



**Hanwell Fields Community School**

The best in everyone™

Part of United Learning

## **Attendance and Punctuality Policy**

### **Aim of the Policy**

The aim of this policy is to ensure that all pupils at Hanwell Fields Community School receive a full time education which maximises opportunities for each pupil to realise their true potential. With a direct relationship between attendance, punctuality and attainment, this policy aims to set out how Hanwell Fields Community School will achieve an overall percentage of **at least 97% attendance**.

### **Purpose of the Policy**

The purpose of this policy is to set out in clear terms the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders at Hanwell Fields Community School, together with the procedures to be followed in ensuring the aim is met. It provides a framework for the workforce.

#### **1. Specific Aims**

*The policy has the following elements:*

- a) To outline the procedure for recording and reporting attendance and punctuality
- b) To achieve an overall attendance and punctuality target of at least 97% in all compulsory aged year groups, and 95% in non-compulsory aged year groups (under 5).
- c) To highlight the importance of good attendance in the first three years of school in setting a solid foundation for future success
- d) To ensure attendance and punctuality is a priority for those associated with Hanwell Fields Community School, including parents, staff and governors and others working in partnership with Hanwell Fields Community School.
- e) To set out the interventions and rewards which will be implemented to improve attendance and punctuality; and
- f) To develop a framework which defines agreed roles and responsibilities for attendance and punctuality.

#### **2. Specific Roles and Responsibilities under the Policy:**

- It is the responsibility of each individual family to ensure that their children attend school, on time, for every day the school is open. The only exception to this should be if a child has a medical condition which could prevent them, or others, from successfully learning.

- In the instance of absence due to a contagious illness (e.g. chicken pox, measles, diarrhoea) it is the responsibility of the parent/carer to ensure that the child is no longer contagious before returning to school, for the health and safety of all members of the school community. *(We recommend 48 hours after the last episode, please see further guidance on the school website)*
- It is the responsibility of parents to arrange (where possible) for all appointments, including medical appointments - to take place outside of school hours (8.50 – 3.15). Where this is not possible children should attend school as soon as possible after the appointment and, if applicable, before the appointment takes place.
- It is the responsibility of parents to inform school of any absence by **9am** on each day of any absence. Parents should inform school by phoning the school office/absence line between 8am – 9am, or by sending a text message/email at [admin@hanwellfields.org](mailto:admin@hanwellfields.org) stating why their child is absent.
- It is the responsibility of the school to praise those children and families with good or better attendance
- It is the responsibility of the school to take an attendance register twice daily and to ensure that all families are kept informed at timely, regular intervals of their child's attendance and any issues that may arise from that *(this will be through letters, reports home to parents and twice a year attendance data certificates)*

### 3. Strategies to promote Attendance and Punctuality

#### 3.1 Recording and Reporting Attendance and Punctuality

##### Recording Attendance

- **Teachers will** take the register AM at the start of the day (by 8.50am) and PM following lunch time play which incorporates the two legal registers of the day (AM and PM)
- **The School Office will** check that the AM/PM registers have been taken by teachers. The School Office will take phone calls reporting child absences between the hours of 8.30 am and 9am. Once the register has been taken at 8.50am and has been checked, the school office (attendance administration) will record all absences via our computerised system. Where no phone call has been received/reason for absence recorded by the parent/carer the **absence will be logged as unauthorised**. It is the parent/carers responsibility to inform the school of their child's absence on the first day of the child's absence and daily until the child has returned to school.
- The attendance administration will endeavour to make contact with all parents of children who are absent from school after 9.15am; this will be via phone call/text message.
- **Periods of Absence with no parent contact.**

During any period of absence, the school office will make contact with a family to ensure that there are no further concerns for the pupil. After two days of absence, an Attendance Officer will phone the family to discuss the absence. If there is no response, and the attendance continues for three days a home visit will be carried out to ensure the safety and welfare of the child. If a pupil is absent for a period of 10 days and there has been no contact with families/guardians the attendance administrator must contact the **Local Authority: Attendance and Engagement Team**. If there are concerns about the student's welfare then these enquires must begin earlier. In the case of **Looked After Children or any children who are considered vulnerable** on the second day of no contact agencies will also be contacted in line with safeguarding at Hanwell Fields Community School.

- **Pupils arriving after 8.50am** - the parent/carer will be required to sign in the late arrivals book at the school office. The office will check the signing in book at 9.00am and at intervals thereafter to record L or U marks after 9.20am.

