

HEALING
SCHOOL



A Science Academy

Healing School – A Science Academy

Attendance Policy September 2021

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Consultations/Training	SLT, EWO, Learning Co-ordinators & Tutors, Governors

POLICY STATEMENT

Healing School is committed to providing a full and effective education to all pupils and embraces the concept of equal opportunities for all. We will endeavour to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome, which will allow them to maximise their potential.

For a child to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance is therefore absolutely essential. We will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

School attendance is subject to various education laws and this school attendance policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by the DFE.

Each year the school will examine its attendance figures and the Governors will set attendance targets. These will reflect both the national and local attendance targets. As part of this process Healing School will review its systems for improving attendance at regular intervals to ensure that it is achieving the targets set.

Whole school attendance targets

Attendance 2018/19	Attendance 2019/20	Attendance 2020/21
95%	95%	95%

The attendance target for Healing School in the academic year 2021/22 is 95%

School Procedures

This policy will contain within it the procedures that the school uses to monitor and evaluate its attendance targets.

Tutors register pupils electronically at the beginning of the morning tutor period. Afternoon registration is recorded at the beginning of period 4 by the subject teacher. All pupils during these sessions are recorded as being present (A) absent (N) or as an approved educational activity with the appropriate code (see codes attachment).

Lateness

Morning registration will take place at the start of school at 8.35am and registers will remain open for 30 minutes, closing at 9.05am. Any pupils arriving late after 8.35am must sign in at the pupil reception, where the code will be amended from code N (no reason yet provided for absence) to L by the office staff and the number of minutes late recorded as well as the reason for the late arrival, unless there is an acceptable explanation i.e. school transport was delayed. However, a pupil must arrive before the register closes at 9.05am in order to gain an attendance mark for that session. If a pupil arrives after 30 minutes a code U will be entered, unless it is an agreed medical

appointment for which we have received medical evidence and then a code M is applied. The appropriate codes of all known absences will be input **by Pupil Services only**. The afternoon registration will be open at 1.10pm and will close at 1.40pm, with the same procedures in operation. Should a pupil persistently arrive after the register has closed at 9.05am (and all other sanctions have been used e.g. After School Detentions) then the pupil will be considered to have truanted and they will be put into inclusion.

First Day Absence

Any child who is absent from school during the morning or afternoon registration period is recorded as an N (no reason yet provided for absence) until notification is received by school. Parents are expected to contact the school in the first place by phone, via the 'Report a child's absence' telephone extension (option 1), which means all telephone calls by parents / guardians reporting an illness will be directed to Pupil Services; these will either be picked up directly by Pupil Services or left as messages on an answer machine solely for this purpose. Pupil Services will input the reasons and the appropriate code into SIMS. If the absence is for 3 days or more, parents should then follow this up with written confirmation stating the reason their child was absent from school and where appropriate medical evidence provided (even if they have contacted the school regarding the absence each day prior). Medical evidence will be expected should a child have an absence lasting 5 days or more. Failure to produce medical evidence will result in the absence remaining unauthorised.

In the event of a pupil being absent and a phone call has not been received to explain their absence Pupil Services will then either text or contact by phone parents or carers by 10am. If by the end of the school day, there has been no contact made via the parent as to the whereabouts of the pupil then the Police may be contacted. Pupils who are absent and the school considers them to be vulnerable children have been identified on a **First Day Response** procedure, which involves PSM's contacting home immediately following the closure of the register at 9.10am. A child is identified as vulnerable in any of the following categories: LAC, Child in Need, known truant, attendance below 90%, parental request, school nurse involvement, EWO involvement, or as identified by the Child Protection Officer, Learning Co-ordinators, Learning Mentors or indeed any other member of the SLT as in need of follow up. This process is repeated daily until the return of the pupil to school.

Pupils absent from school for a medical reason: where ever possible parents are encouraged to make routine medical (dental, GP) appointments after school or during school holidays. Where this is not possible, parents are encouraged to make appointments later in the day so pupils can attend school for the maximum amount of time or attend school before and after their appointment. Parents must inform the school prior to the absence either by sending in a copy of the appointment letter or a printed confirmation of attendance from the medical institution. If the medical reason involves a known stay in hospital (e.g. an operation) then a hospital or doctors letter **will be** required to be received by the school prior to the absence. Should an emergency hospital admission arise than medical documentation may be brought into school upon the pupils return to school.

