

Hove Park School

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Introduction:

Hove Park is a Good school (OFSTED 2013) striving for excellence and your child plays their part in making it so. For our students to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly. Regular school attendance is paramount to ensure that all students have access to the full curriculum. There is a direct link between attendance and attainment with students that attend school regularly by far outperforming their peers. Students are expected in school every day the school is open unless the absence is unavoidable. The school is committed to working with students, parents and carers to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible and that every child's welfare and life opportunities are promoted.

Registration

Every school is required by law to take registration twice daily first thing in the morning and then again half way through the school day. At Hove Park School we also take registration of all students lesson by lesson to ensure their safety. Where students are not present and no reason has been provided for their absence school will make contact home.

Promoting regular attendance:

Creating a pattern of regular attendance is everyone's responsibility – parents, students and all members of school staff. At Hove Park School we will reward students regularly for good attendance. Rewards come in many forms from certificates to house points to priority places on school trips and reduced price prom tickets.

Understanding types of absence:

Authorised Absence

Authorised absence is where a student is absent from school and the parent has given good reason such as illness, religious observance, an unavoidable medical appointment or other exceptional circumstances. Whilst any child may need time off occasionally for sickness, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents/carers and the student. 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 attending.

Unauthorised Absence

Unauthorised absence is where no reasonable justification has been given for the time off such as holidays in term time, days off for a worryingly high level of illness or where there has been no contact from the parent/carer.

Holidays in term time

The Department for Education reviewed it's guidelines to schools regarding absence during term time from September 2013 and as a result of this we are only able to authorise absence in exceptional circumstances. Very rarely will a holiday be considered exceptional. Where absence is planned parents/carers should fill out the absence during school time form and return as soon as possible for the attention of the Education Welfare Officer (Forms are available from the main office on both sites and on the website). We would urge you to plan your holidays around school time as any absence will affect progress and achievement.

Please note: A Fixed Penalty Notice will be issued for all holidays where school has not authorised the absence.

Punctuality

All students are expected in school on time every day. Being on time is a life skill and one we promote here at Hove Park. The first bell goes at 8.25am with the second following at 8.30am at which time all students should be in tutor time ready for registration. Where a student is late for school they will have to pay back the learning time they have missed by attending detention.

Please note: A Fixed Penalty Notice will be issued where students are persistently late to school past the close of registration

Please note the following from Brighton and Hove City Council Code Of Conduct:

Circumstances when a penalty notice might be issued for unauthorised absence/truancy:

- Persistent late arrival to school (After registers are closed).
- Students whose attendance has not reached a satisfactory level (90%) during a 6 week period.
- Where parents allow their children to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification during a fixed term exclusion.
- Penalty notices will be issued following assessment of poor attendance which the LA considers to be 4 sessions or more within a term. This does not relate to unauthorised holidays but any other unauthorised absence.
- Penalty notices will be issued for all unauthorised holidays taken during term time.

A Fixed Penalty Notice is £60 per parent per child, if paid within 21 days of receipt. If it is not paid, another £60 fine will be issued to each parent per child, making a total of £120 per parent per child. Failure to pay the outstanding amount within 28 days of receipt of the notice may result in prosecution under section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

CME (Children Missing Education)

School will refer students to the LEA as per guidance for the following:

- Where a parent removed a student from school roll to electively home educate
- School leavers where destination is unknown
- All students on CP/CIN plans with attendance below 90%
- Vulnerable students with CSE concerns and attendance below 50%
- Any student with attendance below 30%

Persistent Absence (PA)

A student is classed as persistently absent when they miss 10% or more of schooling across the school year for whatever reason and students will be flagged as PA whether absence has been authorised or not. Absence at PA level is doing considerable damage to any child's education and we need parents/carers full support and co-operation to tackle this. PA students are tracked and monitored closely. Please see on the website persistent absence – A guide for parents/carers.

Parent/Carers

Parents will call the attendance line on the first day of absence and for every subsequent day missed. KS3 – 294987 and KS4 - 294833. Parents can also email our Attendance Officers. For KS3 mhughes@hovepark.org.uk and for KS4 dwillard@hovepark.org.uk

Where a student misses school for a worryingly high level of sickness school may request that parents provide medical evidence to support further absence.

