# ATTENDANCE AND INCLUSION POLICY

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October 2026

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## 1 AIMS

The purpose of this policy is to clarify our obligations and expectations for post-16 students, parents and staff with regards to attendance and punctuality, including:

- Setting high expectations for attendance and punctuality
- Promoting good attendance and its benefits
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every student has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure students have support in place to attend. We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons

It has been proven that poor attendance and punctuality have a serious impact on the outcomes students achieve at the end of their course. This is particularly true at A Level due to the intensive nature of a short two-year course and due to prolonged periods of absence often being a sign of other issues. Regular attendance is particularly important for

vulnerable students, as research has shown that there are strong links between extrafamilial harms and regular absence from school. Furthermore, a core purpose of the School is to prepare students for the world of work where strong attendance and punctuality is important.

We expect all students to aim for 100% attendance to maximise both their academic outcomes and enjoyment of life at the School.

## 2 LEGISLATION AND STATUTORY GUIDANCE

This policy is based upon the Department for Education's statutory guidance on Working together to improve school attendance. The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of the Education Act 1996
- Maintained schools: Part 3 of the Education Act 2002
- Part 7 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- The Equality Act 2010

It also refers to:

- School census guidance
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools
- Ofsted's 2025 framework toolkit

## 3 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Governors are responsible for:

- Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, pupils and parents
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Recognising and promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure the school's attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent support is provided for pupils who need it most by prioritising staff and resources
- Making sure the school has high aspirations for all pupils, but adapts processes and support to pupils' individual needs
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on individual pupils or cohorts who need it most
- Working with school leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and providing support and challenge

- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school and repeatedly evaluating the effectiveness of the school's processes and improvement efforts to make sure they are meeting pupils needs
- Making sure all staff receive adequate training on attendance as part of the regular continued professional development offer
- Making sure dedicated training is provided to staff with a specific attendance function in their role, including in interpreting and analysing attendance data

The Head of School is responsible for:

- The implementation of this policy at the School
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Working with the parents/carers of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where pupils with SEND face in-school barriers
- Communicating with the local authority when a student with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has failing attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs
- Working with the parents/carers of students who are disadvantaged, have been known to children's social care or have other barriers, to implement timely, appropriate and targeted interventions to ensure that students are supported in achieving strong attendance
- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents through all available channels

Designated senior leader responsible for attendance is responsible for:

- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the School
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance so that the Student Support Advisor and reception team are clear about their roles and work effectively
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance
- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff
- Liaising with students, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed
- Building close and productive relationships with parents to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the Head of School

Class Teachers and Form Tutors
These staff interact daily with students and therefore their role in attendance is key. They are responsible for:

- Recording attendance for every lesson using the correct codes on the School system. The morning attendance mark comes from students scanning their card at reception as the enter the School. However, it is essential that teachers complete all registers within 10 minutes of the lesson start in case further checks are needed to establish the whereabouts of a student. The afternoon attendance mark comes from students scanning their card at the end of lunch, where form tutors will confirm this mark in the following tutorial session.
- Noticing attendance patterns or signs that a student might begin to have attendance difficulties. Any intelligence should be sensitively addressed with the student and parents as a first level of intervention and protection of positive attendance.
- Speaking regularly to their students/tutees about attendance, but always in a way that supports. If a tutor has provided support but the student's attendance continues to fall, they should flag this with the attendance team to ensure further support can be put in place.

Reception team will:

- Take calls from parent/carers, and check for any communication that has come via office@haringtonschool.com and Groupcall Eduspot about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the School system.
- Code daily attendance and update if further evidence justifies
- Transfer communication from parents/carers to appropriate staff, where appropriate, in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance. This could be the Form Tutor, Student Support Advisor or the Deputy Head of School who leads on attendance.

Student Support Advisor will:

- Update attendance codes if further evidence justifies this
- Identify concerning absence and liaise with tutors/teachers initially or meet with the student to support, including meeting with other agencies to ensure plans are in place and identified students are accessing the right support
- Meet with parents where necessary

Parents
Where this policy refers to a parent, it refers to the adult the School and/or local authority decides is most appropriate to work with, including:

- All natural parents, whether married or not
- All those who have parental responsibility for a young person
- Those who have day-to-day responsibility for the young person (i.e. lives with and looks after them)

Parents are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time

- Call or email the School to report their child's absence before 0830 on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise of the reason for absence and when the student is expected to return
- Provide the school with more than one emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the School day
- Provide medical evidence, when such evidence is possible, if absence exceeds 5 days
- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting their child's Form Tutor or the Student Support Advisor

