NEWHOUSE ACADEMY

Attendance & Punctuality Policy

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ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

This policy is informed by the [DFE guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools, and local authorities: Working together to improve school attendance](#) (applies from September 2022). This policy also takes regard of the DFE statutory guidance documents on: parental responsibility measures, children missing education, supporting pupils with medical conditions at school, suspensions and exclusions, alternative provision and safeguarding.

For the purpose of this policy, a parent means:

- all-natural parents, whether they are married or not;
- any person who has parental responsibility for a child or young person; and,
- any person who has the care of a child or young person (i.e. lives with and look after the child).

This policy should also be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Safeguarding & Child Protection
- Special Education Needs & Disabilities (SEND)
- Permanent Exclusions & Suspension
- Children Looked After
- Equality Statement
- Supporting Students with Medical needs
- Behaviour & Positive Discipline
- Anti-bullying, Hate Incidents & Hate Crimes

1.1. Attendance matters

1.1.1. It is our aim to create a culture of excellent attendance and punctuality at all trust establishments. We recognise that good attendance is learned behaviour and as such it forms an integral part of the Trust's ethos and culture. We expect students to attend on time every day. Creating a culture of attendance is the key to improving students' attainment and wellbeing. Missing out on education has a significant effect on young people's life opportunities; statistical data is clear, students with the highest attainment at the end of KS2 and KS4 have higher attendance over the key stage compared to those with the lowest attainment. For the most vulnerable students, regular attendance is also a protective factor and the best opportunity for needs to be identified and support provided. This policy also sets out the expectation that students will be punctual to their lessons, as we recognise the negative impact of being missing in education as well as being missing from education. It is our intention that this policy is applied fairly and consistently and with due regard to our obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

1.1.2. Improving attendance is everyone's responsibility. Securing good attendance cannot be seen in isolation, and effective practices for improvement involve the close interaction of the curriculum, positive discipline, anti-bullying strategies, special educational needs support, pastoral and mental health and wellbeing support, and the effective use of resources, including pupil premium. The barriers to accessing education are wide and complex, both within and beyond the school gates and are often specific to individual students and families. Encouraging good attendance is therefore the shared responsibility of the Trust board, the local governing body of the establishment, the establishment, the parents, and other agencies and partners, including the local authority. Parents have a legal responsibility to ensure that their child receives an appropriate education, and have an additional legal duty to ensure that their child attends regularly. This means their child must attend every day that the establishment is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission in advance from the Principal.

1.1.3. The senior leader at Newhouse Academy with responsibility for the strategic approach to attendance is Mr Matt Aspden.

1.1.4. To support our **expectation** of excellent attendance, the Headteacher, supported by the Hollingworth Learning Trust Board and the local governing body (LGB) will:

- **Aspire** to high standards of attendance from all students and parents and prioritise attendance improvement across the Trust establishment.

- Create a calm, orderly and supportive environment where students feel safe.

- Provide an outstanding, relevant and inclusive curriculum for all our students.

- Create a climate for learning, in which all students are challenged and supported through high quality teaching to achieve aspirational targets within a structured and well- disciplined environment.

- Resource attendance support and improvement appropriately, and employ attendance and pastoral staff who work with families, conduct home visits and work in partnership with the senior leadership team, the local authority's School Attendance Support Team, and other partners.

- Rigorously **monitor** attendance data to identify patterns of poor behaviour (at individual/group and cohort level).

- Where a pattern is identified, we will discuss with students and parents **to listen and to understand** the barriers to attendance and agree how all partners can work together to resolve them.

- Establish strong, appropriate home-school relationships through regular communications and encourage parents/carers to work collaboratively with our pastoral support team and other appropriate initiatives including facilitating support through an academy initiated early help or family support plan where absence is a symptom of wider issues.

- Remove barriers to attendance, share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, the local authority, and other local partners where absence is at risk of becoming permanent or severe, facilitating support where required.

