



ATTENDANCE POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

It is stipulated in The Education Act that all pupils up to the age of 16 attend education, with the intention of enabling all pupils to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. Hunters Hill Technology College aims to encourage excellent levels of attendance and punctuality. This is particularly important as it is legislated that all pupils with a statement of special educational needs should attend School on a full-time basis.

Reducing absence and persistent absence is a vital and integral part of Hunters Hill work to:

- ✓ promote children's welfare and safeguarding
- ✓ ensure every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- ✓ ensure that pupils succeed whilst at School
- ✓ ensure that pupils have access to the widest possible range of opportunities when they leave School.

2. UNDERSTANDING TYPES OF ABSENCE

Every half-day absence from School has to be recorded by the School (not the parent/carer), as either **authorised** or **unauthorised**. This is why information about the reason(s) for absence is always required, preferably in writing.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from School for a good reason such as illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall during School time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause(s).

Unauthorised absences are those which the School does not consider reasonable.

3. RIGHTS, RESPONSIBILITIES AND ROLES

Hunters Hill Technology College aims to work together with parents/carers in order to ensure the achievement of high levels of attendance and punctuality for all pupils. At formal interview stage all parents/carers are issued with a "School Attendance: Information for Parents" leaflet outlining School procedures relating to absence from School.

Hunters Hill Technology College encourages good attendance and will investigate all unexplained and unjustified absenteeism. It is our aim to work closely with parents/carers should attendance or punctuality give cause for concern. To help us in this quest it is imperative to have the co-operation of parents/carers who have the legal responsibility of



ensuring their child attends School. As stated, if a child does not attend School it is the responsibility of the parent/carer to contact the School at the earliest opportunity and explain the reason for the absence. However should this fail to happen Hunters Hill have developed good practice to highlight any shortfalls in attendance as explained further in the section below 'Procedures for Following up Absence/Lateness'.

3.1 Pupils:

- Pupils will ensure that they attend School regularly and on time.
- Pupils will attend all lessons punctually.
- Pupils will not leave the School without permission.
- Pupils will have individual records of attendance/punctuality acknowledged by the School.

3.2 Parents/Carers:

- Under Section 7 of the Education Act 1996, parents/carers are legally responsible for ensuring their child's regular and punctual School attendance. It is the parents/carers who have the responsibility for ensuring that their child attends School regularly, punctually, in correct uniform and in a fit condition to learn.
- Parents/carers are responsible for immediately informing the School of the reason for any absence by a telephone call on the first morning of any absence (this should be confirmed in writing when their child returns to School).
- Parents/carers will avoid arranging family holidays during term time.

3.3 Attached Agencies

- Should a pupil have a period of 10 or more day's sickness in any one half term and a medical note has not been ascertained, Hunters Hill will contact the School Health Advisor, for advice on the situation.
- The role of the Educational Social Worker is to support Hunters Hill and their pupils who become persistent non-attenders. A referral will be made to the Education Social Worker if all procedures employed by the School have been initiated but have failed to improve the pupil's attendance.



4. AUTHORISED/UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

All absences must be explained by the parent/carer. Hunters Hill will then make the decision as to whether or not to authorise the absence.

Absence from School may be **authorised** if it is for one of the following reasons:

- sickness
- unavoidable medical/dental appointments
- days of religious observance
- exceptional family circumstances, such as bereavement

Absence from School will **not be authorised** for:

- shopping trips
- looking after siblings or unwell parents/carers
- minding the house
- birthdays

However, parents/carers should make every effort to arrange medical/dental appointments outside of School hours when possible to ensure their child does not miss School unnecessarily thereby failing to benefit from their education.

Parents/carers are strongly urged to avoid booking family holidays during term time. Parents do not have any entitlement to take their child out of School for such holidays and leave for family holidays will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, which is explained in detail in the Local Authority's Extended Leave and Absence during Term Time Policy.

5. PROCEDURES FOR FOLLOWING UP ABSENCE/LATENESS

Should a pupil be absent from School and parents/carers have failed to contact the School, a telephone call will be made to the pupil's home to ascertain the reason for absence. Telephone calls will continue on a daily basis during the period of absence.

If a pupil has been absent for 5 days in any one half term and no medical note has been ascertained from their GP, a letter will be sent from the School expressing concern and reminding parents/carers of their legal responsibility to ensure their child attends education. In some circumstances a home visit may be completed at this stage to bring the pupil back into School.



Should the pupil continue to be absent, on day 10 in any one half term, a home visit will be completed by Hunters Hill staff to clarify any reason to account for the pupil's unauthorised absence and to ascertain if any strategies can be put in place to support the pupil returning to School.

6. STRATEGIES FOR PROMOTING ATTENDANCE/PUNCTUALITY

- It is the belief of Hunters Hill that all pupils are more likely to achieve to the maximum potential if they attend School regularly; to ensure this the School curriculum is reviewed regularly to ensure it is lively and meets the pupil's needs.
- To support and promote attendance, Hunters Hill award to all pupils achieving either excellent or high percentage attendance/punctuality termly Certificates of Attendance.
- Parents/carers will be kept regularly and fully informed of all concerns regarding their child's attendance and punctuality.
- Termly reports will be provided by the Head Teacher to the School's Governing Body on attendance rates and issues.
- Pupils are regularly reminded of the importance and value of good attendance.
- Pupils who have been absent for any extended period of time will be reintegrated back into School through a structured and individually-tailored programme.
- All issues which may cause a pupil to experience attendance difficulties are to be promptly investigated by designated members of staff.
- Visits to feeder primary Schools will be made in order to ensure the fullest support for all pupils during secondary transfer and in order to help identify any pupils who may need special help.
- Regular, structured meetings will be held with the School's Education Social Worker in order to identify and support those pupils whose attendance/punctuality is a source of concern.
- Non-school attendance is discussed at the regularly held Pupil Update Meetings attended by a number of Professionals attached to the School.



7. COLLECTION OF ATTENDANCE DATA

A variety of attendance data is collected in order to assess the impact of the School's attendance practices and interventions. The Assistant Head and Deputy Head of Care collect this data and are responsible for its analysis.

Each term the following data will be collected and analysed in order to assess performance and trends, taking action if required:

- whole School attendance rates;
- numbers and proportion of persistent absentee pupils;
- rates of unauthorised absence;

8. REVIEW

This Policy will be reviewed on an annual basis.