

Hummersknott Academy



5 – Attendance/Absence Policy

Review Date: September 2021

Adopted/V1	V2	V3	V4				
Sept 2012	Dec 2014	Oct 2017	Oct 2018				

Hummersknott Academy Trust incorporates Hummersknott Academy and Skerne Park Academy and unless otherwise stated this policy and procedure applies to all Academies equally. This policy relates to Hummersknott Academy only.

PURPOSE

Hummersknott Academy is committed to providing a full and effective education for all its students to ensure they achieve their potential in all that they do.

We recognise the importance of good school attendance and research clearly demonstrates the link between regular attendance and educational progress and attainment.

SCOPE

Hummersknott Academy will support students to ensure they access the best education that we can offer and will work in partnership with parents/carers in ensuring they are aware of their legal responsibilities regarding their child's education and support their child to achieve their maximum possible attendance, ensuring any problems are identified and acted on promptly.

Regular attendance is a prerequisite to a good education and therefore a priority for the Academy.

Statutory Guidance

- The Education Act 1996 - sections 434(1)(3)(4)&(6) and 458(4)&(5)
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2011
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016
- Keeping children safe in education
- Parental responsibility measures for behaviour and attendance

Expectations

97-100%	Excellent
96%	Expected
Below 95%	A cause for concern
Below 90%	Persistent Absentee and a serious cause for concern

We expect that all students will:

- attend school regularly
- arrive on time, appropriately dressed in correct school uniform and prepared for the school day
- follow school rules

We expect all parents to:

- ensure their child attends school every day and on time
- ensure that their child arrives to school wearing school uniform with the correct equipment fully prepared for the school day
- provide the school with up to date home, work and emergency contact numbers
- inform school in confidence of any problem which might impact on their child's attendance or punctuality
- be aware that it is their responsibility to inform school of the reason for their child's absence
- contact school on the first day of absence before 8.45 am when their child is unable to attend

- provide medical evidence if requested by school
- arrange all holidays during the thirteen weeks of school holidays and not during term time
- support our school's procedures in promoting outstanding attendance for all and attend appropriate meetings in school to discuss their child's attendance
- work in partnership with the school, emphasising to their children the importance of respecting school rules

Parents/carers can expect that Academy will:

- provide the highest quality of education
- promote and encourage excellent attendance and punctuality
- raise awareness of the importance of excellent attendance with parents, around school and within the local community
- maintain an effective electronic registration system
- regularly monitor attendance and use data to identify emerging patterns of absence
- closely monitor the attendance of identified vulnerable groups of students
- through our effective guidance system, report any problems which could impact on a student's attendance or punctuality
- address the causes of non-attendance
- work with parents, the Local Authority and external agencies to improve attendance
- make every reasonable effort to contact the parent/carer when a child fails to attend school and the school has not been notified of the reason for the absence
- provide work during a period of authorised absence, or on a student's return
- support students upon return to school after a period of absence
- include attendance data in appropriate school reports
- act promptly and confidentially when notified of a problem which could impact on attendance or punctuality
- comply with safeguarding regulations

Governors will:

- attend attendance meetings when required
- agree attendance targets
- monitor and evaluate attendance statistics
- set areas for improvement to establish and maintain the best levels of attendance for all students. To assist with this, the Headteacher/Vice Principal will report to Governors termly on attendance related issues

Rewards

Hummersknott Academy recognises the importance of praise and reward. To encourage all students to realise the importance of good attendance and punctuality, not only to achieve their full potential at school but also their life goals, there is a monitoring system which incorporates rewards and consequences. In order for students to be considered to take part in school trips and receive their rewards, they must have excellent attendance and punctuality.

Absence

It is the responsibility of parents/carers to inform school of the reason for their child's absence. Contact should be made with the Academy on the first day of absence before 8.45 am when a child is unable to attend. If the Academy does not receive notification, the Academy operates a first-day response procedure. A home visit may be made at the discretion of the Academy to ascertain the whereabouts of a student who has failed to attend. Once a student returns to the Academy a 'return to school' interview may take place with the Form Mentor (use script to assist you).

Admission Registers

The admission register contains the personal details of every student in the Academy, along with the date of admission or re-admission to the Academy, information regarding parents and carers and details of the school last attended.

The Academy will notify the local authority within five days of adding a student's name to the admission register and will provide the local authority with all the information held within the admission register about the student. This duty does not apply to students who are added to the admission register at the start of the Academy's youngest year – for example students who are registered at a secondary school at the start of Year 7 - unless the local authority also requests for such information to be provided.

Expected First Day of Attendance

The Academy will enter students on the admission register and attendance register from the beginning of the first day on which the Academy has agreed, or been notified, that the student will attend the Academy. For most students the expected first day of attendance is the first day of the school year. If a student fails to attend on the agreed or notified date, the Academy will establish the reason for the absence and mark the attendance register accordingly.

Students Moving to a New Address and/or School

Where the parent of a student notifies the Academy that the student will live at another address, the Academy will record the following in the admission register:

- full name of the parent with whom the student will live
- new address
- the date from when it is expected the student will live at this address

Where a parent notifies the Academy that the student is registered at another school or will be attending a different school, the Academy will record the following in the admission register:

- the name of the other school
- the date of when the student first attended, or is due to start attending, that school

Children at Risk of Missing Education

Local Authorities have a duty to put in place arrangements for identifying (as far as it is possible) those children of compulsory school age in their area who are not school registered or receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school. Local Authorities should trace those children and ensure that they receive full-time education.