Students are expected to:

- Attend School every day, on time – this means arriving to scan their card at reception before 8.40am.
- Attend every timetabled lesson, on time.
- Remain on site and attend all lessons, including tutorial, academic enrichment, activities and private study, unless agreed beforehand with the Head of School.
- Where students have private study in the morning, it is their responsibility to register at reception so that their attendance is recorded. Private study is compulsory and students are expected to be on-site during all sessions.
- Scan out at reception is they chose to leave the site at lunchtime, and back in on their return.
- Scan their card prior to afternoon registration, where their mark will be confirmed in the tutorial session.
- Follow the procedure of informing a member of staff (a member of the leadership team, student support officer or reception team) if they feel unwell during the School day. This should be done prior to a student making arrangements to leave School with a parent/guardian.
- Take an active and conscientious role in being responsible for their punctuality and attendance.
- Contact their class teachers and Form Tutor to ensure that all work is caught up if they are absent due to unforeseen circumstances.

## 4 REPORTING UNPLANNED STUDENT ABSENCE

On each day of absence, a parent/guardian must contact the School to explain the reason. This can be done using email via office@haringtonschool.com or using the Absence Reporting option in the EduLink One app. This should be done before 8.30am. If we have not received contact from the parent we will endeavor to make contact by time? telephone to ensure that a parent is aware of the child's absence.

If we have no confirmation of the reason for the child's absence it will be recorded as unauthorised. A member of School staff may take further measures such as carrying out a Welfare Visit at the child's home address, notifying the police or notifying other external agencies. We will always prioritise any follow up actions for those students who we know to be vulnerable. If we receive no communication within 48 hours as to the child's whereabouts, we may contact the police and/or social care.

Parents may be contacted retrospectively to clear previously unexplained absences. It is the Head of School who authorises the absence.

If a student requests to leave School during the School day for any reason, they must inform a senior member of staff (Mr Teasel, Mrs Henry-Oliver, Mr Kerley, Mr Raine or Mr Gumbeer) before they leave. Parental consent will always be sought before the student is permitted to leave unless there are legitimate reasons not to do so.

## 5 MONITORING AND FEEDBACK

Parents of any student who have provided no reasons for an absence, coded N, will also be contacted requesting an explanation. It may be that there are perfectly valid reasons for such an attendance level. However, this may be an opportunity for parents/guardians to raise any issues that may be affecting their child at School.

If a student has been regularly absent due to illness, or has been off for five days, the School may ask for supporting evidence of medical need e.g. appointment card, photograph of medication, or confirmation of medical appointment. These will only be valid for six weeks from the date of issue and the School should be kept up-to-date of ongoing medical needs. If the School is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Missing registration for a medical or dentist appointment is counted as an authorised absence. Advance notice to the School is required for authorising these absences. However, we encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of School hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the student should be out of School for the minimum amount of time necessary.

Applications for all types of absence in term time must be made in advance.

A student who arrives after 8.40am but before 9.10am will be marked as late using the appropriate code. A student who arrives after 9.10am will be marked as absent using the appropriate code.

The School collects and stores attendance data on SIMS management information system. This data is used to:

- Track the attendance of individual students or groups of students
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of students whose absences may be a cause for concern
- Monitor and evaluate those students identified as needing intervention and support.

Parents are able to review their child's attendance on the EduLink One app.

An attendance summary will be shared with the governing body on a termly basis.

## 6 ATTENDANCE BELOW 92%

Where attendance falls below 92% the School will seek to identify the underlying causes using a range of information. These might include:

- Assessment reports to identify curriculum strengths

- CPOMS reports to track behaviour/friendship/bullying incidents
- Tutor group details
- Environmental factors
- Social, emotional and personal health and family information
- Historical attendance issues

Support to improve attendance may include the following reasonable adjustments may be used:

- Targeted pastoral support/allocated key worker
- Time out card
- Attendance and/or punctuality report
- Attendance plan in liaison with parents
- Identify a key person for that student who they feel at ease with
- Curriculum adaptation
- Internal adult or peer mentoring e.g. by the student support advisor
- Mental health support
- Adaptations to movement around the School to avoid times that heighten anxiety
- Short-term reduced timetable, regularly reviewed with the aim to return to a full timetable
- External agency referrals e.g. Early Help, mental health support groups and Teen Health
- Amended strategies in the classroom as part of quality first teaching
- Tests for and/or review of access arrangements, where applicable, to be shared with teaching staff
- Meeting with the SENCO and attendance team to ensure that students with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) are supported correctly
- Parental meetings including inviting parents who have parental responsibility but may not be involved in their child on a daily basis. A formal letter will be sent home to parents which outlines actions and agreed targets.

