



HEADLANDS SCHOOL
SINCE 1965

Attendance Policy

Written By	Deputy Headteacher
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HEADLANDS SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY

Headlands School is committed to maximising educational opportunities and achievement for all students. To gain the best from their time at Headlands School, it is vital that they maintain excellent attendance and punctuality. We aim for 100% attendance for all students, within this we actively promote good attendance and discourage unauthorised absence. This policy acknowledges that both the Local Authority and Headlands School must apply their powers fairly and consistently.

What you can expect from Headlands School:

- We will boost attainment and achievement levels by increasing and maintaining high levels of attendance
- Promote regular and timely communication between parents and school regarding attendance issues.
- Work effectively to improve attendance with our various partners and parents, carers and students

Student attainment and achievement depend on regular attendance in school. Any absence leads to lost learning and other experiences, and may cause difficulties with social relationships. It may also lead to a threat to the welfare of our students or to opportunities for anti-social behaviour.

The attendance of a student at school is central to meeting the agenda for safeguarding and well-being. Only when a student is in school can true responsibility be taken for safeguarding all the interests of the student. At Headlands School attendance is seen as 'a whole school responsibility'.

Encouraging good attendance is the shared responsibility of the school, the parent or carer, the student and partners in the Local Authority, the Police and Children's Social Care. Parents and carers have a responsibility to see that their children receive appropriate education and it is the responsibility of the Local Authority, through its Education Welfare Service to ensure that this happens.

Aims and Principles:

- There is a clear link between good attendance and educational achievement
- Understanding that non-school attendance is a safeguarding issue
- Regular and punctual attendance is vital if students are to benefit fully from academic, personal and social opportunities, which are offered to them within the school
- Parents play an important role in supporting Headlands School and ensuring students attend school every day
- Headlands School will take timely and appropriate action to ensure good attendance

The Education Welfare Service and Headlands School

- The Education Welfare Service has a key function in supporting Headlands School, families, teams within the government and other services and agencies, both statutory and voluntary, in order to promote excellent levels of attendance and punctuality at school or otherwise, thereby contributing to raising student attainment. Alongside Headlands School they will:

- Work within a legal framework and discharge its duties with regard to ensuring that all children receive a suitable education through regular school attendance. In doing so it enables the school and parents to meet their respective responsibilities
- Support Headlands School to fulfil their legal responsibilities with regard to student attendance
- Provide challenge to Headlands School in respect of data analysis, registering of students and marking of registers including authorising and un-authorising absence and holidays in term time, persistent absenteeism, early intervention and monitoring
- Promote partnership working between the Local Authority, Headlands Schools, parents/ and other services and agencies by offering guidance, support and assistance in this area
- Assist Headlands School in creating a framework which promotes consistent practices and procedures
- Work to overcome any language, interpretation, understanding barriers and work with Headlands School and other agencies, services, individuals to assist in overcoming any barriers that may be presented by the child or family in order to ensure the child receives the education to which they are entitled
- Provide training or information to staff, students or governors on attendance issues as and when required
- Support Headlands School with poor or chronic non attendance by utilising legal action, which will be taken, if it is considered that a parent or carer is not fulfilling their parental responsibility to ensure their child receives a full time education. This is under Section 444(1a) of the Education Act 1996

What Headlands School expects of its students

- To attend school every day
- To arrive on time, appropriately prepared for the day and ensure they arrive promptly to each individual lesson
- To ensure all reasons for absence or messages from parents are taken to the Attendance Office

What Headlands School expects of parents

- To fulfil their parental responsibility by ensuring their children attend school regularly and on time. Parents should be aware it is their responsibility in law for ensuring that their children of compulsory school age receive an efficient full time education suitable for their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have
- To ensure that they contact Headlands School by 09.30am on the first day their child is unable to attend
- To ensure their child arrives on time and is well prepared for the school day
- To notify the school on the first day the child is unable to attend due to illness, including the expected date of return
- To ensure that students return to school as soon as they are able
- To avoid medical appointments during the school day unless absolutely necessary and to collect and return students to school whenever an appointment crosses the school day
- To contact the appropriate Year Leader, in confidence whenever any problem occurs that may keep their child away from School
- To inform the appropriate Year Leader and seek authorisation from the appropriate person within the school for any forthcoming appointments and, where possible, arrange appointments outside of the school day
- To ensure the continuity of their child's education by taking holidays during the school holiday period thus avoiding term time
- Provide medical absence if absence is 5 days or more. Absence after and including 5 days will be unauthorised without medical evidence
- Work in partnership with the Headlands School and other agencies (as and when appropriate) to resolve issues relating to non-attendance