- Scrutinise attendance data and hold Trust establishment leaders to account at a trust board and local governing body level

- **Formalise support** where absence persists, and voluntary support is not working or being engaged with.
- **Enforce** attendance through statutory intervention or prosecution to protect a student's right to an education.

- Ensure that **all** staff receive adequate training on attendance through induction and continued professional development.

- Ensure dedicated attendance training is provided to staff with a specific attendance function to their role, including administrative, pastoral or family support staff and senior leaders.

- Regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels in an understandable format (e.g. the amount of time missed and the impact on the student's learning).

- Praise and reward excellent attendance through the initiatives, including rewards at a year group, form/class and individual level. This builds a culture where all can, and want to be attending and are ready to learn.

1.2. **Admissions and Attendance Register**

1.3. The admissions register ('school roll') contains personal details of every student along with the date of admission or re-admission to the establishment, information regarding parents and carers, and details of the last school attended.

1.4. Where possible, the trust establishment will hold more than one emergency contact number for each student.

1.5. A student's name can only lawfully be deleted from the admission register if a reason set out in regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) ((England) Regulation 2006, as amended applies:

1.5.1. Electronic registration takes place at the beginning of the day and additionally, within 11-16 establishments within every lesson. In 3 -11 Primary academies, an afternoon register is also taken. All Trust establishments use national attendance and absence codes to record and monitor attendance in a consistent way and this data is used to collect statistics through the School Census system.

1.5.2. Registers are legal records and trust establishments preserve every entry in the attendance register for 3-years from the date of entry. The register should only be routinely amended where the reason for the absence cannot be established at the time it is taken and it is subsequently necessary to correct the entry, the amended entry, the reason for the amendment, the date on which the amendment was made, and the name and title of the person who made the amendment.

1.5.3. Morning registers **close 30 minutes after the first session begins after which time the student will be marked as absent**. Lateness will be proactively monitored. And students arriving late on a morning will be sanctioned in line with the academy Positive Discipline policy.

1.5.4. Parents are required to phone the school's absence line before 08:30am to ensure that all reasons for an unexpected absence, e.g. illness, are recorded.

1.5.5. Parents can contact the following staff about attendance on a day-today basis and for more detailed support on attendance:

- Majella Keenan – Attendance Lead
- Charlotte Whelan, Cheryl Johnson – Pastoral

1.5.6. Unexplained absence will be followed up with a telephone call to parents (and where appropriate social workers) to collect missing attendance data on the first day of absence and to understand why and when the student will return.

1.5.7. Where absence is recorded as unexplained in the attendance register, the correct code will be input as soon as the reason is ascertained, but no later than 5-days.

1.5.8. Home visits will be undertaken by attendance and pastoral staff if a we are unable to make contact with families and/or there is a safeguarding concern for students with a persistent absence for any reason. The frequency of home visits will be dependent upon a number of factors determined by the trust establishment, and detailed in academy specific guidance**.**

1.5.9. The opening times of the individual Trust establishment can be found on the specific websites for the trust establishment.

2. Analysis of Attendance & Absence Data

2.1.1. As poor attendance is habitual, prevention and early identification are crucial: The key to this is regular data analysis to both identify and provide immediate additional support to students or student cohorts that need it, and to look at historic and emerging patterns across the establishment. To achieve this, we:

- Manage daily absence using a Bromcom aligned internal App

- Analyse absence and lateness on a weekly, half-termly, and full year basis.

- Identify patterns of absence and lateness for:
  - Individuals
  - Tutor/class groups/Year groups
  - Vulnerable groups including SEN/PP/LAC/Previously LAC/ those with identified medical needs & those with a social worker (including those undergoing a child and family assessment)
  - Weekly/seasonal patterns
  - Days of poor attendance
  - Patterns and the nature of unauthorised absence (patterns in the use of certain codes)
  - Patterns of attendance within a session to ensure that all students are attending timetabled lessons
  - Benchmark attendance data against local, regional and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement.
  - Monitor within the data the impact of attendance efforts, including any specific strategies implement

2.1.2   Use this analysis to provide regular attendance reports to class teachers/tutors to facilitate discussions with students.