It is the tutor's responsibility to remind the pupils in their tutor group that a written note must be provided on their return to school and to chase this up if it is not returned by the pupil immediately following their absence. Once a note has been received tutors are to forward the note to Pupil Services or to email Pupil Services with the relevant information; who will then enter the relevant code and details on SIMS e.g. I: Sickness bug note seen in journal. **Tutors are not to input or amend codes in SIMS.** All illnesses must be reported, so a pattern may be identified and further questioned if necessary. If a note has not been received by the fourth day following an absence when a reasonable number of reminders and notes in the pupil's journal have failed to elicit a response from parents, tutors then request a letter to be sent home from Pupil Services to remind parents. This letter is formally requesting the parents for a written response to confirm the reason for their child's absence. If we receive no communication from parents, this will then be recorded as an unauthorised absence. This procedure must be completed within two weeks of the pupils returning to school.

Third Day Absence and beyond

If a pupil still has not returned to school and is not on the first day response list, the tutor informs Pupil Services to confirm the absence has been longer than 3 days and if no information or phone call has been provided by parents regarding the reason for the absence, or the absence has been for 4 days or more (even with notification provided by the parents) a home visit may then take place by the School's Education Welfare Officer. Any pupil who is absent from school for more than 10 consecutive days without a valid explanation, will have their absence notified to the Local Authority. Further home visits will take place by the School's Education Welfare Officer.

Frequent Absence

It is the responsibility of the tutor in the first place to be aware of and bring attention to any emerging attendance concerns. Once a pupil's attendance is below 95% or there have been 3 separate absences, the tutor will have an informal talk with the pupil to make them aware of their attendance and to ascertain any reasons for the drop in attendance. This information should be passed onto the designated Learning Co-ordinator and a text sent home informing parents the discussion has taken place. Should the pupils' attendance further decline this will then be picked up by the designated Learning Co-ordinator linked to the pupil's year group, and a letter will be sent home informing parents of the discussion and that further absences may result in the EWO being made aware who then may also make contact with the parent. Where a pupil is frequently absent for the same medical reason, parents may be requested to liaise with the school nurse or provide evidence from a medical professional regarding the regularity of the absence.

In cases where a pupil begins to develop a pattern of absences or a reoccurring reason is given for absences, the school will try to resolve the problem with the parents. If this is unsuccessful the school will refer to the Education Welfare Officer for a home visit.

Persistent Absentees (below 90%)

The attendance and reasons for absences of pupils who regularly take time off school will be monitored closely by their tutors, the Learning Co-ordinators and Pupil Services. Texts, letters and phone calls home will be made by Pupil Services and discussions with parents may take place regarding further medical treatment should a reoccurring illness be identified. Should this level of intervention prove unsuccessful and absences exceed 10 days in total then the case is referred to the EWO. If absences continue, the school will then hold a **School Attendance Panel**. Representatives from the school will meet with child's parents, the pupil concerned and any external agencies to review the case and set attendance targets.

If further absences continue, the school will then hold a **Governor Attendance Panel**. Representatives from the school will meet with child's parents, the pupil concerned, and any external agencies to review the case and set attendance targets.

Parental Request for Leave of Absence

With effect from the 1st September 2013, an amendment has been made to the 2006 regulations in the **Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2013**, stating that Principals/Head teachers can no longer grant 10 days discretionary leave of absence for the purpose of a family holiday during term time. The amendment states that leave of absence may now only be granted during term time in exceptional circumstances. This means therefore that as a school we will not be able to authorise any requests for family holidays. However, we would ask that should parents intend to take their child out of school; a Leave of Absence form will still need to be completed.

If a parent believes their request for leave is of an exceptional nature, this will be reviewed by the Principal.

If a parent chooses to take their child out of school without approval this will be unauthorised and the Education Welfare Service will be notified and a Penalty Notice may be issued. A Penalty Notice is issued to each parent (as defined under s576 Education Act 1996) for each child taken out of school. A Penalty Notice is a fine of £60 if paid within 21 days rising to £120 if paid between 21 days and 28 days.

