Promoting Good Attendance and Punctuality**

The foundation for good attendance is a strong partnership between the college, parents and the child. The Home/College agreement will contain details of how we will work with parents and our expectations of what parents will need to do to ensure their child achieves good attendance.

To ensure all students have at least 'good' attendance, the college will:

- Report to parents at least once a term on the attendance and punctuality of their child
- Celebrate good attendance by displaying individual and class achievements
- Reward good or improving attendance through class competitions, house points, notifications on ClassCharts, certificates and formal letters sent home
- Set targets for the college and tutor groups for attendance and display these in the college

- Ensure tutors are actively monitoring daily attendance of tutees
- Ensure parents can track attendance on ClassCharts
- Report concerns about attendance to parents through letters when attendance concerns arise, these include the following:
  - Attendance concern letter 1 – triggered by a fall in attendance through authorised absence (e.g. medical) but will impact a students' potential progress through missed lessons (below 96%)
  - Attendance concern letter 2 – attendance falls below 90% (but absence is authorised)
  - First warning letter – when a student has accumulated a number of 'unauthorised' absences and as a consequence their attendance has dipped below 96%
  - Final warning letter – when a student is close to 10 unauthorised absences for a 100-day school period
  - Penalty notice – when a student has 10 or more unauthorised absences for a 100-day school period
  - County Involvement for severe absentees

## **2.2. Roles and Responsibilities**

Responsibilities of the college's Attendance Leader:

A member of the Senior Leadership Team will oversee, direct and co-ordinate the work in promoting regular and improved attendance and will ensure the Attendance Policy is consistently applied throughout the college. This person will also ensure that attendance is both recorded accurately and analysed. (S)he will ensure that attendance issues are identified at an early stage and that support is put in place to deal with any difficulties.

If absence is frequent or continuous, except where a child is clearly unwell, staff will discuss with parent/carers the need and reasons for their child's absence and will encourage them to keep absences to a minimum. A note or explanation from a student's home does not mean an absence becomes authorised. The decision whether or not to authorise an absence will always rest with the college.

### **Assistant Principal will:**

- Oversee the whole policy
- Meet with House Progress Leaders (HPLs) and the Support and Progress Liaison Officer (Attendance Officer) fortnightly to review attendance across all Houses and the whole college and ensure appropriate actions are in place for students below 96% attendance
- Liaise with HPLs and Wellbeing Manager to ensure effective support and intervention is in place for declining attendance, persistent absentees (PAs), school refusers and vulnerable students struggling to attend college
- Have particular regard to the equalities act in respect of the policy as they pertain to SEN, gender, ethnicity and Looked after Children
- Report to governors on attendance issues on a termly basis
- Strategic action for non-attendees – PA's etc

- Responsibility for ensuring Children Missing from Education are reported to County
- Developing system to celebrate and reward good attendance and punctuality
- Agreeing when Fixed Penalty Notices should be issued

### **Student Welfare Assistant will**

- Extract messages from and turn off answerphone daily
- Take all calls, clear absence notifications on ClassCharts and find out exact reason why student is off ('unwell' does not suffice)
- Process absence forms with evidence and pass to Principal for decision
- Upload absence forms to linked documents in SIMs and parents informed of outcome
- Look for patterns in absence
- Look for collaborative absences i.e. siblings, friendships
- Update 'N' codes and supply registers when reasons are known
- Sign out students and update ClassCharts accordingly for the day if a student needs to leave site with the reason for leaving
- Run missing registers and 'N' code report and request runner\*
- Chase teachers for missing registers (if not completed within first few minutes of the lesson)

\*NB: Year 8 runner to be based in library

### **Behaviour Administrator will**

- Inform Behaviour Team of students with 'N' codes
- Set breaktime detentions of students with 'L' codes
- Update Welfare Assistant and Admissions Officer on managed moves and twilight students' attendance
- Will notify teachers and Assistant Principal if staff have failed to complete the register within the allotted time frame
- Will notify Behaviour Team/Senior Leadership Team (SLT) of any student who is not marked in for a lesson and is known to be on site

### **Library Manager will**

- Inform Attendance of any student needing to work in the Library as part of a risk assessment or intervention

### **House Progress Leaders will**

- Scrutinise attendance data for the house group and report patterns or concerns in fortnightly meetings to the Assistant Principal and the Support and Progress Liaison Officer (Attendance Officer). SIMs attendance reports will also be analysed to identify trends
- Reinforce good practice at meetings and ensure tutors are monitoring daily attendance, identifying patterns and following up on absences
- Raise the profile of attendance at appropriate times (e.g. assemblies, tutorials)