## 7 STUDENTS RETURNING TO SCHOOL AFTER A LENGTHY OR UNAVOIDABLE PERIOD OF ABSENCE

After a lengthy period out of School, it may be necessary to offer the following strategies to help the student reintegrate back into School life:

- A phased return
- A reduced curriculum
- A trusted adult to touch base with
- Review meeting with parents
- Extra support around catching up such as academic interventions
- Short-term exemptions from mock exams or other assessments
- Peer mentoring
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health group work

## 8 ESCALATATION AND SUPPORT

### Stage 1 - Form Tutor Support

Should a form tutor feel that there is a concern about the attendance of a tutee, a letter or email will be sent home to highlight this and offer parents support in improving attendance. At this point, form tutors will also discuss the importance of

good attendance with their tutee and support them with any of their own concerns. At this stage typical support strategies might include conversations about lessons, relationships, prep etc, seating plans, movement around the building and pressure points during the day. A regular mentoring meeting with the form tutor may take place.

Stage 2 - Attendance Team monitoring

Where a student's attendance is at risk of falling below 92%, the attendance team will monitor the student's attendance and support the form tutor to identify issues and create the support needed to improve their attendance.

A meeting may be convened with the student and their family to identify underlying causes for low attendance. Support strategies may be used.

A medical evidence request may be sent when:

- A student has been absent for a period of 5 consecutive days.
- A student has reached a 90% attendance rate.
- A pattern of repeated short-term absence is noted.
- The School has reason to believe that the student was not too ill to attend, but was absent from School.

Medical evidence may be required for absences in the form of a GP or hospital letter, a photograph of any medication prescribed (including the date) or a copy of an appointment card. Further evidence may be requested at the discretion of the School attendance team.

Stage 3 – Attendance Team monitoring

A student whose attendance continues to fall, despite the support offered at Stage 2, will be met by a member of the attendance team and further support sought to address the continuing barriers for attending. Parents will be invited in to meet. At this stage it would be expected that curriculum adaptations and external support will be considered depending on the situation. If mental health issues are a contributing factor, then parents will be advised to take their child to the GP and support such as Teen Health will be reviewed.

If appropriate, medical evidence will be required and targets set around short-term attendance. It is likely that those whose attendance falls below 80% will be given a fixed monitoring period between 4 and 6 weeks.

A student will be placed on a short-term monitoring period when:

- Medical evidence has not been provided for absences.
- A student's attendance remains below 80% and there is not a sustained improvement despite support from the School.
- There has been little engagement with the support offered by the student or parent.

A letter will be sent which outlines the dates over which this monitoring will take place.

We will liaise with parents to discuss concerns over attendance and offer further support strategies where appropriate. Where attendance does not show a sustained

improvement over this monitoring period, parents will be invited to meet with the Attendance Lead and the Head of School.

Severe absence

If the student has attendance of less than 50% this is classed as severe attendance and as thus might be considered, depending on the circumstances, as educational neglect. The School might refer this to Children's Social Care as a safeguarding issue.

## 9 PLANNED STUDENT ABSENCE

As per the Pupil Registration Regulation legislation (September 2013), we are only able to authorise time off from School in exceptional, once-in-a-lifetime circumstances. Any applications must be received in writing at least 10 working days in advance. The School cannot authorise absence requests on the basis of cost, nor can the School authorise a known absence retrospectively.

The School considers each application for term-time absence individually, considering the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. All planned absences must be agreed in writing with the Head of School via the completion of an absence request form, available from reception or the School website. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the Head of School's discretion.

## 10 ACCEPTABLE REASONS FOR ABSENCE

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from School for a good reason such as:

- My child is too ill to leave the house.
- My child has a medical or dental appointment which cannot be arranged outside of School hours. Where possible, the student should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary, and attend school before/after their appointment
- My child has a hospital appointment which cannot be arranged outside of School hours.
- My child has toothache and has an emergency appointment.
- To attend the funeral of a relative.
- My child is currently suspended or excluded.
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the student's parent(s) belong(s). If necessary, the School will seek advice from the parent's religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart.

Other reasons the school may allow a pupil to be absent from the school site, which are not classified as absences, include (but are not limited to):

- Attending an off-site approved educational activity, sporting activity or visit or trip arranged by the school.
- Attending another school at which the pupil is also registered (dual registration).
- Attending a provision arranged by the local authority.
- Attending work experience.
- Attending open days at universities only if visiting at weekends is unavailable.