What parents and students can expect of Headlands School:

- To maximise attendance rates as one of their key tasks with clear procedures to identify and follow up absence and provide a consistent approach in dealing with absence and lateness
 - Inform and involve governors, through the identification of a link governor with responsibility for attendance
 - To nominate a member of the senior management team to be the Attendance Lead for Headlands School
 - Identify a range of strategies to deal with absenteeism and punctuality
 - Support parents in ensuring regular and punctual attendance
 - To respond promptly to any issue which may lead to non or irregular school attendance
 - Be sensitive to the needs of the individual parent. This will be reflected in the ways in which attendance issues are addressed. E.g. Headlands School should recognise that some parents have difficulty understanding written communications. (Headlands School will also recognise the reluctance of some parents to come into school)
 - Be alert to critical times - e.g. return to school after a period of long term sickness, a return after a traumatic event or during the period leading to a phased transfer
 - To encourage and promote good attendance. Information is on display in the school
 - That efficient and accurate recording of attendance and basic analysis of attendance data is undertaken regularly
 - That first day contact is made with parents when a student fails to attend Headlands School without providing a valid reason
 - Close liaison with the Education Welfare Service and other external services and agencies to assist and support parents and students where needed
 - Notification to parents of their child's attendance record through an annual report home and regular updates throughout the academic year
 - That all staff maintain high expectations in relation to attendance, all students aware that their presence is expected, appreciated and that their absence is noted
 - Systems of reward for attendance as well as achievement and sympathetic re-integration strategies for long-term absentees
 - Provide effective primary to secondary liaison and transition for students with poor attendance in primary school
 - Referral to the Education Welfare Service where school intervention has failed to secure an improvement in attendance. Schools will always refer to Education Welfare Service where a child is a Persistent Absentee student (90% or less attendance) or has failed to show the necessary improvement following an Attendance Action Plan
 - Parents and students will be involved prior to referral to the Education Welfare Service. Year Leader will contact and support parents with an Attendance Action Plan for a period of 2 weeks in an attempt to support good attendance
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- Liaise with parents where attendance falls below 97% will be monitored, below 95% will trigger an action plan, which could then lead to support from Education Welfare intervention team.

The Role of the Headlands School Governing Body

The governing body of Headlands School will set an annual attendance target for the school. It will be equal to or exceed the previous year's target. The governing body will receive information on a termly basis from the SLT in respect of the current position on school attendance, which includes; analysis, identifies concerns, emerging issues, possible areas for improvement and successes. The governing body will appoint a governor with specific responsibilities for attendance.

Statutory Framework

Under Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act, a pupil is required to attend regularly at the school where they are a registered pupil. The Local Authority will use the Education Act 1996 and the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 (penalty notices) in order to fulfil its duties in ensuring regular school attendance. The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003, Section 23 of the Act gives powers to the Local Authority to issue penalty

notices where a parent or carer is considered capable of, but unwilling to secure an improvement in their child's school attendance. These powers came into force on the 27 February 2004. (see Penalty Notices Appendix 1)

Registration

Schools are required to take an attendance register at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session. The Education (Students' Attendance Records) Regulations 1991 and the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 stipulate that schools should maintain an attendance register for each class containing the names of all students in the class.