Parents will engage with the school and meet key staff to discuss concerns so that we can work together to ensure better outcomes for students.

Parents will wherever possible plan family time/holidays outside of school hours.

Students

Students will come to school every day the school is open unless they are genuinely unwell or are absent for other authorised circumstances.

Students will be on time to school. Students will be on time to all lessons

Students will attend all lessons as directed.

Students will not leave school site without permission.

Staff Responsibilities

The Governing Body

The governing body has responsibility for school attendance and will be familiar with current legislation.

There is a nominated governor who will be the schools link for attendance. The governors will receive regular reports on attendance and will discuss data along with school intervention during committee meetings.

Head Teacher

The Head Teacher has over-all responsibility for attendance in the school. Individual tasks are delegated to key staff members to deal with on his behalf.

The Head Teacher will receive regular reports on attendance.

School Staff

It is everyone's responsibility in school to promote regular attendance. Students and parents may work with many staff to improve attendance including the Education Welfare Officer, Attendance Officer, Head and Assistant Head of Year, Tutors and the Senior Leadership Team. The staff team will use the attendance framework to help identify students in need of intervention.

Links

The attendance and punctuality policy links to the bullying policy and safeguarding policy.

Bullying is not tolerated by the school but it is also not a reason for a student to be absent from school. All students have the right to feel safe at school and the school will do all it can to support students and make them feel safe.

School has a duty to safeguard all students therefore where attendance is giving cause for concern and where school has reason to believe that an individual may be at risk of harm there is a duty to follow concerns up with appropriate staff which may lead to a referral to social services.

Fixed Penalty Notices for unauthorised absence – A guide for parents and carers can be found on Hove Park and Brighton and Hove City Council's website.

Persistent Absence – A guide for parents/carers can be found on Hove Park and Brighton and Hove City Council's website

Appendix:

Letter from Gill Manton; LEA Attendance Lead



Date 19th June 2015
Our ref: GM

Phone: 01273 291378

e-mail: attendanceteam@brighton-hove.gov.uk

To All Parents/Carers,

Re: School Attendance

Dear Parent/Carer,

School Attendance Matters!

DFE research suggests that if a student's attendance improves by 1%, attainment improves by 5-6%. Therefore, in order to support excellent attendance across the City, Brighton & Hove City Council has revised the Code of Conduct. The revised document is an important part of a range of strategies and policies we use to support excellent attendance and attainment for students.

In Brighton & Hove we aim to ensure that all pupils attend school all of the time and our commitment is to promote excellent school attendance. We know that this is a priority for all schools. Pupils who attend school all of the time are more likely to positively develop academically and socially, improving their life chances. Schools will be using various strategies to support students and families and working together to raise attendance. Where a need for an external support agency is identified, it will be discussed with families and appropriate referrals will be made.

You may or may not know, that it is a legal requirement under section 7 of the Education Act 1996 that parents of children of compulsory school age ensure that their child/ren receive full-time education. A child reaches compulsory school age at the start of the term on or after their fifth birthday, and continues to be of compulsory school age until the last Friday of June in the school year that they reach 16. A Fixed Penalty Notice cannot be issued to children in reception who have not yet reached compulsory school age. Additionally, this legislation does not apply to parents who have chosen to educate their children at home under section 7 of the Education Act 1996.

In addition to the above, Section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 and section 103 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 enable Local Authorities to issue penalty notices for certain offences. These notices can be used as an alternative to prosecution under section 444 and enable parents to discharge potential liability for conviction for that offence by paying a penalty. This Code of Conduct is issued under The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended). The Council's Behaviour and Attendance Team is authorised to act under this code and will ensure the consistent, fair and transparent application of the policy regarding penalty notices throughout the City.

To raise awareness of the new Code of Conduct, schools must ensure that literature provided to parents/carers in connection with attendance must include the warning that parents/carers may be issued with a penalty notice if leave is taken without permission. This literature might include Attendance and Behaviour Policies, Home School Agreements, website information etc.

Schools must also ensure that if a parent has had their request for leave during term time refused because of lack of evidence of exceptional circumstances, parents are issued with a warning letter.

Thank you in advance for your support and cooperation

Kind regards

G. Manton

Gill Manton
Attendance Lead