An unpaid Penalty Notice may lead to prosecution under the Education Act 1996 section 444 for the offence of failing to ensure your child's regular attendance, and may incur a fine of up to £1000.

Long Term and Chronic Absence

For children experiencing a long period of authorised absence, a plan will be prepared in consultation with the parent/carer and relevant professionals which focus on the individual needs of the child.

A reintegration plan will be devised and implemented for children returning to school who have been absent for long periods.

Sanctions

Where attempts to improve a child's attendance have failed, consideration will be given to enforcing attendance through the use of penalty notices, or prosecution through the Magistrates court.

Child Employment

To protect children there are laws which govern what hours and the type of work children of compulsory school age may undertake. Children may not participate in any employment (other than approved work experience) during school hours. Work permits must be obtained from the local authority within 7 days of the child commencing work. Employers who contravene the rules may face fines of up to £1,000 and find they are not covered by their insurance in the event of an accident.

A child's school attendance will be taken into consideration prior to a permit being issued.

Child Performance

Legislation requires that a local authority licence must be obtained before a child under school leaving age can take part in certain types of performance. A child's school attendance will be taken into consideration prior to a license being issued.

A Welcome Back

It is important that on return from an absence that all pupils are made to feel welcome. This should include ensuring that the pupil is helped to catch up on missed work and brought up to date on any information that has been passed to the other pupils. It is also the parents' responsibility to ensure that the pupil returning to school brings in written confirmation regarding the reason for their absence.

Rewarding Attendance

For each full week of 100% attendance pupils shall receive an achievement point, this will be awarded by the tutor each Friday.

Attendance Awards (certificates) are given to individuals with 100% attendance at the end of each term.

Pupils with 100% attendance for a full academic year are awarded a certificate and badge in an awards assembly.

Pupils in Y9-11 will not receive an Aiming Higher Certificate if their attendance is below 95%.

Tutor groups with the highest attendance are awarded each term.

Pupils with Outstanding attendance and no behaviour points will be invited to attend a reward afternoon at the end of each term.



PARENTAL INFORMATION FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 Regulation 7: Leave of absence

Due to the amendment above, which became effective on 1st September 2013, Headteachers/Principals **may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances**

Leave of absence may be granted by the Learning Director on behalf of the Principal if:

- (a) an application has been made at least two weeks in advance to the school by a parent with whom the pupil normally resides:
- (b) the school considers that leave of absence should be granted due to the **exceptional circumstances** relating to that application.

Should the Leave of Absence request exceed 5 days an appointment with the school attendance officer to discuss further must be made before the request can be considered.

If a request, or any part of it, is refused, and the child does not attend school, or if days in excess of granted leave are taken, that absence will be **unauthorised**.

The Education Welfare Service will be informed of Unauthorised Absences relating to requests for leave of absence and will take appropriate action, which could include a Penalty Notice or prosecution.

IMPORTANT – If you still intend to take your child away from school please consider the following facts:

There is a strong link between the amount of absence and the results/qualifications that a pupil achieves. Every lesson matters – children who have time off often find it difficult to catch up and do well at school. Research suggests that just 17 days missed from school equates to one grade lower at GCSE.

A pupil who takes a 10 day holiday, during one whole academic year, will only attain 94.7% attendance. A pupil in the Upper School therefore will not be awarded an Aiming Higher Certificate, which is only awarded to those pupils who have attendance above 95%.



LEAVE OF ABSENCE REQUEST FORM

PARENT TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:

Pupil's Name:

Tutor Group: Year

First Day of Leave..... Last Day of Leave.....

Reason for application and dates:

.....

I would like to request that the above pupil is given Leave of Absence from school for the dates requested.

I confirm that the above dates are correct and that the number of days pupil would be absent from school will be

I have read the accompanying information and am aware that a leave of absence can have an adverse effect on progress, and ultimately affect performance in external examinations.

Full Names of Parents/Guardian (please print):

.....