- Celebrate excellent attendance or most improved attendance in Praise assemblies and staff briefings at least every half term
- Initiate contact with parents/carers as soon as a negative attendance pattern is identified
- Liaise with The Support and Progress Liaison Officer in organised meetings and set actions for persistent absentees (PAs) as appropriate
- Organise the reintegration of long-term absentees with the support of the appropriate Assistant Principal

### **The Support and Progress Liaison Officer will**

- Monitor the daily attendance for the whole college
- Meet with the welfare staff to discuss medical absences to identify any patterns/trends
- Liaise with parents/carers regarding authorised, medical and unauthorised absences
- Attend fortnightly meetings with Assistant Principal and House Progress Leaders (HPLs)
- Issue attendance warning letters, medical absence letters and penalty notice warnings as appropriate through liaising with Assistant Principal and HPLs
- Keep Assistant Principal and HPLs informed with regular attendance data for year groups, Houses, tutor groups and vulnerable groups
- Support students and parents/carers in understanding attendance data and advising how to improve standards of attendance if appropriate
- Provide information for Legal Intervention Court Officer (LICO) and agreeing early help plans
- Provide information for supporting Education Supervision Orders
- Oversee warning letters and support for parents
- Oversee part time medical timetables
- Referring to Attendance Legal Panel (ALP) when all support fails
- Organise provision for EBSA (Emotionally Based School Avoidance) students onsite to encourage attendance and integration

### **Subject Teachers will**

- Complete electronic registers accurately and on time (within the first five minutes of every lesson)
- Update electronic registers with students who arrive late to the lesson with the number of minutes late, so lateness can be monitored and appropriate action taken
- Inform the Behaviour Team via the suspected truancy button via ClassCharts if a student truants from a particular lesson so a detention can be set and the student makes up the missed time
- Mark the student as 'N' on the register if not in class
- Provide live in-college link for EBSA students as requested

### **Tutors will**

- Complete electronic registers accurately and on time (within the first five minutes of tutor time, or before sending tutees to assembly)
- Have attendance for their tutor group on their homepage on SIMS/ClassCharts
- Spotting patterns and raising issues, Informing HPL of attendance or punctuality concerns
- Inform the Support and Progress Liaison Officer and attendance team of any known authorised absences via [attendance@henrycort.org](mailto:attendance@henrycort.org) . The Welfare Team/Support and Progress Liaison Officer will then record all reasons for absence on ClassCharts and follow up any unexplained non-attendance by contacting parent/carer
- Be proactive and 'check in' with any tutee where attendance falls below 96%
- Contact parents to see what support can be put in place
- Maintaining visual attendance system for tutor group
- Support the rewards system for praising good attendance & punctuality

### **Responsibilities of Students**

- Attend every day unless they are genuinely unwell or have an authorised absence
- Arrive in college on time and be punctual to lessons, going to their registration and all lessons on time
- Take responsibility for registering at the Reception Desk, or for signing out if they need to leave the college site for any reason
- Ensure they have a message from parents about every absence

### **Responsibilities of Parents and Carers**

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at college is a parent/carers legal responsibility (Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act) and permitting absence from college that is not authorised by the college creates an offence in law.

### **Parents/Carers will**

- Inform the college on the first day of absence
- Discuss with the tutor/class teacher any planned absences well in advance and inform the college via the ClassCharts app or [attendance@henrycort.org](mailto:attendance@henrycort.org)
- Support the college with their child in aiming for 100% attendance each year
- Ensure that any absence is clearly accounted for on the first and subsequent days of absence by the ClassCharts app or or calling the absence line
- Absences known in advance should be communicated to the tutor and Welfare Assistants via [attendance@henrycort.org](mailto:attendance@henrycort.org). The Welfare Assistant will record absences with the reason
- Avoid taking their child out of college for non-urgent medical or dental appointments and arrange appointments outside of college hours where possible
- Only request leave of absence in exceptional circumstances



- Get students to and from any off-site provision and understand that this is the parent/carer's responsibility
- Not take students out of college for term time holidays

## 2.3. Guidance School Attendance

We will:

1. Promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence (below 90%)
2. Ensure every child has access to full time education
3. Act early to address patterns of absence
4. Inform parents of their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age, who are registered to a school, attend regularly
5. Encourage all students to be punctual to their lessons. **Arriving late to college or afternoon lessons after registration has closed constitutes a 'missed' session.** If no valid reason is provided by parents/carers this will be recorded as unauthorised and subsequent 'lateness' could also lead to a Penalty Notice

## Section 3

### 3.1. Recording Attendance

Legally the register must be marked twice daily. This is once at the start of the college day 8:25am and again for the afternoon session at 1.35pm. This will be available to parents/carers through ClassCharts.