The Academy will notify the Local Authority when a student's name is to be deleted from the admission register under any of the grounds prescribed in regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended, as soon as the ground for removal is met and no later than the time at which the student's name is removed from the register.

This duty does not apply where the student's name is removed after they have completed the school's final year, unless the Local Authority requests for such information to be provided.

When the Academy notifies a Local Authority that a student's name is to be deleted from the admission register, the Academy will provide the Local Authority with the following information:

- the full name of the student
- the full name and address of any parent with whom the student lives
- at least one telephone number of any parent with whom the student lives

- the full name and address of the parent who the student is going to live with, and the date
- the student is expected to start living there, if applicable
- the name of student's other or future school and the student's start date or expected start date there, if applicable
- the ground prescribed in regulation 8 under which the student's name is to be deleted from the admission register

The Academy will inform the Local Authority of any student who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent without the Academy's permission for a continuous period of 5 days or more.

Marking of Registers – the Academy will follow Government Guidelines:

There is a legal requirement upon Academies to keep an accurate attendance register at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session to mark students present or absent. This is also part of the Academy's Safeguarding Procedure. There is also a requirement that attendance records must show whether an absence of a student of compulsory school age is authorised or unauthorised.

Hummersknott Academy uses Bromcom Management System for registration which incorporates a lesson monitor. Taking of registers is an integral part of the school day, as was intended by the law and particular attention is paid to accurate use of codes. These codes can be found in the Attendance and Absence Procedure

Falsification of attendance registers may lead to disciplinary action. Registers in the Academy will be checked on a termly basis to ensure the correct codes are entered. This will be completed by Senior Leaders and a link member from the Governing Body.

Authorised/Unauthorised Absence

Authorised absence means that the Academy has either given approval in advance for a student of compulsory school age to be away, or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification.

Unauthorised absence is where the Academy is not satisfied with the reasons given for the absence. Only the Academy can approve absence, not parents/carers. The Academy is not obliged to accept a parental note or other form of notification as a valid reason for absence and further evidence may be requested. If, after investigation doubt remains about the explanation offered, or where no explanation is given, the absence will be treated as unauthorised.

Where parents condone unjustified absence the Academy will commence attendance procedures at an early stage and this may lead to a referral to the Local Authority for Statutory Procedures. Should a student feel unwell in school, the student must follow the Academy's procedure and inform medical if they feel too poorly to remain in school. If appropriate, the Academy will call home to notify parents/carers who can decide if they wish the child to be collected. The Academy does not allow parents/carers to collect their child during the school day without the Academy's permission as this has serious safeguarding implications.

Medical Appointments

The Academy recognises that occasionally medical appointments during the school day are unavoidable. However, students are expected to return to school immediately following an appointment and medical evidence may be requested. The vast majority of medical appointments do not require a full day, or even a full session of absence. In line with safeguarding regulations, students are required to sign in and out of school when they arrive or leave during the school day.

Requests for absence in term-time

Permission must be sought from the Principal for all absences that occur during term-time. A 'request for leave of absence' form must be completed in advance of the absence (available from the office). Only the Principal can decide if the absence is to be authorised or unauthorised.

Under current regulations, Academies cannot authorise any holidays taken in term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The Academy will require evidence of exceptional circumstances, which should be attached to the 'request for leave of absence form' and the judgement about what is exceptional will be made by the Principal.

Holidays taken in term time can have a very negative impact on a child's education, as well as the Academy's attendance statistics and examination results. Research has shown that a 4% absence (equivalent to 15 sessions in a school year) can mean a significant decline in performance at GCSE. For absences that are due to sporting or other educational activities which have not been organised by the Academy, evidence of the event must accompany the 'request for leave of absence' form.

Punctuality

Punctuality is extremely important. All students are required to arrive punctually for registration at 8:30 a.m. in the morning and 1:00 p.m.

If a student arrives after the close of registration at 8:50 a.m. the session can be recorded as 'U' mark on the registration certificate which is an unauthorised absence and will impact on their overall attendance.

We also expect students to arrive punctually to lessons. Students who arrive late to lessons not only affect their own learning but also seriously disrupt the learning of others in the class.

The Academy has strict disciplinary procedures for dealing with persistent lateness and rewards for excellent punctuality.

Truancy

When the Academy becomes aware that a student is truanting, whether it is internal or external truancy, parents/carers may be contacted and the truancy will be recorded as unauthorised absence.

Persistent Absenteeism

The Department for Education deems that if a student's attendance drops below 90% they become known as a persistent absentee, regardless of the reason for the absence and irrespective of whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any student's educational prospects and parent/carer's full support and co-operation is required to avoid this.

At Hummersknott Academy all absence is monitored thoroughly and any case seen to have reached the persistent absence level or becoming at risk of reaching it is given priority. Continued persistent absence may lead to a referral to the Local Authority for statutory procedures.

This policy links with values 1 - Academic Excellence, 3 - Nothing but the best for all, 4 - Taking responsibility and 5 - Foundations for future success, of Hummersknott Academy Trust's Vision and Values.

RESPONSIBILITY

This policy will be reviewed and updated where necessary by the Vice Principal Student Support, Welfare, Guidance and Progress and approved for adoption by the Curriculum and Standards Committee.

PUBLICISING THE POLICY

A copy of this policy and related procedure will be available on the Academy's website and the X Drive/intranet. Staff will be advised of amendments to this policy via the Staff Bulletin and are expected to familiarise themselves with the content.

POLICY STATUS

This is a non-statutory policy.