### **3.2 Reporting Attendance and Punctuality**

#### **The School Office Administrators will**

- Ensure registers are completed each day, by 9.30am and correct codes are used for logging attendance and absences.
- Monitor absences, if children are off for 2+ consecutive days to share this with the Inclusion Team

#### **The Attendance Team will**

- Report attendance and punctuality figures broken down into categories set out in Appendix 2 for the Headteacher, Senior Leadership Team and Class Teachers. Attendance will also be reported for the different groups in the School (FSM, Ethnicity, Gender, SEN, Year Group);
- Provide any necessary information for the Local Governing Body;
- Will provide all necessary information for annual attendance returns;
- Support the Class Teachers with their role in Attendance and Punctuality and will let them know the weekly attendance for their class.
- Provide necessary information for reporting to parents during the year at regular intervals.

#### **Class Teachers will**

- Report attendance to parents three times a year at parent meetings, using information generated for them by the Attendance Team.

### **3.3 Recording Punctuality**

- **Pupils arriving at Hanwell Fields Community School in the morning will** receive a late mark (L) if they arrive after 9.00 and before 9.20am. If pupils arrive after the register has closed (9.20am) they will receive a U mark.



**4. Supporting Students with their Attendance** the following strategies will be followed to provide both parents/carers and pupils with support advice and guidance to improve pupil attendance.

**Table 1) Attendance Categories at HFCS**

| Stage         | % Required                                  |
|---------------|---|
| <b>GOLD</b>   | <b>100% - Perfect!</b>                      |
| <b>SILVER</b> | <b>Above 97%</b>                            |
| <b>GREEN</b>  | <b>Above 95%</b>                            |
| <b>AMBER</b>  | <b>Warning – Cause for Concern → 90-95%</b> |
| <b>RED</b>    | <b>Action Required → Below 90%</b>          |

#### **4.1 Attendance Targets and Parent/Carer Discussions**

The importance of 95% attendance as a **minimum** will be discussed with parents on entry to Hanwell Fields Community School, as well as when reporting to parents throughout the school year on attendance. The importance of punctuality will be discussed with parents on entry to Hanwell Fields Community School, as well as throughout the school year at parents meetings.

#### **4.2 Informing all parents and guardians**

All parents and carers will receive their child's attendance certificate/letter termly. This will be discussed with class teachers at parents meetings. Where attendance is a concern, the Attendance Officer or member of SLT will join the meeting to discuss attendance.

#### **4.3 Students whose attendance falls below 95%**

Any child whose attendance falls below 90% will be monitored monthly on the High Level Log. This is reviewed each month. Parents will be informed via a **Warning Letter** that their child is on the High Level Log and we are monitoring attendance because it has dropped below 90%. The High Level Log will detail if the students are SEN students and/or Pupil Premium students.

The attendance team will notify the Head Teacher, Senior Team, Safeguarding and Family Welfare Co-ordinator and relevant class teachers on a termly basis of the children who are on the High Level Log and the support in place for them. If it is felt necessary, a multi-agency team will be convened to support the child in their attendance or punctuality and other related issues.

Where appropriate the school will begin dialogue with parents/carers whose children's attendance is being monitored due to being below 90% and invite families in for an **'Attendance Action Meeting.'** Whilst in this meeting, an **Attendance Contract** will be written. This will detail actions to be taken by parents/carers, as well as the school attendance and engagement teams where applicable. This will then be signed. If parents do not attend the meeting, or refuse to sign the agreement, this will be created/finalised by the team in their absence and a copy will be sent to them following the meeting.

#### 4.4 Students whose attendance falls below 85%

If a pupil's attendance falls below 85% or less, the attendance officer or attendance administrator will notify the Oxfordshire Attendance and Engagement team. Provided the student has received a **Warning Letter**, an **Attendance Action Meeting** has taken place and an **Attendance Contract** has been written and reviewed at least once, a formal referral will be made to the Attendance and Engagement team.

When deciding on the level of action the school will take, historical records and levels of attendance, patterns of absence, unauthorised holidays and medical absences will be taken into account.

#### 5. Implement a system of rewards

In order to highlight to pupils, parents and carers the value of attendance and punctuality, the following rewards will be in place:

- a) If pupil's attendance improves whilst on an Attendance Contract, a member of Senior Team will write home to congratulate the pupil.
- b) A trophy for the best class attendance will be handed out in assembly at the end of every half term, with a feature in the newsletter.
- c) Attendance for each class will be recorded on classroom doors and updated weekly.
- d) Class Teachers will promote good attendance, and raise awareness of possible rewards using displays, assemblies, discussions and parents meetings.

#### 6. Time away from school in Term-time

Any time away from school in term time is strongly discouraged due to the impact this will have on a pupil's learning. Time off during term time will **not be authorised** unless there are **exceptional circumstances**. These circumstances will be considered by the Head Teacher, but by way of guidance the following **would not** be exceptional reasons:

- If the reason given is that the time off is for a holiday that is cheaper in term time
- If the reason given is the availability of the holiday
- If the reason given is the overlap with Hanwell Fields Community School holiday time

Permission is likely to be refused if;

- A student's attendance is below 95%
- It is near exam or test time
- It is the view of the Head Teacher that it may have a harmful effect on a pupil's education

#### 6.1 Procedure for applying for time off in Term-time

Parents/Carers need to apply for approval of time away from school on the standard application form held at the school office before the proposed time away.

