

Attendance Procedure

Version Number: 1.1

Author: S. Unwin



1.0 Purpose

We believe that regular attendance and punctuality is crucial if the learners at Hardwick House School are to achieve their potential and reach their academic and well being targets. Education is important. Missing school means missing out. Children should be at school, on time and ready to learn, every day the school is open, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. Permitting absence from school without a good reason is an offence by the parent that can result in legal action by the Local Authority.

The objectives of this procedure are:

- To ensure high attendance and punctuality across the whole school.
- To reduce the percentage of school absence experienced in mainstream school and increase the percentage of completed weeks in school.
- To create a culture in which good attendance is accepted as the norm.
- Demonstrate that good attendance and punctuality is valued by the school.
- Maintain and develop effective communication regarding attendance between home and school.

2.0 Scope

Under The Education Act, it is the duty of the parent of a child of compulsory school age to ensure that he or she receives efficient full time education. Schools are required to keep an attendance register within which, at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session, the presence or absence of every learner on the school roll is recorded. Schools have a responsibility to inform the local authority of details of any registered learner who fails to attend regularly or who has been absent for a continuous period of ten or more school days, except where such absences are covered by a medical certificate or where the student has been granted leave of absence.

3.0 Hardwick House School Staff Responsibilities

3.1 The Directors

- Ensure that the school's attendance policy is implemented and regularly reviewed.
- Authorise or delegate that authority to authorise requests for absence.
- Ensure that the policy is communicated to children, staff, and parents/carers.
- Create a school ethos which values and promotes excellent levels of attendance and punctuality by all.

3.2 The Head of School

- Ensure registers are properly maintained and absences followed up.
- Liaise with other staff on attendance related matters
- When necessary communicate with and meets parents/carers of those learners experiencing attendance difficulties.
- Consult when appropriate with other agencies.
- Process requests for authorised absences

- Celebrate good attendance.

3.3 Form Tutors and Class Teachers

- Alert emerging patterns of absence to the Head of School.
- Promote habits of regular attendance and punctuality.
- Set an example of punctuality by arriving for lessons on time.
- Accurately completes the registers twice a day.
- Pass on leave of absence requests from parent/carers to the Head of School.

3.4 Administration Staff

- Accurately input data from registers onto the attendance database.
- Report any absence/punctuality problem to form tutors and class teachers.
- Record lateness.
- Produce absence reports on a half termly basis for the Head of School and Directors.

3.5 Parents and Carers Responsibilities

- Ensure a leave of absence form is completed and submitted to school in good time.
- Medical appointments are notified to the school without delay.
- Contact the school before 9am to advise of absence due to illness.

4.0 Procedures

4.1 Learner Registration

The Hardwick House School day has two registration sessions. The morning form period counts as the AM registration and the start of lesson 5 counts as the PM registration. Any learners who are missing from a lesson who have been present in previous lessons are identified by the class teacher and a member of support staff is sent to the school reception to investigate.

Morning registers will close at 9.30am and afternoon registers will close at 1.30pm. The school register is a legal document. For each learner, the register must be marked either as present, engaged in an approved educational off-site activity, or absent. If a learner is absent, the absence has to be classified by the school, as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED and an appropriate code must be entered.

Form Tutors will complete the morning register in the appropriate hard-copy register, and return this to the office by 9.30am. The afternoon registers will be taken by the class teacher for period 5. It is the class teacher's responsibility to collect the hard-copy register from reception before the start of period 5 and to return the completed register back to reception for 1.30pm.

The School administrator will investigate any missing marks on a daily basis and will endeavour to make contact with legal guardians to ascertain reason for any absences, should the school remain uninformed by 9.30am. Data from registers will be collated at the end of each half term.

Post 16 learners have more freedom and experience privileges. Unlike other learners in the school, Post-16 learners do not always have a full timetable of lessons. Study facilities, supervised by members of staff are provided and staff support learners to

develop their independent learning skills. As the senior learners in the school, the Post16 learners have access to their own learning area where they can meet and socialise at break-times, as well as study during lesson time. The privileges include:

- be allowed to organise their use of independent study periods
- have their own base room
- have access to the kitchen at times outside of break and lunch
- be allowed to bring mobile phones into the school and use them responsibly in designated areas.
- access to a wider range of off site enrichments

4.2 First Day Calling

The parents of absent learners are telephoned from 9.30am when no contact has been made to explain the absence of their child. For safeguarding reasons it is important that Hardwick House School address any absent learners and speak to parents about this. Parents are also required to contact the school every day of any illness.

A record of all first day calling conversations are kept in the bound First Day Calling Log Book which is held in reception. Each entry in the log book is signed, dated and includes a summary of the reason for absence as well as a record of the name of the parent or carer spoken to.

4.3 Attendance at Medical Appointments

All learners at Hardwick House School have a diagnosis of autism and many of the learners require regular appointments with CAMHS and other medical practitioners. The school encourages parents are asked to make routine medical and dental appointments outside school time, however when such appointments in school time are unavoidable, the Head of School should be informed in advance. A "present" mark can still be awarded if the child attends for as much of the session as they can. It is always better to attend for some of the time, rather than missing the whole day. We always expect learners to attend school before and after appointments. Copies of appointment letters and cards are asked to be sent into school prior to an appointment and these are stored in the individual learner's record.

4.4 Holidays in Term Time

The government set out a clear expectation that term time holiday leave should only be granted in 'exceptional circumstances'. If, despite the law, a parent wishes to request an absence, a Leave of Absence form must be completed and returned to the Head of School detailing the exceptional circumstances. It is recommended that this is done well in advance of booking a holiday.

Leave may however, be granted in an emergency or for genuine pastoral reasons (e.g. after the death of close relative). Parents are encouraged to provide a written note explaining the absence in advance and the school will determine whether the absence is to be authorised or not.

4.5 Frequent Absence

It is the responsibility of everyone in the school to be aware of and bring attention to, any emerging attendance concerns. In cases where a pupil begins to develop a pattern of absences, the school will try to resolve the problem with the family.

4.6 Monitoring

The school will monitor attendance on a half termly basis. Those learners who achieve 100% attendance will receive an attendance certificate and reward. Half termly, a 'traffic light' method will be used, with Red, Amber and Green triggers. A letter will be sent to parents whose child falls into the Red (less than 85% attendance).

Red = (attendance less than 85%)

Amber = (attendance between 85% and 94%)

Green = (attendance between 95% and 100%)

4.7 Equal Opportunities

All work carried out in Post 16 Education seeks to comply fully with the Hardwick House School Equal Opportunities Policy, in particular:

- That all learners should have equal access to learning opportunities, activities, resources and experiences regardless of race, language, religion, culture, disability, gender, sexual orientation or class.
- That resources, activities, opportunities and experiences should reflect all the above and avoid stereotyping of any group and as much as possible.

5.0 Related Documentation

- Post 16 Education Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy