

OUR SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY

We place a high priority on regular attendance and punctuality by our students. The following systems are in place to support our students and their families in the achievement of regular and full attendance.

INTRODUCTION

We recognise that:

- regular attendance is essential if our students are to make the most of the educational opportunities offered to them.
- irregular attendance disrupts continuity of learning, undermines educational progress and leads to underachievement.
- irregular attendance harms young people's prospects in later life. They are less likely to be in full-time education or to have a good job with training opportunities. They are more likely to be unemployed.
- students who attend school irregularly put themselves at greater risk of becoming victims of crime or abuse, or get drawn into criminal or anti-social activities themselves.

The Role of the Local Authority

All children of compulsory school age (5-16) must receive suitable education. Parents are responsible for ensuring that this takes place, either at school or by an effective alternative to school.

The Local Authority has powers to ensure that parents meet their duties. When attendance is unsatisfactory the LEA may:

- issue a school attendance order
- issue a Penalty Notice
- prosecute parents
- apply to the courts for an education supervision order

The Role of the School

The school monitors attendance through its registration system and decides how to authorise absence.

Parents have no right to authorise the absence of a student. Only the school has the power to do this.

Good Attendance: will be recognised by Heads of Year in assemblies and through letters of commendation.

The Role of the Parents

Parents have the prime responsibility for ensuring that their children attend regularly. If this does not happen, they need to work closely with the school and the Education Attendance Officer (EAO) to resolve the problem. Parents can help by keeping requests for their child to be absent from school to a minimum. If a student cannot attend school, the parent is responsible for informing the school. Parents are asked to follow the procedures adopted by the school for reporting reasons for absence.

MONITORING ABSENCE

The school has an excellent attendance rate. This is a result of the high priority it gives to attendance and punctuality. The Assistant Head - Pastoral, as a member of the School Leadership Team, has a specific responsibility for student attendance.

Only the school can approve absence. The fact that a parent has offered an explanation for absence does not oblige the school to accept it as a valid reason for absence.

All absence from school is carefully monitored :

- parents are asked to notify the school of reasons for their child's absence on the first day wherever possible.
- parents are contacted as soon as possible and no later than the third day of absence, notifying them of absence and seeking explanation. When appropriate, parents are contacted on the first day of absence.
- Form Tutors register students twice a day, at the beginning of morning and afternoon sessions.
- teachers register teaching groups at the beginning of each lesson.
- Heads of Year carry out spot checks.
- Heads of Year and Form Tutors monitor attendance rates and patterns of absence on a weekly basis and parents and alert Heads of Year to any concerns.
- if a member staff has reason to doubt the authenticity of a student's absence, the Head of Year should be notified.

AUTHORISING AN ABSENCE

We recognise the importance of developing a culture and good ethos in which students want to learn and attend school. The school follows the Somerset Local Authority strategy for School Attendance and DfE Statutory Guidelines, including the Education Regulations 2006/7 and amendments made from September 2013.

The decision to authorise an absence rests with the Headteacher.

Haygrove School is committed to following Statutory Guidelines and Legal Processes and will request warning penalty notices where there are a significant number of unauthorised absences.

REGISTRATION SYSTEM

(Details for the completion of registration duties are set out in separate guidance to staff)

The school uses the SIMS attendance and Lesson Monitor to record attendance at registration and in lessons. Staff are made aware of the necessity of keeping accurate records of attendance.

The following must be shown:

- whether the student is present or absent.
- if absent, whether the absence is for approved educational activity, authorised or unauthorised.

APPROVED EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITY is not recorded as an absence. It covers supervised activity, undertaken off-site but with the approval of the school.

This category may include :

- work experience
- field trips
- foreign exchanges
- sporting activities
- link courses
- tuition at home or another school (while remaining on the home school roll).

AUTHORISED ABSENCE may include :

- illness
- medical and dental appointments
- family bereavements
- graduation of an elder sibling
- days of religious observance

- interview with a prospective employer or for a place at an institute of F.E.
- music examination
- study leave for Year 11
- exclusion

UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE may include:

- non-attendance and failure to provide adequate explanation
- minding the house or looking after siblings or other relatives
- shopping during school hours
- students removed from school without permission.

EDUCATION ATTENDANCE OFFICER (EAO)

Student attendance is monitored closely by the Head of Year through the SIMS Attendance Module. The EAO visits the school fortnightly to meet with Heads of Year. The EAO and Head of Year jointly agree action necessary to support students with a poor attendance pattern. When a student's attendance causes concern either as a result of consistent non attendance or through a developing pattern of inappropriate attendance, the EAO is alerted.

LATENESS PROCEDURE

Punctuality is actively encouraged. Where persistent lateness occurs the following action will be taken:

Letters confirming 'Late Detention' on a Friday after school will be sent home.

The Head of Year will contact parents to seek their help in rectifying the situation. Where this fails the Head of Year will notify the EAO who will initiate the appropriate action.

TRUANCY

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| 1. | If discovered missing from school | Parents to be notified immediately by telephone. EAO informed at regular meeting. Student interviewed upon return by the Head of Year. Attendance check to Tutor and lunchtime/after school detentions to make up lost work time. Henceforth parents to notify school on first day of any period of absence. |
| 2. | Second offence | As above. Attendance check to Head of Year and detentions to make up lost work time. Parents invited into school by Head of Year. EAO to be notified. |
| 3. | Further offence | Interview with Assistant Head - Pastoral
Assistant Head – Pastoral's Report. |

STUDENTS ON WORK EXPERIENCE

If students do not attend their agreed placement, both their parents and the "employer" are requested to inform the school.

HOLIDAYS DURING TERM TIME

Haygrove School follows Government regulations (amended September 2013). Absence as a result of holidays taken during term time will not be authorised unless there are exceptional circumstances. Details of such exceptional circumstances should be forwarded, IN ADVANCE, to the Headteacher for consideration.