- Attending driving lessons in Year 13 private study periods, but only where there are no concerns around attendance and progress.
- If there is any other unavoidable cause for the pupil not to attend school, such as disruption to travel caused by an emergency, a lack of access arrangements, or because the school premises are closed.

Parents can consult the NHS guidance Is my child too ill for school? to support them in deciding whether to keep their child home due to illness. We will share this guidance with parents in order to promote school attendance.

## 11 UNACCEPTABLE REASONS FOR ABSENCE

Unauthorised absences are those which the School does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been authorised. This includes:

- To look after other family members
- Sleeping in
- To avoid being late
- Another child is ill, so all are kept off
- Minor ailments such as tummy ache or headache
- End of term
- To mind the house or take a delivery
- Holiday during term time.

## 12 WELFARE VISITS

Pastoral staff may conduct a home visit when:

- a student is absent from School without a valid reason
- the School has not received a reply to a follow-up call
- the School has received a reply that they are concerned about
- the School has concern that the student has not been seen since the return of a holiday period or by another professional

For further details about Welfare Visits please read the Welfare Visit Policy.

## 13 CHILDREN WHO DO NOT ATTEND SCHOOL DUE TO MEDICAL REASONS

We recognise that there will be times when students need to be absent due to illness. When a student is too unwell to attend for a few days we do not routinely provide work. However, we do recognise that there are some exceptional circumstances, for example, following an operation, when a student may be diagnosed as too unwell to be in School but well enough to complete work at home for a short period of time. During this period, the School will aim to provide work to match that which is covered within the lessons.

However, this should only be for a short period of time, because without specialist teacher input students inevitably progress at a different rate to their peers. Once an absence extends for more than a few lessons, it becomes increasingly difficult to plan and assess work, as well as provide effective feedback.

If you believe your child will be too ill to attend School for a longer period of time, please:

- Contact the School at your earliest convenience to explain the nature of the illness.
- Provide medical evidence to the School in the form of a GP or hospital note.
- Refer to the Federation Supporting Students with Medical Conditions Policy.

## 14 LATENESS AND PUNCTUALITY

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. Students who arrive late miss work, have reduced contact time with teachers, disrupt the learning of other students and can suffer embarrassment.

The School opens at 8am, and by 8.40am all students should be in lessons and ready to commence their learning. Morning registers are marked as students swipe their card to go through reception. Students will receive a late mark if they go through the turnstiles after 8.40am.

If a student is late three times or more in a week, they will be issued with a lunch-time catch-up and their parents will be notified.

Persistent lateness will be addressed and those who are identified as fitting this category will have an email or letter sent home detailing their recent lateness. Efforts will be made to address underlying causes and improve the situation.

The morning register will close no more than 30 minutes after the School day begins. In accordance with government guidance, if a student arrives after that time they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site, but this will not count as a present mark and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence.

## APPENDIX 1: ABSENCE DUE TO EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

I/we request that (name) _____ in Tutor Group _____
should be granted an authorised absence from (start date) _____
to (end date) _____ this is a total of _____ School days.

The reason for the absence:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

I understand that this will result in work being missed and may affect the learning and achievement of my son/daughter.

I confirm that I have read the School's Attendance and Inclusion Policy and it is not possible to avoid this absence by using School holidays / evenings or weekends.

I understand that this absence cannot be authorised unless deemed to be an exceptional event.

Signature of Parent/Guardian _____ Date _____

Please leave completed forms at Reception.

For office use only:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Current attendance | % | Number of unauthorised absences | |


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## APPENDIX 2: ATTENDANCE CODES

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

| Code | Definition | Scenario |
|---|---|---|
| / | Present (AM) | Pupil is present by 0840 |
| \ | Present (PM) | Pupil is present at afternoon registration |
| L | Late arrival | Pupil arrives after 0840 but before 0910 |
| U | Arrived in school after registration closed | Pupil arrives after 0910 but before afternoon registration |
| V | Attending an educational visit/trip | Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised/approved by the School |
| W | Attending work experience | Pupil is on an approved work experience placement |
| M | Medical/dental appointment | Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment |
| S | Study leave | Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination |
| R | Religious observance | Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance |
| I | Illness (not medical/dental appointment) | Pupil is unable to attend due to (either related to physical or mental health) |
| E | Suspended or excluded | Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school |
| G | Holiday not granted by the school | Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school |
| N | Reason for absence not yet established | Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes |
| O | Absent in others or unknown circumstances | No reason for absence has been established, or the school is not satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence |
| # | Planned whole-school closure | Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays |


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