2.1.3   Use the analysis of attendance and impact data to provide regular reports to Senior Leaders, the Local Governing Body and Trustees.

2.1.4   Identify the students who need support and focus staff efforts on developing targeted actions for those cases.

2.1.5   Devise specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data e.g. students in a year group with higher than average absence of for pupil premium students if their attendance falls behind that of their more advantaged peers.

2.1.6   Triangulate attendance data with behaviour, safeguarding and SEND information.

2.1.7   Regularly inform parents of their child's attendance and absence levels.

3.   GRANTING LEAVE OF ABSENCES

3.1.   **Only exceptional circumstances warrant g r a n t i n g a l e a v e o f a b s e n c e . An authorised absence** is granted **by the Headteacher** and will include: illness, medical appointments, bereavement, participation in a performance (as specified in section 37 of the Children and Young Persons Act 1963), student' subject to a temporary part- time timetable and other circumstances where the Headteacher deems it appropriate. There will be no entitlement for students to be granted leave of absence for holidays during term time. The Headteacher has discretion to grant up to ten days' leave per school year if appropriate. A written request for leave of absence would be expected in advance from the parent the student usually lives with and would not be granted to a student with an attendance record below 97%. No student from Year 10. upwards will be granted leave of absence. Even authorised absence though, is still time away from school and for this reason medical and dental appointments, as far as possible, should be arranged for out-of-Trust establishment hours. **Retrospective leave of absence requests will not be authorised under any circumstances**.

3.2.   **Study Leave**
Study leave will only be granted to Year 11 students during public examinations and is down to the Headteachers discretion. Provision will be made to students who wish to continue to attend the establishment to revise. Study leave is recorded as absence (code S) if the Headteacher decides this can be taken.

3.3.   **An authorised absence** is any absence which does not fall into the following categories:

- Absence caused by illness or other unavoidable cause
- An approved absence for religious observance
- Situations where the Trust authorises absence e.g. work experience

Persistent Absentees

3.3.1. Any student who is absent for more than 10% of teaching time (equivalent to 1 day or more a fortnight across a full academic year) is classed as a Persistent Absentee. This group of students is monitored assiduously through data analysis and personalised strategies for re-integration, which are formulated by the pastoral support team. Additional targeted support will be put into place via a joint approach with the local authority to remove barriers to attendance.

3.3.2. Particular focus will be given to students who are absent more than they are present (those missing 50% or more of school). These students may require intensive support across a range of partners, including the local authority.

4.   STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVING PUNCTUALITY

4.1.   Lateness to school will be sanctioned in line with the Positive Discipline Policy.

5.   BUILDING STRONG RELATIONSHIPS WITH FAMILIES & UNDERSTANDING BARRIERS TO ATTENDANCE

5.1.   Students whose absence from the trust establishment gives cause for concern, or who are absent during the school day, are interviewed by a member of the attendance/ pastoral support team/inclusion team.

5.2.   If the needs and barriers are individual to the student this may include provision of mentoring, or some other targeted support.

5.3.   Where a pattern of absence is at risk of becoming problematic, the Head of Year or the Attendance Team will always seek the support of the parent in improving attendance, with the intention of working together to address any in-school barriers. A standard letter, accompanied by an attendance print out, will explain to the parent the extent of the problem and request they attend a meeting. Where possible, the parent will be made aware of the situation initially by telephone, and an appointment to discuss the problem will be offered during this initial discussion.

5.4.   Where barriers are outside of the establishment's control, the meeting will focus on supporting parents to access any support they may need voluntarily. It is important that that actions are agreed, recorded and regularly reviewed with the student, family and services and/or organisations that have been providing the ongoing support. This could form the basis of an Early Help Plan led by the Trust establishment.

