



The Hayesbrook School

A Brook Learning Trust Academy

Attendance Policy



Introduction

At Brook Learning Trust we bring together our unique academies in our belief in the power of education to change lives and communities. It is our steadfast purpose to challenge and defy the barriers that constrain the educational progress of any child. We set high aims for aspiration and secure collective responsibility for all our children's achievements. Our work is underpinned by the values of Integrity, Respect, Courage, Optimism, Excellence and Accountability.

Aim

To define the standards required by The Hayesbrook School students and the responsibilities of staff and parents.

Objectives

The Hayesbrook School is committed to the continuous raising of achievement of all pupils. This policy will:

- Ensure that all students strive to achieve 100% attendance.
- Define procedures when a student is absent.
- Clarify position on term-time and holiday absence.

Why regular attendance is so important:

Absence from school disrupts the pattern of a student's education, disrupts teaching routines and will have an adverse effect on the learning of others. The school offers a broad and balanced curriculum and to facilitate this, many academic topics may not be re-visited. Before permitting any absence, we urge parents/carers to carefully consider the negative implications of missed learning opportunities.

The academic year consists of 195 days of which 5 are staff inset/training days with pupils not being required to attend on these days. Students who attend for the full 190 days will achieve 100% attendance for the academic year and are highly likely to achieve best grades for their ability, enabling them to continue their studies and raise their earning potential in the world of work.

Method of Implementation

The school day begins with Morning Registration at 08.45am and concludes each day at 3.00pm except on a Thursday when the school day concludes at 3.50pm. Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everyone's responsibility, it is not only the responsibility of parents/carers, it is also the responsibility of the student with the support of all members of the school staff.

To help focus on this we will:

1. Report to Parents/carers on their sons' performance in school, giving their attendance percentage and how this relates to their attainments;
2. Celebrate good attendance by displaying individual and group achievements;
3. Reward good or improving attendance through competitions, certificates and outings/events.
4. Work with students, parents/carers and the appropriate agencies to provide mutual advice and support to those who give low priority to attendance and punctuality.

Understanding types of absence:

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by parent/carer), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. It is a legal requirement that morning and afternoon registers are taken each day. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required, by a telephone call or email to the school before 9.30am on the day of absence.

Call the school on 01732 500600 and choose option 1 to leave a message or dial 223 to speak to the Attendance and Inclusion Officer.

Authorised absences include mornings or afternoons absent from school for a valid reason such as illness, urgent medical/dental appointments or other emergencies. All non-urgent medical or routine dental appointments should be arranged outside of the school day or during the holiday periods. Please do not arrange appointments before 3.50pm on a Thursday as this additional lesson forms part of the school curriculum and absences will be recorded.

If students are required to leave early or be absent from lessons for an urgent appointment, please write a letter which the student should present to the Attendance and Inclusion Officer. The Attendance and Inclusion Officer will then issue an official pass which can be shown to the local Police or Local Authority Attendance Service if required to confirm that the school is aware of the absence.

To enable the appointment to be authorised parents/carers may also be required to provide a copy of the medical appointment letter or dental appointment card.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave of absence' has been approved. This type of absence may be subject to Penalty Notices or legal proceedings issued by the Local Authority.

Unauthorised absences include:

1. Truancy during the school day
2. Absences which have no proper explanation
3. Persistent absence due to illness that has no supporting medical evidence
4. Students who arrive late to lesson after the registers have closed
5. Absence from school to undertake shopping, look after other children or celebrate birthdays
6. Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
7. Day trips or holidays taken during term time
8. Excessive absence due to medical/dental appointments without good reason

Absence Procedures:

If a student is absent from school, Parents/carers should: Telephone the school as soon as possible or by 9.30am on the first day of absence with an update every day if the absence is ongoing.

Call the school on 01732 500600 and choose option 1 to leave a message regarding the absence or speak to the Attendance and Inclusion Officer or Student Manager.

Consider providing the school with any supporting medical evidence if the absence is likely to continue.

Unless advised by a medical practitioner the school will **not** request 48hours clear of symptoms such as sickness and diarrhoea if the student feels well enough to attend.

It is a parent/carer's responsibility to contact the school to inform of any absence to support the safeguarding and welfare of all students. If a student is absent we will:

1. Text or telephone to request information from parents/carers if we have not received a valid reason for the absence;
2. Invite parents/carers in to the school to discuss the situation with the Attendance and Inclusion Officer/ Student Manager or Head of Year if the absences persists.
3. Refer the matter to the Local Authority Attendance Service.