**Code / \ : Present / =AM \ =PM** - A child must be present during Registration to be marked as present

**Code L : arrived Late but before the register closed** - Legally all registers must close within 30mins

### 3.2. Lateness/Punctuality

It is important to be on time at the start of the morning and afternoon college sessions and to lessons. The start of college/lessons are used to give out instructions or organise work. If your child is late they can miss work, time with their class teacher getting vital information, cause disruption to the lesson for others and it can be embarrassing leading to possible further absence.

The college day begins at 8:20am and **all students are expected to be in college at that time.** Morning registration is at 8:25am.

All lateness is recorded daily. This information will be required by the courts, should a prosecution for non-attendance or lateness be necessary.

**Arrival after the close of registration will be marked as unauthorised absence code 'U'** in line with County and Department for Education (DfE) guidance. This mark shows them to be on site, but is legally recorded as an absence.

If a student is late due to a medical appointment, they will receive an authorised absence coded 'M' – evidence of the appointment must be provided. Please be advised that where possible doctors and dentists appointments are to be made outside of college hours or during college holidays.

Students who are consistently late are disrupting not only their own education but also that of the other students. Lateness to school or tutor time triggers a breaktime detention, lateness to lessons will trigger a same day D1 detention. On-going and repeated lateness to college and PM lessons is considered as **unauthorised absence and will be subject to legal action** (see Section 6 for further detail).

Parents, guardians or carers of students who have patterns of lateness will be contacted to discuss the importance of good time keeping and how this might be achieved. If lateness persists, parents, guardians or carers will be invited to attend the college and discuss the problem and offered support. If support is not appropriate or is declined and a child has 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence due to lateness recorded in any 10-week period, the college or Hampshire County Council will be required to issue parents with a penalty notice in accordance with Hampshire's Code of Conduct for issuing penalty notices for non-attendance (See section 6 of this policy for further detail).

### 3.3. What to do if my child is absent?

#### First Day Absence

A child not attending college is considered a **safeguarding** matter. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required. **If your child is absent you must:**

- Contact us as soon as possible on the first day of absence and explain the reason for the absence and how long you anticipate your child will be absent for. To do this, the ClassCharts App is available at all times and a 24-hour answer phone service
- Phone the absence line or use the ClassCharts app for each subsequent day when the duration of absence is unknown
- Write a note on the first day they return with an explanation of the absence – **you must do this even if you have telephoned us or used the ClassCharts app**
- Or, you can call into college and report to reception

If your child is absent we will:

- Telephone or text you on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you; This is because we have a duty to ensure your child's safety as well as their regular college attendance
- Invite you in to discuss the situation with our Attendance Officer and/or House Progress Leader and/or Assistant Principal if absences persist
- Write to you if your child's attendance falls below the 95% and then 90% threshold

- Work with parents and students to try and resolve attendance issues and improve overall attendance if it becomes a problem
- Issue penalty warning notices if attendance issues persist and your child becomes a persistent absentee (90% or below) despite measures being put in place to try and improve attendance
- Refer the matter to the Hampshire's Attendance Legal Panel if persistent absences are still not resolved

### **Third Day Absence**

**Please note:** If your child is not seen and contact has not been established with you or any of the named parent/carers after three days of absence the college is required to start Child Missing in Education procedures as set down by Hampshire County Council Guidance. We will make all reasonable enquiries to establish contact with parents and the child including making enquiries to known friends, wider family and the college's Support and Progress Liaison Officer may be asked to make a home visit.

### **Ten Days Absence**

We have a legal duty to report the absence of any student who is absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive days. If the child is not seen and contact has not been established with the named parent/carer, then the Local Authority is notified that the child is 'at risk of missing'. Children's Services Staff will visit the last known address and alert key services to locate the child. So help us to help you and your child by making sure we always have an up to date contact number. There will be regular checks on telephone numbers throughout the year.