The school session times at Headlands School are 8.25a.m. to 2.45 p.m. The school register is a legal document and may be required as evidence in court. It is completed fully twice daily. On each occasion we record whether every student was present, absent, present at approved educational activities or unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

Morning registration will take place at 8.30 a.m. Afternoon registration will take place during P4. Registers are also taken at the start of each lesson. Registration will close at 9.50 a.m. and 13.25 p.m. Once registration has taken place the following procedures apply:

If a student arrives late and the register is still open, they should be marked as 'late' but counted as present for that session (**late defined as coming into school via the main door - having missed normal entry into school**), student to sign in with the attendance officer as they arrive.

If a student arrives after the close of registration and provides a satisfactory explanation from the parent, they will be marked as authorised absent for that session, e.g. medical appointment - 'M'.

If a student arrives after the close of the register and fails to provide a satisfactory explanation, they will be marked as 'Late and after close of registration' - 'U' for that session, which is an absent mark.

Students, who arrive late after the school start time, should report first to the attendance office then to the class teacher. A record is made of the time the student arrives. The register entry will then be amended in accordance with the details above. The school will accurately record the arrival time of each student.

All teachers will take registers in their classroom within the first 5 minutes of the start of each lesson, and will notify the school attendance office immediately of any new in school absenteeism, this will be done using a 'Red Slip'

Accurate tracking of late arrival to school and class will take place and parents informed on a regular basis of concerns with late arrival to school or class. Students will be expected to make up lost time within school if they receive 3 late to lesson marks per week, or 2 late to school marks per week. Parents will be informed of concerns over late arrival and action taken by the school.

Authorised or Unauthorised Absence

It is vital that all staff within Headlands School adhere to the same criteria when deciding whether or not to authorise an absence. Absences are recorded in accordance with the Attendance Codes issued by the government. For each absence, evidence will be required by the school.

Examples of when Absence may be **authorised**

- The student was ill or prevented from attending by any unavoidable cause
- Family bereavement and/or attendance at a funeral
- The absence occurred on a day exclusively set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the student's parent belongs
- The student is the child of Traveller parents and the conditions stated in the Education Act 1966 Section 444(6) are met

- An absence during term time where exceptional circumstances are given at the time of application (evidence may be required) and these are accepted
- The student is excluded from school and appropriate information and paperwork have been forwarded to the parent
- A visit to a school or college to attend an interview or careers interview

Note: The absence of students taking part in appropriately supervised educational activities outside the school is recorded as ‘approved educational activities’ - ‘J’, ‘B’, ‘V’ or ‘W’ as appropriate. This is equivalent to ‘present’ for performance table purposes.

Examples of when an approved education activity category can be used:

- Field trips and educational visits, in this country and overseas
- Participation in or attendance at approved sporting activities
- Interviews with prospective employers or for a place at a further or higher education establishment (year 11 only); or for a place in another school
- Link courses, whereby students attend college for part of the time
- Students receiving part of their tuition off site at another location while remaining under overall supervision of the home school (i.e. a flexible arrangement short of formal dual registration). This can include tuition of sick children being taught at home by Home Tuition Service but remaining on roll.

Any student who does not attend a provision offsite and is not attending school has to be marked as absent in the school register.

Dual Registration

The law allows for dual registration of students at more than one school. This code is used to indicate that the student was not expected to attend the session in question because they were scheduled to attend the other school at which they are registered. The main examples of dual registration are students who are attending a pupil referral unit, a hospital school or a special school on a temporary basis. Each school should only record the students’ attendance and absence for those sessions that the student is scheduled to attend their school. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby all unexplained and unexpected absence is followed up in a timely manner.

Examples of when Absence should be unauthorized-

- No explanation is forthcoming with an acceptable time limit
- The school is dissatisfied with the explanation
- The parent has been advised that absences will not be authorised without appropriate medical confirmation
- The student stays at home to mind the house or look after siblings
- The student is shopping during school hours
- The student is absent for unexceptional special occasions (e.g. a birthday)
- The student is absent from school for the purpose of an unauthorised holiday
- The student is absent from school due to not returning to school from an authorised holiday at the given date

Any absence taken without the permission of the Headteacher will be recorded as unauthorised absence in the school register, which is a **legal document**. It is for the Headteacher and **not** the parent to make the decision as to whether the absence should be authorised. It is the parent’s responsibility to provide all evidence of absence.