Signed: Date:

Office Use Only

Request seen by Learning Director	Y/N	Current Attendance %	<input type="text"/>
Permission Granted	Y/N		
Other outcome			
Any GCSE Exams during requested absence dates.....Y/N			
Letter from Employers received.....Y/N		Date	

Date Request Received



LEAVE OF ABSENCE

School Response

Pupil's Name: Tutor Group:

The school acknowledges that the above pupil will be absent from school

from to inclusive.

The absence is authorised / not authorised* by the school. *If you choose to take your child out of school for the leave of absence this will be recorded as unauthorised leave. In the case of unauthorised leave the Education Welfare Service will be notified and a Penalty Notice may be issued. Please note that a Penalty Notice is issued to each parent (as defined under s576 Education Act 1996) for each child taken out of school. A Penalty Notice is a fine of £60 if paid within 21 days rising to £120 if paid between 21 days and 28 days. An unpaid Penalty Notice may lead to prosecution through the Magistrates court and may incur a fine of up to £1000.

Signed:

Date:

Position:

* delete as appropriate

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Signed:

Date

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* delete as appropriate

APPENDIX 2

Attendance Guidance for Tutors and Teachers

- The tutor group register **must be** completed as the first task of the day
- All pupils who are late after (8.35am) must sign in at the pupil reception, who will amend the register accordingly
- The pm registration taken during **period 4** must be completed at the start of the lesson
- All pupils absent from lessons must be marked with a code N even if you know the reason for the absence. If a code is already showing on the register **do not** change it.
- Tutors **should not** amend their tutor group codes on receipt of an absence note; however, they should pass this onto Pupil Services who will amend the code.
- Tutors **should not** input code H for holidays as holidays can no longer be sanctioned, therefore only Pupil Services should enter these codes. (Or any other alternative codes)

Procedures for pupils who are late

- **1st late** the tutor should warn the pupil and note the late in the pupils' journal and issue a C1 on SIMS.
- **2nd late** the tutor should note the late in the pupils' journal and issue a break time detention and issue a C2 on SIMS.
- **3rd late** tutor to complete a late slip or send an email to pupil services who will issue a lunch time detention in pupil services and issue a C3 on SIMS.
- **4th late** tutor to complete a late slip or send an email to pupil services who will write home and an afterschool detention issued with pupil services and issue a C4 on SIMS.
- **All subsequent lates** will result in after school detentions with pupil services. Tutors to inform pupil services via a late slip or via email.
- Each term the consequences will start again to be in line with the Behaviour, Rewards & Sanctions Policy e.g. a pupil who receives a 4th late in January will only receive a C1 if their previous late marks were recorded September – December.

(Pupils who are late to lessons should be punished by the subject teacher following the behaviour policy)

Procedures following pupil absences

If the absence has been for a total 3 days or more **or** there has been no reason given for the absence prior to the pupil's return to school, then a note must be presented on the **first day** following a pupil absence, the tutor should then forward the information to Pupil Services who will enter the code accordingly as well as enter the reason on SIMS. If a note is not received a warning is issued and a reminder placed in the journal by the tutor.

Please note: if the Health and Welfare Assistant has sent a pupil home in the morning or afternoon a note is not required. However, if the pupil does not return after 2 or more days have passed, a note is required for the subsequent absences.

If the note is not returned on the **third day** another reminder should be placed in the pupil's journal and a break time detention issued with the tutor. If a note is still not received on the **fourth day**, the tutor requests a letter to be sent home from Pupil Services to remind parents. After a further three days, if no note is received, you need to inform Pupil Services who will then send another letter home. If Pupil Services have received a note stating a reason for the absence and the pupil returns to school after one or two days' absence Pupil Services will change the code N to the appropriate code e.g. 'I' for illness. All code 'N' s must be removed within 2 weeks following an absence, if no note is received during that time an unauthorised absence code 0 is input by Pupil Services.

Once a pupil's attendance is below 95% or there have been 3 separate absences, the tutor will have an informal talk with the pupil to make them aware of their attendance and to ascertain any reasons for the drop in attendance. This information should be passed onto the designated Learning Co-ordinator and a text will be sent home informing parents of the discussion. Should the pupils' attendance further decline, this will then be picked up by the designated Learning Co-ordinator linked to the child's year group and a letter will be sent home informing parents of the discussion and that further absences may result in the EWO being made aware who then may also make contact with the parent.