### **Continued or Ongoing Absence**

If your child misses 10% (three weeks/sessions) or more schooling across the college year for whatever reason they are defined as persistent absentees (PA). Absence at this level will do considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parent's full support and co-operation to tackle this. Where this absence is unauthorised the college will meet with the parent(s) and student to discuss reasons for absence and formulate a plan for how to minimise their impact on learning.

Absence for whatever reason disadvantages a child by creating gaps in his or her learning. Research shows these gaps affect attainment when attendance falls below 96%. As such we monitor all absence thoroughly and all attendance data is shared with the Local Authority and the Department for Education. If your child has had absence and their attendance level is falling towards 90% we will contact parent/carer and, depending on the reasons for the absence, will invite you to meet with the House Progress Leader to draw up an attendance plan, which will be closely monitored. All our PA students and their parents are subject to an Attendance Plan, and the plan may include allocation of additional support through a mentor, individual incentive programmes or support from outside agencies.

## Section 4

### Request for Leave of Absence

Amendments to school attendance regulations were updated and enforced from September 2013: (Student registration) (England) regulations state that:

The Principal may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. It is important to note that the Principal can determine the length of the authorised absence as well as whether absence is authorised at all. The fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional' are rare, significant, or unavoidable which means the event could not reasonably be scheduled at another time. There are no rules on this as circumstances vary from school to school and family to family. There is however, no legal entitlement for time off in college time to go on holiday and in the majority of cases holiday will not be authorised. **The Principal will not authorise holidays because they have been booked by grandparents, or other family members, for significant birthdays or anniversaries that fall in term time.** Parents/carers wishing to apply for leave of absence need to fill in an application form from the college website in advance and before making any travel arrangements.

**It is college policy not to authorise any holiday in term time. Parents/carers who take their child out of college without the absence being agreed and authorised by written permission from the college can be issued with a penalty fine. Parents who are rearranging holidays due to COVID-19 cancellations will need to ensure that these are not taken in term time.**

If term time leave is taken without prior permission from the college, the absence will be unauthorised and if the number of sessions absent hits the thresholds set down in Hampshire's Code of Conduct parent/carers will be issued with a fixed-penalty notice or other legal action in accordance with the code (see Section 6 for detail).

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 not taking children out during college time.

## Section 5

### 5.1 Understanding types of absence

Students are expected to attend college every day for the entire duration of the academic year, unless there is an exceptional reason for the absence. There are two main categories of absences.

**Authorised Absence:** is when the college has accepted the explanation offered as satisfactory justification for the absence, or given approval in advance for such an absence. If no explanation is received, absences cannot be authorised. In

instances of illness for medical appointments the college will ask parents for medical evidence to support this. The college is required to do this in order to maintain up-to-date and accurate records.

**Code I – illness** (including Covid)

**Code M – medical/dental appointment** (appointment evidence is required)

**Code O - Unauthorised Absence** is when the college has not received a reason for absence or has not approved a child's leave of absence from college after a parent's request.

This includes:

- parents giving their children permission to be off college unnecessarily such as for shopping, birthdays, to look after siblings, trips to visit relatives
- truancy before or during the college day
- absences which have not been explained

The college can, if needed, change an authorised absence to an unauthorised absence and vice versa if new information is presented. Any changes will be communicated to parents/carers. An example of this would be where a parent states a child is unwell but on return to college there is evidence they have been on holiday. This would trigger a penalty notice.

## **5.2 Authorised Absences**

### **Leavers**

If your child is leaving our college (other than leaving at the end of Year 11), parents/carers are asked to give the Senior SLT Administrator comprehensive information about their plans including any date of a move and your new address and telephone numbers, your child's new school and the start date when known. This should be submitted to our college in writing.

If students leave and we do not have the above information, then your child is considered to be a 'Child Missing in Education'. This requires schools and Local Authorities to then carry out investigations to try and locate your child, which includes liaising with Children's Services, the Police and other agencies. By giving us the above information, these investigations can be avoided.

**Other Authorised Absences: (although authorised, most of these still negatively affect attendance figures)**

**Code V: Educational visit or trip**

This code should be used for attendance at an organised trip or visit, including residential trips organised by the college, or attendance at a supervised trip of a strictly educational nature arranged by an organisation approved by the college.

**Code B: Educated Off-site**

This would refer to any college arranged intervention with an outside agency, extended work placement or approved educational course for students.