Leave of Absence from School Due to Exceptional Circumstances

New legislation came into effect on 1 September 2013 which means there is no longer a provision in law

for the Headteacher to authorise an absence for the purpose of a term time holiday other than in a very limited set of exceptional circumstances outlined here:

- 1) Service personnel returning from a tour of duty abroad, or other employees where it is evidenced the individual will not be in receipt of any leave in the near future that coincides with the school holidays
- 2) Where an absence from school is recommended by a health professional when a family need time together during or after a 'crisis'

For any absence from School to be authorised by the Appropriate Person, the parent or person within whom the child normally resides must make an application to remove that child from School (Regulation 7(3)). In determining that application, the Appropriate Person within the School must be satisfied that there is a special reason as to why the application should be granted (Regulation 7 (3)(b)) and if there is a special reason, is it appropriate for the absence to be authorised. If there is no special reason, the application should be refused and no further consideration should be given to it.

The Appropriate Person within the School should seek written evidence supporting the claim that there is a special reason to satisfy them that one exists, such as a letter from an employer or a letter from a medical practitioner.

If the Appropriate Person within the School is satisfied that there is a special reason, then, and only then, should they proceed to consider whether the absence should be authorised, give proper consideration to matters such as internal assessments and attendance record of the student concerned.

In the event that a child has unauthorised absence from School for a period of at least 5 consecutive days, the local authority may issue the parents or other person(s) with day-to-day responsibility for the child with a Penalty Notice. In the event that a Penalty Notice is not paid, the parent(s) and/or other person(s) with day-to-day responsibility for the child will be prosecuted. In appropriate cases, no Penalty Notice will be issued where there are unauthorised absences from School for a period of at least 5 consecutive days (10 sessions) and the matter will proceed straight to prosecution.

Schools will use the East Riding of Yorkshire Council's "Absence from School for Exceptional Circumstances" form and guidance in order to ensure consistency throughout the Authority and parents must request leave of absence in term time at least **10 school days** prior to the leave taking place.

Persistent Absence

A student will be defined as a Persistent Absentee when they have been absent from school for 10% or more. The Department of Education reduced this threshold from September 2015 from 15% previously. Persistent Absence is a serious problem for students, leaving them at a considerable disadvantage. The school will always seek support from EWO or other external services when attendance falls below 90%.

Procedures for following up absence

Absences should be explained by parents, to the school on the first day of absence prior to 9.30 a.m. Notes, letters and telephone messages should be retained by the school with dates and times if appropriate, to ensure evidence is available for recording purposes and any legal intervention taken by the LA's Education Welfare Service. All verbal conversations should be recorded with date, time and name of staff and parents involved for the same reason.

To ensure the safety of students, where parents have not contacted the school prior to 9.30 a.m., the school will operate its first day contact procedures and SIMS In touch message or telephone parents to ascertain the reason for absence. Where there are concerns as to the safety or welfare of a child, the school will endeavour to contact parents via an immediate home visit. This may be done in conjunction with Education Welfare Service, Children's Social Care, Health or the Police where appropriate.

Failure to respond within 5 days to absence telephone calls and letters or home visits will result in an immediate referral to the Education Welfare Service for investigation. For those students with Social Services involvement or significant concerns action will be taken on day 2 of absence where no contact is made.

Failure to respond within 2 days to absence calls and messages will trigger a home visit from the Safeguarding Team. Where the team are not satisfied as to the whereabouts of a student guidance will be taken The Safeguarding Hub as part of a consultation call.

If a student is persistently absent or late after register has closed and the school's efforts to effect an improvement (Action Plan) have proved unsuccessful, a referral will be placed with the Education Welfare Service for investigation and legal intervention if necessary. This may include prosecution, penalty notice or Education Supervision Order.

Prior to referral to Education Welfare Service, Headlands School will have contacted parents to discuss these concerns. Parents will be advised that the school will no longer authorise absences without appropriate evidence, until there is an acceptable improvement in attendance and that a referral will be made to the Education Welfare Service. Registration certificates will show unauthorised absences 'O' when a student is referred to Education Welfare Service.