5.5.   Where further absence intensifies, further action will be necessary.

5.6.   Where further support has not been effective and/or has not been engaged with the establishment we will work in tandem with the local authority and other relevant partners to establish a more formalised approach, this would include formal conversation with the senior leader responsible for attendance and may include the establishment's point of contact in the local authority School Attendance Support Team. These meetings should clearly explain the consequences of persistent and severe absence to the pupil and family and the potential need for legal intervention in future, but should also be an opportunity to continue to listen to and understand the barriers to attendance and explain the help that is available to avoid those consequences.

5.7.   Where voluntary support has been ineffective and/or has not been engaged with or not considered appropriate, the local authority will be engaged to consider legal intervention. This could include:

- Putting formal support in place in the form of a Parenting Contract;
- The issue of a Parenting Order

- The issue of an Education Supervision Order (ESO)
- Issuing a fixed penalty notice where support would not be appropriate or has not been successful or engaged with and it is unlikely to change parents' behaviour;
- Intensifying support through statutory children's social care involvement where there are safeguarding concerns, especially where absence becomes severe (below 50% attendance);
- Attendance prosecution and fining parents where all other routes have failed or are not deemed appropriate.

5.8   In all cases the Trust establishment will monitor the impact of any interventions, in discussion with the student, parents and any other partners involved as part of any whole family plan or team around the child.

6.   STUDENTS WITH MEDICAL CONDITIONS or SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

We acknowledge that some students face greater barriers than their peers. These can include students who suffer from long term medical conditions or who have special educational needs or disabilities. We work collaboratively with parents to understand the barriers to attending, and where required will put in additional support to help improve attendance. In some circumstances a referral to the Medical Needs Teaching Service will be appropriate.

7.   USE OF REDUCED TIMETABLES

All students of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In very exceptional circumstances, where it is agreed by both the Headteacher (appropriate SLT) and the parents / carers that it is in a student's best interests, a temporary part-time timetable may be considered. For example, where a medical condition prevents a pupil from attending full-time education and a part-time timetable is considered as part of a re-integration package. Formal arrangements will be put in place to regularly review the impact of the time-limited reduced timetable, with the view to reintegrate to full-time education. In agreeing to a part-time timetable, the Headteacher has agreed to a student being absent for part of the week or day and therefore must treat absence as authorised.

8.   INFORMATION SHARING

We are committed to working collaboratively (including with voluntary and community groups as well as with the local authority and other partners e.g. health services or the police where there are extra-familial harms) to help remove the barriers to attendance that families experience. In some cases, families will experience the same or similar barriers to attendance for multiple children who attend different schools in the area. As such, it is of mutual benefit to work together, as a family of schools, and share information where possible.

The following information will be shared with the local authority within the timescales directed:

- Every time a student's name is to be added to, or deleted from, the school admission register outside of standard transition times (including the statutory reason for deletion). For deletions this must take place before the deletion, and for additions it must be no later than **5 working days** after the addition.

- The name and address of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly or has missed school for **10 days** or more without the absence being recorded as authorised. Current guidance suggests this should be no less frequently than once per calendar month.

- Attendance data and access to registers

9. REINTEGRATION OF LONG-TERM ABSENTEES

9.1. Students, who are long-term absentees, whether through ill health, suspension, or unauthorised absence, often find the return to the Trust establishment problematical. There are academic and social hurdles to overcome. At the Trust establishment, individual programmes are devised to reintegrate long term absentees into school, which may involve the assistance of external agencies including the local authority.

9.2. Other strategies include:

- Personalised learning programme
- Individual work with our Pastoral staff or other appropriate staff
- Adapted curriculum/ use of a personalised time-table

9.3. Staff are made aware of reintegration strategies via a Student Support Plan, staff briefings and other internal communication methods.

10. HOLIDAY PROCEDURE – IN TERM TIME

10.1. Any disruption to a student's education is detrimental to their success, especially during examination periods. This is particularly relevant in Years 10 and 11, when missed assessments and/or coursework can result in lower grades.

10.2. Holidays in term time are totally inappropriate and for this reason the Trust establishment will not authorise any holiday during term time.

10.3. Unauthorised absence can lead to a **Fixed Penalty Notice** being issued. More than 5 days unauthorised absence in any one term may result in the issuing of a Fixed Penalty Notice.