**Code D: Dual registered**

This would refer to any student who is on the college roll and also of another school and is receiving education at the other school (e.g. managed moves).

**Code W: Work experience**

Work experience is for students in the final two years of compulsory education. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the work experience placement provider notifies the college of any absences by individual students. Any absence should be recorded using the relevant code.

**Code C:**

- **Exceptional leave of absence has been authorised**
- **Children on part time timetables,**
- **Is pregnant and on maternity leave**

Support will be directed to keeping a pregnant student in college and, wherever possible, her return to full time education as soon as possible after the birth. A student who becomes pregnant should be allowed no more than 18 weeks authorised absence to cover the time immediately before and after the birth of the child. After that time, any absence should be treated as unauthorised.

- **Absence is through child participation in public performances, including theatre, film or TV work and modelling**

Parents of a child performer can seek leave of absence from college for their child to take part in a performance. They must contact the Principal to discuss the nature and frequency of the work, whether the child has a valid performance licence and whether education will be provided by the employer during any future leave of absence. Any absence recorded as part of a child's participation in a public performance is recorded as 'C', an authorised absence.

### **Code N – No reason yet provided**

This is an unexplained absence - if no reason can be established within 5 days the code will change to O unauthorised absence

### **Code P - Absence through competing at regional, county or national level for sport**

Parents of able sportsmen and women can seek leave of absence from college for their child to take part in a regional, county, national and international events and competitions. It is, however, down to the Principal's discretion whether to authorise this and they will wish to discuss with you the nature and frequency of the absence and how learning will continue if absence occurs. Permission for your child to leave early or arrive late to attend coaching and training sessions are also at the discretion of the Principal and are not likely to be approved if it is a regular event, unless the sports club or association are providing an education tutor as part of their coaching.

### **Code G - Unauthorised Holiday**

Holiday has been taken in term time, without authorisation from the college.

### **Code H - Agreed Holiday**

In exceptional circumstances, the Principal may grant a 'special holiday' to be authorised but only in advance of the holiday and made by the person the child normally resides with.

### **Code J – Interview**

Normally for Year 11 students only or for students transferring to another school.

### **Code R - Religious observance**

Schools must treat absence as authorised when it is due to religious observance. The day must be exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong. Where necessary, the college would seek advice from the parents' religious body about whether it has set the day apart for religious observance.

### **Code S - Study Leave**

We believe that students' needs are best met if they attend college every day in the period leading up to examinations. No study leave will be granted during this period, therefore, students will be expected to attend college in the usual way. A structured programme of revision will be organised for all students. Study leave will only be granted to Year 11 students during the time of the GCSE examination period. Should any students wish to attend college (or should their parents wish them to) on the days and at times when they are not sitting examinations, arrangements will be made for them to do so. The college will work within the legal requirements of:

- Study leave should only be granted to Year 11 students and never to those in other year groups
- It should never exceed 15 college days in a year and is most appropriately granted during the examination period itself, i.e. not before the beginning of that period
- It should always be granted sparingly taking account of an individual student's ability to manage and benefit from unsupervised study
- Any student has the right to attend college during study leave and a parent has the right to insist he/she does so
- Any sessions given to students as study leave have a statistical meaning of authorised absence (it is not an 'approved educational activity' as it is unsupervised) and should be recorded and reported on by the college as such

### **Code T - Traveller Absence**

This code can only be used when a child's parent(s) is travelling for occupational purposes.

### **Code E - Excluded**

Student is suspended or permanently excluded from college.

### **Code Y - Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances**

The college site or part of the college site is closed due to exceptional circumstances and students are not able, or not required, to attend.

### **Code Z – Prospective student not on admission register**

Used to set up students who are joining the college but not yet started.

### **Code # - Planned whole or partial closure**

Bank holidays/days between terms.

### **Code X - Non-compulsory school age not required to attend school**

This is no longer used for Covid which is now marked as 'I' – illness.



## **Section 6**

### **Penalty Notices for non-attendance and other legal measures**

In Education Law, parents/carers are committing an offence if they fail to ensure the regular attendance of their child of compulsory school age at the school at which the child is registered, unless the absence has been authorised by the college.

### **Legal measures for tackling persistent absence or lateness**

Hampshire Schools and Hampshire County Council will use the full range of legal measures to secure good attendance. Legal measures will only be considered through a referral to Hampshire's Attendance Legal Panel where:

The child or family do not require the support from any agency to improve the attendance. The child has 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence and parents are complicit in the child's absence.

