

PERRYFIELDS HIGH SCHOOL

"Together We Achieve Excellence"



Attendance Policy

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Perryfields High School

Attendance Policy

Policy Statement and Principles

The aims of this policy are:-

- To strive to improve the school's yearly attendance target
- To reduce the number of authorised and unauthorised absences
- To foster links with the Attendance Service, parents, feeder primary schools and the local community in order to improve attendance
- To develop strategies to help students improve attendance and develop support mechanisms for those with attendance issues
- To ensure that students achievements and progress are not undermined by attendance issues

At Perryfields High School we believe attendance and attainment are linked and we require all students to be reaching an attendance target of at least 97%. As a school we work hard to raise standards in education and ensure that students achieve their full potential. We believe good attendance is essential for students to be given the best opportunity to achieve the highest possible grades. Students are expected to attend school every day. It is the responsibility of parents to perform their legal duty by ensuring their children attends regularly and are punctual.

At Perryfields High, we value achievement of every kind and believe that we all respond well to having high expectations placed upon us. These expectations cannot be met if students do not attend regularly or are persistently late. School seeks to be proactive when dealing with attendance issues, as students have the right to a quality education and to learn without disruption. Students also have the responsibility to be on time each morning and for all lessons and respect others in the class and the teacher. Please remember that one day's absence is 6 lessons missed, 3 days is 18 lessons missed and taking 5 days off will be 30 lessons missed. Every lesson missed leads to gaps in the students' knowledge and this can be detrimental when it comes to taking their exams.

Interventions

When a student is absent for the first time a letter will be sent to parents informing them of their child's percentage attendance and request parents avoid further absences. This letter will notify parents of the support the school could provide, for example, a Learning Mentor or an Inclusion placement. If a student's absence then drops below 97%, a concerns letter will be sent requesting parents contact school. If no improvement is seen the decision will be made to un-authorise any further absences unless medical evidence is provided. Further letters will be sent out to parents/carers until improvements are made. This may involve a face to face meeting where a Parental Contract may be offered. Your child may also be placed on an Attendance/Punctuality report which will be monitored by the Form teacher or our Pastoral Achievement Leader. If the school does still not see any improvement then a referral to the Attendance Service will be made, where legal action may be taken. Once referred to the Attendance Service they will attempt to resolve the

situation by agreement. If the situation cannot be resolved and attendance does not improve, the Attendance Service has the power to issue sanctions such as warning letters, 15 day notifications or prosecutions.

Whilst any child may be absent because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If your child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from not attending school. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and usually makes things worse.

Registration

In accordance with the legal guidelines, (Education [Student Registration] Regulations 1995) students are registered twice a day. This data is made available to interested parties for their scrutiny, e.g. Local Authority (LA), Department of Education (DfE).

Registers will be taken at 8:45, sharp, students should be outside their classroom no later than 8:40am. If a student is not in their lesson by 8:45 a late mark will be recorded and a detention may be issued. Registers will also be taken at the beginning of all lessons by the relevant subject teacher. If a student continues to arrive late to school or lessons the students will be issued a Punctuality Report card, which will be monitored by their Form teacher until improvement are seen.

Absence Procedures

It is the responsibility of the parent to inform the school of a student absence and also to inform school of any changes to contact details. Parents/Carers are asked to contact the school before 8:45am on EACH day that their child is absent and inform school when their child is likely to return. The school does not except ill or unwell as a reason for absence as these definitions are too vague a description of what is ailing the student. Please state Flu, Cold, Upset Stomach, Chickenpox etc. As these definitions of absence are clearer to track and monitor. If no contact is made by the parent/carer to school this constitutes a Safeguarding concern. The Attendance Officer will send a truancy text to parents and will try to make contact with parents throughout the morning. If no response is made by parents the Attendance Officer will alert our Safeguarding and Welfare Manager who will attend the family home. Not knowing the reason for the student's absence is a safeguarding concern.

Returning to School after a Prolonged Absence

If a student has had a significant length of time off school then the Pastoral Achievement Leader, Assistant Head Teacher and Inclusion Manager have responsibility for ensuring that a student has a smooth transition back into education. This will be arranged through the Inclusion Centre.