10.4. *There are 190 school days in the year – leaving 175 days when holidays can be taken out of term time.*

11. EXEATS

11.1. Students who need to leave the premises during the school day are asked to bring a letter from home and/or an appointment card, or a note in their planner.

11.2. Exeats can only be issued on the day of the required absence and not in advance. Students with an exeat must sign out on the register at Student Services on leaving the premises and sign back in on their return to the Trust establishment.

12. REWARDS & INCENTIVES

Newhouse Academy recognises the importance of rewarding excellent attendance. Full details of Newhouse Academy's reward programme can be found on the school website.

13. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

13.1. **The Trust Board & Local Governing Body (LGB)**

The board and LGB are committed to:

- Recognising and promoting the importance of attendance through ethos and policy.
- Ensuring that establishment leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Reviewing attendance data in order to discuss and challenge trends, and focus on improvement efforts to raise attendance at both the board and LGB meetings.
- Ensure staff training is adequate.
- Share effective practice on attendance management and improvement across the trust establishments.

13.2. **Local Authority School Attendance Support Team**
The school support team will provide the following 4 core functions, without charge:
- Communication and advice
- Targeted Support Meetings
- Multi-disciplinary support for families
- Legal interventions

13.3. **Students**
All students should:
- Attend regularly
- Attend punctually
- Attend appropriately prepared for the day
- Alert their Form Tutor/pastoral support team to any problems that might affect attendance

13.4. **Parents**
All parents should:
- Encourage regular school attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities
- Ensure that students arrive at school punctually and prepared for the school day
- Ensure that they contact school whenever their child is unable to attend
- Consider the NHS guidance on when their child should attend school and also when their child returns to school after absence.

13.5. **Form Tutors**

The form tutor will:
- Record students' % attendance
- Challenge students, where appropriate, in all areas of non-attendance, punctuality, truancy, discussing absence with individuals in the weekly PD lesson
- Complete registration procedures accurately and efficiently
- Celebrate student attendance, in line with the Trust's policy and display attendance data in accordance with agreed academy procedures

13.6. **Subject Teachers**

The subject teacher will:
- Complete student registration using Bromcom in every lesson
- Communicate any concerns arising to the member of staff with responsibility for attendance administration

13.7. **Pastoral Support Team**

The pastoral support team will:
- Monitor trends in non-attendance through weekly meetings with the Attendance Officers and take appropriate action
- Manage strategies for raising achievement through regular communication with form tutors, relevant members of SLT and parents/carers
- Motivate students through assemblies, rewards, and incentives

13.8. **Attendance Officers**

The Attendance Officer (AO) will:
- Meet with the pastoral support team on a weekly basis to analyse attendance trends and identify target students
- Meet with SLT on a weekly basis to discuss whole school trends, groups of students (e.g. by gender, ethnicity etc) who are causing concern and strategies for improvement
- Make home visits to targeted students to discuss issues with parents/carers
- Manage the staged process, including School Attendance Panels and Parenting Contracts
- Make appropriate links with other outside agencies to improve attendance of those students on stages
- Maintain records of school attendance problems, evidence for court action, etc.

13.9. **Attendance Support**

The Administrative staff will:
- Alert Form Tutors to absence issues and oversee first day calls
- Analyse Lesson Monitor data
- Alert SLT to unexplained absences
- Assemble weekly printouts for pastoral support team, AO, SLT and Form Tutors

13.10. **Attendance Managers**

The Attendance Managers and/or SLT in charge of each Year Group/ Key Stage) will:
- Manage pastoral support teams/AO with regard to attendance
- Manage Lesson Monitor data and action strategies to improve attendance
- Market and promote attendance
- Provide attendance returns to the DfE via Rochdale Local Authority
- Analyse comparative

13.11. **Attendance Leader**

The Attendance Leader (Matt Aspden) will:
- Lead the strategic development of attendance in the school
- Prepare a report to be delivered to the Governing Body