



HIGH SCHOOL

Five Acres High School Attendance Policy

Approval and review

This policy is the responsibility of: Kelly Styles – Attendance Manager

This policy was approved by the Local Governing Body on: 24 November 2020

This Attendance Policy applies to Five Acres High School, and all governors and staff of the school must abide by this policy which has been adopted in accordance with and pursuant to the Student Welfare Policy of the Greenshaw Learning Trust.

It is the responsibility of the local governing body and Headteacher of the school to ensure that their school and its staff adhere to this policy. In implementing this policy school staff must take account of any advice given to them by the CEO and/or Board of Trustees.

This policy is subject to the GLT Student Welfare Policy and the Scheme of Delegation approved for the school. If there is any ambiguity or conflict then the GLT Student Welfare Policy and the Scheme of Delegation and any specific Scheme or alteration or restriction to the Scheme approved by the Board of Trustees takes precedence. If there is any question or doubt about the interpretation of this, the CEO should be consulted.

Five Acres High School Attendance policy

At Five Acres High School we firmly believe that all students benefit from outstanding school attendance. To this end, we will do all we can to ensure that our students achieve maximum possible attendance and that any problems that prevent full attendance are identified and acted upon promptly. In order for a Student's attendance record to be deemed very good, it must be 96% or above:

100% - Outstanding Attendance

96% - Very Good Attendance

94% - Good Attendance

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

We intend to establish systems and practices which will:

- Create an ethos in which excellent attendance is the norm
- Maintain a safe, secure environment where students feel valued and welcome, thereby positively encouraging attendance.
- Raise student awareness of the importance of punctuality and uninterrupted attendance, and encourage in students a sense of responsibility.
- Celebrate excellent school attendance.
- Support students and families who experience difficulties maintaining good school attendance.

Expectations

We expect that all students will:

- Attend school regularly
- Attend school punctually
- Attend school appropriately prepared for the day

We expect that all parents/carers who have day to day responsibility for the children and young people will:

- Encourage regular school attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities;
- Ensure that the child/children in their care arrive at school punctually, prepared for the school day;
- Contact the school before 8am on the morning of each day of the Student's absence by calling the attendance line.
- All absences should be followed up by a letter explaining the reason and date of absence or a medical appointment card. Any unexplained absence is treated as unauthorised absence;
- Parents/carers are encouraged to contact the school promptly whenever any problem occurs that may keep the child away from school.

Five Acres High School has a responsibility to ensure that all teachers:

- Complete registers accurately and punctually during every registration period and lesson;
- Assist the attendance officer in following up any unexplained absences upon the Student's return to school;
- Inform the Head of Year/Safeguarding Team/SLT/EWO of concerns;
- Be alert to early signs of disaffection which could culminate in non-attendance and to report these concerns as soon as possible to the attendance officer.

The legal framework

Regular school attendance of children of compulsory school age is the responsibility of the parent / guardian and is a legal requirement in accordance with section 444 (1) of the Education Act 1996. Parents / Guardians are committing an offence if they fail to comply with this legislation and legal action can be instigated.

Responding to Non-Attendance

Student attendance is continually monitored by the attendance officer/EWO. When a student does not attend school, the school will respond in the following manner:

- If no telephone call is received from the parent/carer, the job title will activate the 'First Day Absence' call. The system will text/email the parent/carer contact numbers.
- In the event of no response being received for the absence, a letter will be sent home. If no response is received within 10 days of the date of the letter, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.
- Periods of absence from school of 4 days or more will require medical evidence to be provided.

There are four stages of dealing with absenteeism at Five Acres High School:

Stage 1

A letter will be sent to the parent/carer of any student whose attendance falls below 93%. This is monitored for a period of 2 weeks.

Stage 2

If there is no marked improvement parents/carers will receive Letter 2 and be invited in for a meeting with the Attendance Officer/EWO and Head of Year where an attendance improvement plan will be agreed to address any issues preventing a child from attending school. (Letter 2 alerts the parents to the possibility of legal action should their child's attendance not improve.)

Stage 3

If no improvement is seen within a further 2 weeks, a notified home visit is arranged and the parents are invited by letter to attend a formal 'Attendance Intervention Meeting' (AIM) with the Head of Year and EWO using the Local Authority template. A review date is set and is then monitored for a further 2 weeks.

Stage 4

At this point a further AIM review will take place with the Assistant Headteacher/Attendance Officer. (Meeting to proceed even if parents choose to not

attend). If no improvement is seen, the case is referred to the Education Performance and Inclusion Team to begin legal proceedings.

NB: A penalty notice may be issued, without notice, for persistent lateness to school or unauthorized holidays taken in term time.

Continued failure to contact the school to report a child's absence may result in a referral to The Safeguarding Team, MASH Team (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub) or the police for a welfare check

- Failure to comply with the expectations set by the job title may result in further action, by either a referral to appear before the Governor's Attendance Panel, issue of a Penalty Notice, an application for an Education Supervision Order or court prosecution.

Lateness

The school day begins at 8.30am with morning line-up. Morning registration takes place at the start of lesson 1 at 9am.

AM Registration – 8:25 to 9:00. Registers are closed at 9:30 am

- If a student arrives late to registration, after 8.25am, they must 'sign in' at the school reception.
- If a student arrives late to registration a detention will be issued. Where appropriate, reasons for lateness are investigated and responded to in the appropriate manner.
- Lateness after registration closes is recorded as an unauthorised absence (U) and parents/carers will be notified of this absence via PS Connect parent comms.

Absences that the school is unable to authorise include:

- Holidays during term time.
- Arrival after the registers close at 9:30am without prior notification
- Shopping trips, even if this is for school uniform.
- Birthday celebrations
- Looking after a relative/pets.
- Tiredness due to extra-curricular activities.
- All unexplained absences

Medical Appointments

Parents/carers are encouraged to arrange medical appointments outside of school hours but where this is not possible the school should be notified in advance by emailing or sending a letter to the attendance officer, Miss K Styles (kstyles@5acreshighschool.co.uk). Where it is not possible to arrange appointments outside of school hours, students are encouraged to attend school either side of their appointment where possible.

Religious Holidays

We will authorise absence for major religious holidays. It is the responsibility of the parent/carer to inform us in advance of their intention to keep their child at home. If parents/carers do not inform the school any days missed will be recorded as an

unauthorised absence. Requests for extended absence for religious observances should be made in writing to the Headteacher.

Holidays

The school holiday dates are published a year in advance and it is essential that parents/carers take their family holidays during the school holidays. It is the school's policy not to authorise absence during term time for holidays and any absence of this nature will be recorded as unauthorised. Should parents/carers choose to remove their child from school for a holiday during term, they will be required to attend a meeting with the attendance officer/EWO to discuss this absence.

We recognise that there may be occasions where a parent feels there are extenuating reasons for requesting leave during term time. In such circumstances we advise parents to write to the Headteacher outlining the reason for the request and the dates the student will be absent from school. The Headteacher will inform you of his/her decision in writing.

Requests for long periods of absence will not be authorised and a meeting with the Headteacher and attendance officer/EWO will be required. Prolonged unauthorised absences may put your child's place at Five Acres High School at risk.

If parents take their children on holiday during term time without authorisation the School will apply for a Penalty Notice to be issued in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act 1966 and the Education and Inspection Act 2006. The fine from September 2013 will be £60 if paid within 21 days of receipt of the Penalty Notice, increasing to £120 if paid after this date, but within 28 days. Failure to pay can result in a referral to court.

Please note that a Penalty Notice is issued to each parent in respect of each child not attending school. "Parents" includes partners who are not married to, but who live with, one of the parents who has main care responsibilities for the child. Other family members with parental responsibility including grandparents and siblings may also be liable for a penalty notice.

Penalty Notice

A Penalty Notice is an alternative to prosecution, which does not require an appearance in Court, but which seeks to improve a Student's attendance.

A Penalty Notice may be issued to parents/carers who are failing to secure their child's regular school attendance and are failing to engage with the Attendance Officer.

- Where a child is taken out of school for a holiday during term without the authority of the Headteacher, each parent is liable to receive a penalty notice for each child.
- Where attendance has fallen below 85% or there are no less than 10 unauthorised sessions during a sixth month period.

With the exception of unauthorised holidays taken in term time, parents will be sent a formal warning of their liability to receive such a notice before it is issued.

The Law

Under the provision of the Education Act 1996 (s434) and the Student Registration Regulations 1995 the school must keep an attendance register. Under Section 7 of the Education Act 1996, parents are responsible for making sure that their children of compulsory school age receive full-time education. Parents have a legal responsibility to ensure their child's regular attendance at the school where they are registered. If a child of compulsory school age who is registered at a school fails to attend regularly at the school then the parent is guilty of an offence under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996; which may lead to prosecution. Since March 2001 there has been a further offence where a parent, knowing that their child is failing to attend regularly at school, fails without reasonable justification to cause him/her to attend (Education Act 1996, section 444(1A) as amended by the Criminal Justice and Court Service Act 2000). In February 2004, section 23 of the Anti- Social Behaviour Act gave powers to designated bodies to issue Penalty Notices where a parent/carer is considered capable but unwilling to secure an improvement in their child's attendance at school. Since September 2015 the Persistence Absence percentage has changed from 15% to 10%.