Absences

An authorised absence is:

An absence for sickness for which the school has granted leave.

- Medical or Dental appointment which unavoidably falls during the school day of which the school has received an Appointment card or Hospital letter. However, students should be in before or after a dental appointment.
- Religious observations for which the school has granted leave.
- Family emergency in which the school has granted leave
- Agreed Request for Leave of absence with exceptional circumstances.

Unauthorised absences is:

- Parent's keeping their children off school unnecessarily or without good reason.
- Truancy before or during the school day.
- Absences that have not been properly explained and the school has not granted leave.
- Medical evidence has not been provided.
- Arriving late to school after registers have closed or when the late privilege has been removed.
- Unauthorised Leave of absence during term time.

Schools requires attendance of above 97%, Persistently Absent is defined when 10% or more schooling is missed across the year for any reason.

Appointments- School request dental and medical appointment are made outside of school hours as these absences have an impact on your child's attendance, thus their attainment. If a medical appointment is made during school time the school will expect the student to attend before or after the appointment, where possible. These students will have to be signed in and out of school by our Attendance Officer. The Attendance Officer will require proof of the appointment before any appointment is authorised- this can be an appointment card or letter before this absence is authorised

Persistent lateness is defined by the school as students who have 5 lates recorded. When the students has recorded 5 lates this may lead to the privilege of the (L) late code being withdrawn and replacing by a (U) unauthorised late code. If unauthorised codes are recorded this can lead to prosecution by the Local Authority. If your child arrives late to school before our register close at 9:15 he/she will be expected to attend a 30-minute detention after school on the day it was issued. If your child arrives after the register have closed, after 9:15, he/she will be issued a 1-hour SLT detention. If lateness does not improve students will be placed on a punctuality report and parents will be request to attend a meeting in school and a Parental Contract will be offered.

Religious observations- Parents must inform the school in advance if an absence is required for a day's religious observation. The school will authorise absence where a reasonable request is made.

Leave of Absence- All request for leave of absence will be considered on an individual basis and the student's previous attendance recorded will be taken in to

account. A request for leave of absence forms should be completed, a minimum of six weeks before the date of the Leave has been requested. School will authorise leave of absence only in exceptional circumstances.

As part of a revised School policy we will make a referral to the Attendance & Prosecution Service for students who take unauthorised leave of absence. Such a referral may lead to a Fixed Penalty Notice being issued. Penalty notices, when issued, tells the parents/carers to pay a fine of £60 (if paid within 21 days) or £120 if paid within 28 days.

Parents can prevent their child from missing school by

- *not letting them take time off school for minor ailments - particularly those which would not prevent you from going to work. For example- headache, period pains, sore throat, cough. Please NHS guidance on schools website*
- *making sure they understand the importance of good attendance and punctuality and the links between good attendance and that of good attainment.*
- *taking an interest in their education - ask about school work and encourage them to get involved in school activities.*
- *discussing any problems they may have at school and letting their teacher or Pastoral Achievement Leader know about anything serious.*

Truancy Call

This is an automated text messaging service. After registers have been taken at the specified time, Truancy Call will be activated. A call/text message will be sent to every parent where there is an unexplained absence.

This service is also used to send messages to remind parents of important days and times, particularly for exams.

Persistent Absenteeism (PA)

A student becomes a '**Persistent Absentee**' (PA) (from September 2015) when they miss 10% or more schooling across the academic year for any reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we require parents' fullest support and co-operation in order to tackle this. We monitor all absence thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority.

Parental Contracts

Students and their parents who are approaching being PA will be subject to a **Parental Contract**. The Contract will be issued by our Safeguarding and Welfare Manager and monitored daily and if attendance fails to improve during this time a referral will be made to the Attendance and Prosecution Service.

This is a voluntary written agreement between you and the school. Between you, you agree to find ways to improve your child's attendance. If you refuse to sign a contract or you don't adhere to it, it can be used as evidence if the local authority decides to prosecute you.