Any requests need to include supporting evidence. This should include by way of example;

- Doctors Notes
- Wedding Invitations

- Where travel is authorised, we will ask for transport details/tickets

Hanwell Fields Community School will respond to this request giving reasons for the decision to approve or not. If the application for leave is approved the letter to parents will state;

- The expected date of return
- The need for the parents to contact the school should any delay occur
- What action will be taken if the pupil fails to return on the agreed date.

If the application is refused, Hanwell Fields Community School will write to the parents/carers and what actions will be taken if the parents ignore the refusal and keep their child away.

## 7. Penalty Notice

The Education Act 1996 Part 1, Section 7 states:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable –

- a) To his age, ability and aptitude and
- b) To any special needs he may have

Either by regular attendance at school or by education otherwise.

For educational purposes the term parent is used to include those that have parental responsibility and/or those that have the day to day care of the child. The legislation that appertains to children who are of compulsory school age and are registered at school is contained within this Act.

Part V1 Section 444 contains the details of when an offence is committed if a child fails to attend school. In cases of **persistent absenteeism** (see below for definition), the school reserves the right to ask the County Attendance Team to either issue a Penalty Notice Warning which could result in a fine or further legal action through the courts.

A Penalty Notice is a fine that the County Attendance Team may decide to issue instead of taking legal action through the Magistrates Court system.

A Parent/Carer can be issued with a penalty notice if:

- They fail to ensure that their child attends school, or other education provision regularly, usually defined as six or more unauthorised absence sessions over a six week period;
- They allow their child to take a leave of absence during term time without the school's authorisation;
- They fail to return their child to school on the agreed date after a period of authorised leave of absence;
- Their child persistently arrives late for school after registration has closed.

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' (PA) when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year **for whatever reason**. Absence at this level causes considerable damage to

any child's education prospects and Hanwell Fields Community School aims to work with parent's, utilising their fullest support and co-operation to tackle this.

Please see Appendix 2 for the process Hanwell Fields Community School will use when requesting Penalty Notices.

#### **8. Chronic Illness over time**

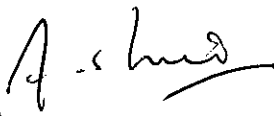
If a child is deemed to be ill for a period of time, medical evidence will be obtained from the child's doctor. Parental permission must have been given through signing a permission form. This documentation is important to support the bank of evidence around the attendance of the pupil.

#### **9. Policy Monitoring, Evaluation and Review**

This policy will be monitored on an ongoing basis, with regular oversight from the Governors. Parent/Carers will be consulted with, in particular in relation to rewards for good attendance and punctuality. This policy will be formally evaluated annually, prior to the annual review by the Governing Body of Hanwell Fields Community School.

**Ratified by Governors:**

**Date:**

  
16-07-2021.

## Appendix 1

### EVERYONE has a responsibility for pupil Attendance and Punctuality

Specific roles and responsibilities for Attendance and Punctuality

| Person of Group with Responsibility | Responsibilities   |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| <b>All</b>                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Act in way which encourages and promotes a high level of attendance and punctuality</li> <li>• Consistently follow, support and enforce Hanwell Fields Community School's attendance and punctuality policy</li> <li>• Create an ethos and environment in which all pupils feel welcomed, wanted and eager to come to school</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Class Teachers</b>               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take registers AM and PM, in a timely manner (within 15 minutes of the start of registration), which incorporates the two legal registers of the day.</li> <li>• Implement all aspects of Hanwell Fields Community School's policy and procedures for attendance and punctuality</li> <li>• Lead by example by being punctual and by planning interesting and stimulating lessons which motivate pupils.</li> <li>• Teaching children about the value of attendance through PSHE/Values curriculum.</li> <li>• Support those working with families around attendance by discussing attendance patterns and absence reasons where applicable</li> <li>• Develop positive relationships with families and use these to promote good attendance.</li> <li>• Discussing attendance with parents/carers at each parents meeting (x3 times year)</li> </ul> |
| <b>Head Teacher</b>                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teaching children about the value of attendance through assemblies.</li> <li>• Recognising and rewarding attendance and punctuality where appropriate.</li> <li>• Supporting families, and those working with families around attendance and punctuality by discussing attendance patterns and absence reasons where applicable</li> </ul>  |
| <b>School Office Administrators</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greeting and advising parents/carers to record the names of any pupils arriving after 8.50am</li> <li>• Checking the AM registers between 9am-9.20am and identifying those not taken by teachers, ensuring all registers are completed.</li> <li>• Checking the late arrival book at the School reception at regular intervals</li> <li>• Phoning/sending text messages to all unauthorised absences after 9.20am</li> </ul>  |



|   |   |
|---|---|
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Closing the register at 9.20am and recording any students arriving after this time as U</li> <li>• Informing the Attendance Team of any child that has been off school for 3 consecutive days.</li> <li>• In the case of Looked After Children and other students considered vulnerable to contact the Headteacher/Designated Teacher/DSL should there be no parental contact to explain absence on the second day.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Attendance Team</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Taking attendance phone-calls between 8-8.30am for those children not attending school.</li> <li>• Making referrals to the Attendance and Engagement team as appropriate and informing the Head Teacher/Senior Team of actions taken</li> <li>• Meeting with the SLT/Class Teacher/Families and pupils as required</li> <li>• Discussing pupils causing concern with SLT</li> <li>• Work with Headteacher and Senior Team to set attendance targets</li> <li>• Provide class teachers, Senior Team and Governors with data regarding attendance</li> <li>• Working with families to support attendance by carrying out Attendance Action Meetings and creating Attendance Contracts</li> <li>• Sending warning letters as appropriate to families</li> <li>• Updating the High Level Log</li> <li>• Ensuring the delivery of and monitoring the effectiveness of attendance and punctuality rewards</li> <li>• Supporting teachers in discussing attendance at parents meetings x3 times year as needed.</li> <li>• Reporting weekly to the Senior Team and Teachers with key attendance and punctuality figures.</li> </ul> |
| <b>SLT with responsibilities for Attendance &amp; Punctuality</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leading and supporting the implementation of an attendance policy and framework for the school, within which specified responsibilities are delegated to identified members of staff</li> <li>• Monitoring and evaluating the work of staff to ensure that specific responsibilities described within the attendance policy are carried out consistently</li> <li>• Discussing attendance patterns and children who are persistent absentees with the attendance team.</li> <li>• Supporting the Attendance Team in making referrals to the Attendance and Engagement team as appropriate.</li> <li>• Supporting teachers in discussing attendance at parents meetings x3 times year as needed.</li> </ul>   |

|                             |  |
|-----------------------------|--|
|                             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working with families to support attendance by carrying out Attendance Action Meetings and creating Attendance Contracts</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Parents &amp; Carers</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aim for 100% attendance, only being absent through genuine illness</li> <li>• Arrive at school before 8.50am in time for AM registration</li> <li>• Register at the school office if they arrive late</li> <li>• Contact the school on the first day of absence and each day thereafter</li> <li>• Complete request for absence form if required</li> <li>• Respond to any letters/information given about child's attendance and attend any necessary meetings.</li> <li>• Send a note from home explaining the reasons for absence following every session of absence unless a parent/guardian has contacted the school office.</li> <li>• See individual teachers and catch up on any work missed during the period of absence</li> <li>• Speak to class teachers, Head teacher, Family Welfare Co-ordinator or Attendance Team if they are having problems attending school.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Governors</b>            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To monitor and evaluate attendance and punctuality trends within Hanwell Fields Community School</li> <li>• To set attendance targets for Hanwell Fields Community School</li> <li>• To be available to attend attendance meetings where appropriate.</li> </ul>  |

## **Appendix 2 – Process of Issuing Penalty Notices**

### **Hanwell Fields Community School's Responsibilities**

Hanwell Fields Community School will consider Penalty Notices in the following circumstances:

- At least 6 sessions (3 school days) lost due to unauthorised absence in a period of no more than 6 weeks;
- A leave of absence that has not been approved due to exceptional circumstances during term time, of at least 6 sessions of unauthorised absence in a period of no more than 6 weeks;
- Persistent late arrival at school (after the register has been closed) equivalent to 6 sessions of unauthorised absence in a period of no more than 6 weeks.

| Unauthorised Absence  | Exceptional Circumstances<br>(not approved)  | Persistent Lateness<br>(after close of register)   |
|---|--|--|
| A WARNING LETTER WILL BE ISSUED TO PARENTS, ADVISING THEM OF TIME SCALE FOR ATTENDANCE IMPROVEMENT & MONITORING TIME SCALE.<br><br>A REFERRAL TO THE COUNTY ATTENDANCE TEAM WILL BE MADE. |  |  |
| Attendance will be monitored for 15 days after the warning letter issued.   | Attendance monitored for 12 months after date warning letter issued                      | Attendance monitored for 15 days after the warning letter issued.  |
| If no further unauthorised absence during this period, referral is considered for closure.  | If no further unapproved absence during this period, referral is considered for closure. | If no further lateness (after registers have closed) during this period, referral is considered for closure. |

### **County Attendance Team's Responsibility:**

- If there is further unauthorised absence during the monitoring period, make a referral for a Penalty Notice fine to be considered.