The following legal measures are for students of compulsory school age who are registered at a school:

- Parenting contracts set at Education Planning Meetings
- Parenting Orders
- Penalty Notices
- Education Supervision Orders
- Prosecution

### **Legal measures for absence taken when the Principal has declined parent/carers request for leave of absence**

Where a student has unauthorised absence due to either:

- Non approval of a parent/carer's request for leave of absence or
- A holiday that has been taken without permission
- And the unauthorised absence is for 10 or more sessions (5 days) in any 100 possible college sessions then a penalty notice for non-attendance will be issued

Where a child has unauthorised absence the college must enforce Hampshire's Code of Conduct for issuing Penalty Notices or follow its guidance on other Legal Measures for Non-Attendance. The Code of Conduct is a statutory document that ensures that powers for legal sanctions are applied consistently and fairly across all schools and their families within the authority. A copy is available from <http://www3.hants.gov.uk/education/hias/learningbehaviour-attendance/attendance-guidance-for-parents/possible-penalties.htm>

The code of conduct states that:

Schools or Hampshire Local Authority will issue a Penalty Notice for any unauthorised absence where the student has been:

- Absent for 10 or more half-day sessions (five college days) of unauthorised absence during any 100 possible college sessions – these do not need to be consecutive
- Persistently late (coded U) for up to 10 sessions (five days) after the register has closed
- Persistently late before the close of the register (coded L), and the college has met with parents and has clearly communicated that they will categorise as unauthorised any further lateness (code O), and where the threshold of 10 sessions (five days) has been met
- Absent for any formal college assessments, tests or examinations where the dates have been published in advance

unless the issuing of a penalty notice would conflict with other intervention strategies in place or other sanctions already being processed.

If a child's unauthorised absence meets any of the above criteria and the family or child do not require any agency support to improve the attendance, then a single Penalty Notice is issued for either:

- 10 sessions of unauthorised absence or lateness in any 10-week college period
- 1 or more sessions of unauthorised absence during a public exam, formal college assessment or testing where dates are published in advance

Parents and carers will be warned of the likelihood of a penalty notice being issued for unauthorised absence via a formal letter. **The penalty notice is a fine that is issued to each parent/carers who condoned (or was responsible for the child) during the period of unauthorised absence for which the fine has been issued.** For each case of unauthorised absence, the college or Hampshire County Council will decide whether a penalty notice is issued to one or more parent/carers for each child. N.B. This could mean four penalty notices for a family with two siblings both with unauthorised absence for holiday i.e. one penalty notice for each child to each parent.

Each penalty notice carries a fine of £60 if paid within 21 days of the penalty notice being posted. If the fine is not paid within 21 days, the penalty is automatically increased to £120 if paid within 28 days. If the fine remains unpaid then Hampshire County Council will consider prosecution for the non-attendance. Payment methods are detailed on the penalty notices themselves. Penalties are to be paid to Hampshire County Council and revenue resulting from payment of penalties is used by the County Council to help cover the costs of issuing penalty notices and/or the cost of prosecuting recipients who do not pay.

For further information parents/carers can request a leaflet from their college and should visit Hampshire County Council's website at:  
<http://www3.hants.gov.uk/education/hias/learningbehaviour-attendance/attendance-guidance-for-parents/possible-penalties.htm>

## **Section 7**

### **7.1 My child is trying to avoid coming to college. What should I do?**

Children are sometimes reluctant to attend college. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the college, the parents and the child. If a 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 may make things worse.

Contact your child's tutor/head of house, or the Attendance Officer immediately and openly discuss your concerns. Your child could be avoiding college for a number of reasons – difficulties with college work, friendship problems, family difficulties. It is important that we identify the reason for your child's reluctance to attend college and work together to tackle the problem. In some cases, you may find it helpful to discuss the circumstances of your child's difficulties with another professional.

### **7.2 What can I do to encourage my child to attend college?**

Make sure your child gets enough sleep, gets up in plenty of time each morning and has a proper breakfast. Ensure that he/she leaves home in the correct clothes and is properly equipped. Show your child, by your interest, that you value his/her education.

Your child's attendance can also be monitored at home via the ClassCharts App. Please ensure that you have a look at this regularly and discuss this with your child.

Be interested in what your child is doing in college, chat to them about the things they have learnt, what friends they have made and even what they had for lunch.