Children Missing From Education or who may otherwise be at risk

A child who is absent from school for 10 consecutive school days without notice from home is regarded as a 'child missing from education'. As a major safeguarding concern, the school seeks to identify the location of a st through engagement with external agencies (such as but not limited to the Education Welfare Service, Police and the Immigration Service). Before doing so, the school will have made all necessary enquiries to trace the student, through any additional contact numbers. It is important that all absences are notified to the school on each day of absence and a change to contact information is updated. Otherwise, a missing child could be removed from Headlands School register, requiring a parent/carer to re-apply for a school place. (Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2018).

Headlands School will follow the procedures set out in the Children Missing from Education Policy and Procedures as agreed by the Education Welfare Service. It is important that parents inform the school if they move house or area etc, giving full details of any new address and the proposed school. The Education Welfare Service will follow up all students who are believed to have left the area. Headlands School and the Education Welfare Service will make "reasonable" enquiries to locate the student. When a student is deleted from the school roll, The Education Welfare Service will be informed.

Truancy Sweeps

The Education Welfare Service and the police may undertake truancy sweeps throughout the year and often in conjunction with other services and agencies. Any students found during the school day will normally be returned to Headlands School and parents will be notified. Evidence from truancy sweeps may be used in prosecutions.

Strategies for Promoting Attendance

- Headlands School will offer an environment in which students feel valued and welcomed. The school's ethos must demonstrate that students feel that their presence in school is important, that they will be missed when they are absent or late and that follow up action will always be taken. Early intervention is often the key to preventing more frequent absences.
- A varied and flexible curriculum will be offered to students. Every effort is made to ensure that learning tasks match student's needs.
- Attendance data will be regularly collected and analysed in order to help identify patterns, set targets, correlate attendance with achievement and support and inform policy and practice.
- Good attendance will be praised appropriately.
- Parents will be reminded regularly (via newsletters, the school brochure, parents evenings, etc.) of the importance of good attendance.

- Students who are absent through sickness for any extended period of time may (when appropriate) receive home tuition through the LA and will be reintegrated back into school upon their return.
- Students who have been absent for whatever reason for an extended period of time will (when appropriate) have individually tailored reintegration programmes prepared for them. These will be recorded and have clear timescales for reviews.
- The Headteacher will report to the school's governing body on attendance matters through termly Headteacher's report to governors.
- The Headteacher and Attendance Lead have regular meetings with the local authority in order to identify and support those students who are experiencing attendance difficulties.
- An increased use of SIMS package to analyse data and statistics. Schools should regularly analyse their data so that early identification can be made of student's absence and especially those who are persistent absentees (or in danger of becoming a persistent absentee - PA), to identify patterns of absence and the school's overall absence and types of absence.
- Good attendance will be promoted with children through attendance awards made termly and annually to students with 100% attendance in assembly and class and those with the greatest improvement in attendance.

Safeguarding

School attendance is a safeguarding issue - see Headlands School Safeguarding Policy. It is therefore vital that all registers must be marked correctly and up to date.

The school Attendance Policy will be reviewed annually in conjunction with the Behaviour, Anti-Bullying and SEND policies. The active involvement of governors, parents and all staff within the school is essential to the review process. Students can also make a valuable contribution to policy development.

APPENDIX 1 - Penalty Notices

Under the Anti-Social Behaviour Act (2003) the local authority and schools have statutory powers to tackle poor school attendance and/or unauthorised absences. An unauthorised absence is any absence that the school has not given permission for or where an explanation has not been provided by the parent.

Penalty Notices may be used as a deterrent to prevent a pattern of unauthorised absences developing. They will be issued by post directly to the home of a parent after a warning, or in the case of absences without acceptable cause, warnings may not be given. This may include students caught on truancy sweeps, excessive or unauthorised family holidays and persistent late arrival after the close of registration.