Telephone numbers:

To comply with health and safety guidelines it is important that we have up to date contact information at all times. There are a variety of reasons that the school may need to contact parents, including ill health, school emergencies or to discuss unexplained absences.

To confirm with parents/carers the reason for a student's absence, the school will generally use the first contact number listed on the student's record but please be aware that if unsuccessful in making contact, the absence may be recorded as unauthorised.

Lateness:

Students should be on the school premises no later than **8.40am**. The school day starts at **8.45am** and we expect students to be settled in class promptly to encourage a calm and responsive start to lessons.

How we manage lateness:

The Hayesbrook School has an electronic registration system which records the National Attendance Codes set by the DfE (Department for Education).

Morning Registers are marked during the first ten minutes of the start of lesson at **8.45am** and students will receive a late mark if not present by that time.

At 10am each morning the Registers will be closed. The school is only permitted to keep registers open due to extreme local transport issues or severe weather conditions. In accordance with regulations, students arriving after 10am will receive a mark that shows them to be on the school premises, but this will **not** count as a present mark and will be recorded as an unauthorised absence.

All students should arrive at school by 8.40am to allow prompt registration at 8.45am. Persistent late arrivals will be noted. If a student arrives after the gates are closed they are required to sign in at reception with the Attendance and Inclusion Officer to confirm their presence in school in the event of a fire or other emergency evacuation.

Please note that sanctions may be imposed if a student fails to register as this contravenes our Health & Safety policy.

If students have a persistent late record, parents/carers may be invited to attend the school to discuss the matter. The Local Authority Behaviour and Attendance Service may consider issuing a Penalty Notice if the problem persists. Parents/carers may approach the school at any time if students are having problems getting to school on time.

Students should endeavour to ensure that they are correctly registered but if they are concerned that an error has occurred, they should review their attendance record with the Attendance and Inclusion Officer who will investigate further.

Afternoon Registers are marked during the first ten minutes of the start of lessons at 12.20pm (or 12.50pm on a Friday) and unless students have an authorised reason for arriving in class after this register, they will be deemed late for that session.

Leave of absence during term time:

Please be aware that the school policy will be rigorously applied and Penalty Notices will be issued for leave of absence unless the school considers there to be exceptional circumstances.

Taking holidays in term time will affect students schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents/carers to support their son's education by avoiding holidays during the school term. Financial savings that you may achieve by taking a holiday in school time will be offset by the cost to a student's education. Please also consider the further financial implication of Penalty Notices issued for unauthorised holiday or extended holidays. Examinations and Assessments are regularly held throughout the academic year. The school may not have prior notification of all examination dates but if the absence is unavoidable we do suggest that parents/carers contact the School Examinations Officer to discuss proposed dates. If you consider you have exceptional circumstances, please write to the school outlining your reasons at least 4 weeks in advance to enable the Head of School to consider your request.

From September 2013 the Department for Education have amended the Pupil Registration Regulations, removing the Head of School's ability to authorise leave of absence for the purpose of a family holiday.

Requests for holidays in term time will not be authorised.

The Head of School may authorise absence in 'exceptional circumstances' but this must be requested in advance and agreement to each request is at the discretion of the Head of School, acting on behalf of the Academy Council (Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006). Each case will be judged on its merits and the Head of School's decision is final. Once the decision not to authorise leave is taken, it cannot be authorised retrospectively.

If the absence is not authorised and the holiday is taken anyway, the school will follow the Code of Conduct for Education Penalty Notices. Where applicable, the case will be referred to the PRU Inclusion and Attendance Service who will issue a Penalty Notice to each parent for each child taken out of school.

Penalty Notices:

The school works under the guidance of the Local Authority PRU Inclusion and Attendance Service (PIAS) who may issue a Penalty Notice or Court Proceedings for continued unauthorised absences. A Penalty Notice is an alternative to prosecution. A Penalty Notice is a fixed amount of a fine for the child's non-attendance at school and is presently £120. The Penalty Notice will apply to each parent and each person with parental responsibility. This fine can be reduced to £60 with prompt payment.

Failure to pay the penalty in full by the end of the 21 day period may result in prosecution by the Local Authority. For further information parents/carers may contact the Attendance and Inclusion Officer on 01732 500600 extension 223.

Local Authority PRU Inclusion & Attendance Service (PIAS)

Attendance Records for all students are regularly reviewed by the School Liaison Officer of PIAS. Unauthorised and persistent absence, including late arrival to school, may lead to a referral to the Local Authority for action or Penalty Notice and possible prosecution. As a matter of course the Local Authority Attendance School Liaison Officer will often speak to students collectively and individually to discuss the value of regular attendance at school.