### **7.3 How does Henry Cort engage with families, understand barriers to attendance and work together to remove them**

**In the first instance** The Henry Cort Community College is expected to support students and parents by, for example:

- Working together to understand and address any in-college barriers to attendance
- Meeting with those at risk of persistent or severe absence and agreeing actions or interventions to improve the situation
- Making referrals to services and organisations that can provide support

**Where absence intensifies**, Henry Cort Community College will provide additional support, such as:

- Holding more formal conversations with the parents and students
- Working with the local authority (LA) and other relevant partners

**Where voluntary support has not been effective** and/or not been engaged with, Henry Cort Community College will work with the local LA to put formal support in place. For example:

- Use a parenting contract or an education supervision order
- Intensify support through statutory children's services involvement where there are safeguarding concerns, especially where absence becomes severe

#### **7.4 How does The Henry Cort Community College provide additional support for students with medical conditions or SEND?**

The Henry Cort Community College will be aware of the additional barriers to attendance these students face and put additional, tailored support in place where necessary. For example, this support should include:

- Making reasonable adjustments where a student has a disability or put in place an individual healthcare plan where needed
- Working with parents to develop specific support approaches for attendance for students with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND)

#### **7.5 How does The Henry Cort Community College share information and work collaboratively with others?**

- Work with LA and other local partners to share:
  - Data on individual students
  - Effective practice where there are common barriers to attendance
- Have regular 'targeting support meetings' with the LA, at least termly. Contact the LA to find out when it will put in place these meetings

#### **7.6 How will The Henry Cort Community College focus on persistent and severe absence?**

- **Persistent** absence refers to students who miss 10% or more of college
- **Severe** absence refers to students who miss 50% or more of college. This is a **new term** introduced by this guidance

In the first instance Henry Cort Community College will;

- Proactively use data to identify students at risk of poor attendance and work with them to understand and address the reasons for absence

- Signpost and support students and parents to access any required services, identifying out-of-college barriers

Where a student is persistently absent, Henry Cort Community College will;

- Put additional targeted support in place to remove any barriers
- Work with the LA on legal intervention where support is not working or being engaged with
- Intensify support through statutory children's services, where there are safeguarding concerns

Where a student is severely absent, Henry Cort Community College will take the approach above for persistently absent students **and** agree a joint approach with the LA.

The type of support Henry Cort Community College and other partners can provide includes:

- A whole family plan
- An education, health and care (EHC) plan
- Alternative provision

## **7.7 What the DfE expects from other stakeholders**

Expectations of the governing board

- Recognise the importance of college attendance and promote it across the college's ethos and policies
- Make sure college leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly review attendance data and help college leaders focus improvement efforts on students who need it most
- Make sure staff receive adequate training on attendance

The DfE also expects multi-academy trusts (MATs) and federations to provide regular opportunities to bring staff together from different schools to learn from each other's expertise and share effective interventions.

## **7.8 Expectations of Local Authorities (LA)**

The DfE expects the LA to have a school attendance support team which provides the following core functions free of charge to all schools, regardless of type:

- Communication and advice - for example, regularly bringing schools and trusts together to share best practice
- Targeting support meetings (termly conversations with schools) - for example, to agree targeted actions for specific students and cohorts identified in the data
- Multi-disciplinary support for families - for example, to provide access to early help support workers to work intensively with families
- Legal intervention

## **Section 8:**

### **Record preservation**

College registers are legal documents. We will ensure compliance with attendance regulations by keeping attendance records for at least 3 years.

Appendix 1 – Hampshire County Council Code of Conduct

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/educationandlearning/behaviour-attendance-parents>

## Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Description
/	Present (am)
\	Present (pm)
#	Planned whole or partial school closure
A	Absent from class but in school for authorised reason
1	Wellbeing
2	Medical Room
3	Twilight
4	Offsite Isolation
5	Isolation
6	RTL
B	Educated off site
C	Other authorised circumstances
D	Dual registration
E	Excluded
G	Family holiday (unauthorised)
H	Family holiday (authorised)
J	Interview
L	Late (before register closes – Present)
M	Medical appointment
N	Absent - No reason yet provided
O	Unauthorised Absence
P	Approved Sporting Activity
R	Religious observance
S	Study Leave
T	Traveller Absence

U	Late (after register closes – Absent)
V	Educational Visit
W	Work Experience
X	Non-compulsory school age pupil not required in school
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances
Z	Pupil not on roll