If a parent's/carer's term time holiday request is declined, and they still take their child out of school, each parent within the household may be issued with a £60 penalty notice for each child you have taken out of school. If a penalty notice remains unpaid after 21 days it will increase to £120. If after 28 days it remains unpaid the parent will be summonsed to appear before Magistrates to explain why their child has unauthorised school absences and they may be liable for a fine of up to £1000.

This policy is based on:

The Education Act 1996 Section 7 and Sections 437-448

The Children Act 1989 Section 36

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006

The Education Act 1996 Section 51

The Education Act 1996 Section 576

Crime and Disorder Act 1998

Criminal Justice Act 2003

The Children Act 2004

Guidance on the Education-related provisions included in the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003

Anti-Social Behaviour Act Sections 19, 20 and 23

Human Rights Act(HRA)

Race Relations Act Amendment 2000

Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and 2005

Single Equality Act 2010

The Education Act 1996 Sections 444(1/1A) as amended by the Criminal Justice and Court Service Act

DCSF Behaviour and Attendance Strategy

Addendum to Headlands School Attendance Policy:

CoronaVirus Re-Integration

The attendance policy will be adapted as Government guidance change.

Current Attendance Guidance 5 March 2021

Recording non-attendance related to coronavirus

We have defined a set of sub codes for schools to use to consistently record non-attendance related to coronavirus and help them to complete the educational settings status form.

Set of sub codes

The set of sub codes to record non-attendance related to coronavirus are:

Code X01: Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to be in school

This code is used to record sessions that non-compulsory school age children are not expected to attend.

Code X02: Pupil self-isolating with coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms

This code is used for pupils who are self-isolating because they have symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) but they have not yet had a positive test.

Code X03: Pupil self-isolating due to potential contact with a confirmed case of coronavirus (COVID-19) inside the school setting

This code is used for pupils who are self-isolating because of contact with a case of coronavirus (Covid-19) inside the school setting (for example, individuals, classes, year groups or bubbles who have been sent home because of potential contact with a confirmed case of coronavirus (COVID-19) within the school setting). Includes test and trace where it applies.

Code X04: Pupil self-isolating due to potential contact with a confirmed case of coronavirus (COVID-19) outside the school setting

This code is used for pupils who are self-isolating because of contact with a case of coronavirus (Covid-19) OUTSIDE the school setting (for example, a household member with symptoms or a confirmed positive test, or a social contact or a contact with someone from the local community with a confirmed positive test). Includes pupils advised to self-isolate through test and trace where appropriate.

Code X05: Pupils required to self-isolate as part of quarantine requirement (after arriving in the UK from a non-exempt country or territory)

This code is used for pupils who are required to be in quarantine on arrival in, or return to, the UK. Department of Health & Social Care guidance ['Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): how to self-isolate when you travel to the UK'](#).

Code X06: Pupil not in school because they have been advised specifically by their Doctor or public health authority that they are clinically extremely vulnerable and should not attend.

This code is used for the small number of pupils who have been specifically identified as clinically extremely vulnerable and advised that they should not attend school. Department of Health & Social

Care / Public Health England '[Guidance on protecting people who are clinically extremely vulnerable from COVID-19](#)'.

Code X07: Pupil advised specifically not to attend school as part of restrictions to education set out in Government advice.

This is for pupils who as part of local or national restrictions to education settings, (including set out in the [Contingency Framework and related guidance](#)) are specifically advised not to attend school for public health reasons.

Code I01: Illness

This code is used for pupils who are absent because of non-coronavirus (COVID-19) related illness or sickness.

Code I02: Illness Confirmed case of coronavirus (COVID-19)

This code is used for pupils who are absent because they have tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19).

Where schools are using these sub-codes they will still need to consider on an individual basis whether Code X is the appropriate code for a given non-attendance. They will need to ensure that Code X is only used where a pupil does not attend school because their travel to, or attendance at, school would be:

- contrary to guidance relating to the incidence or transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19) from either Public Health England (PHE Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC))
- prohibited by any legislation (or instruments such as statutory directions) relating to the incidence or transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19)

Where a pupil's non-attendance does not meet these requirements it should not be recorded as Code X and schools should consider whether another code can be used.