

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

1.0 School Mission Statement

At Haggerston we have very high expectations of students. Our routines and rituals create a calm and orderly environment where all students can learn.

Our combination of strict discipline and warmth allows students to flourish and develop into well rounded, happy individuals. Our character programme promotes the qualities of Resilience, Ambition, Curiosity and Community Spirit and these values are embedded in all aspects of school life. As students progress through the school, a wide range of student leadership opportunities help students aspire to become the leaders of the future.

The Haggerston Way: Our Mission

- **Aspiration:** We strive to be the best versions of ourselves. We work hard every day to master the knowledge and skills we need to lead successful, fulfilled lives.
- **Creativity:** We create beautiful work to inspire others. We are independent-minded creative thinkers and problem-solvers.
- **Character:** We are articulate, brave and determined individuals. We work to build the qualities of Resilience, Ambition, Curiosity and Community Spirit.

All of the work of Haggerston School is intended to support the delivery of our mission statement in full.

2.0 Policy links to school mission, aims and values

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We aspire to high standards of attendance from all pupils and parent(s)/carer(s). We aspire to build a culture where all can and want to be in school, and are ready to learn by prioritising and improving attendance. This is because:

1. The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full time education. It is the legal responsibility of parent(s)/carer(s) to ensure their child receives that education. Schools and local authorities have a responsibility to ensure attendance of children in school and to promote good attendance and punctuality.
2. Being in school every day, on time, means our pupils get the most out of their school experience including their attainment and well being. Pupils cannot achieve if they are not in school and on time.
3. Good habits of attendance and punctuality enable pupils to maximise their opportunities both at school and in later life. Nationally, only 36% of persistent absentee students in secondary schools got 9 to 4 in their English and Maths GCSEs, compared with 84% of regular attenders. (DfE, 2022)
4. Haggerston School places a high priority on promoting equal access to the curriculum for all pupils. Irregular attendance may lead to disadvantage and inequality. For our most vulnerable pupils, regular attendance is also an important protective factor, and the best opportunity for needs to be identified and support provided.

Good attendance begins with school being somewhere pupils want to be, and therefore the foundation of securing good attendance is that school is a calm, orderly, safe and supportive environment where all pupils are keen and ready to learn.

Improving attendance is a whole school initiative. Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility, including parent(s)/carer(s), pupils and all school staff members. Specific staff at Haggerston School focus on improving attendance and punctuality. A member of the school's leadership team, Ms Powell, acts as a Senior Attendance Champion with responsibility for improving attendance. The attendance and punctuality of all pupils is followed up through robust daily processes and regularly monitored by the Heads of Year, Assistant Heads of Year, Attendance, Inclusion, Student Services and Safeguarding teams. We have a statutory responsibility to

complete admission and attendance registers. Attendance reports are submitted to the local authority and meetings are held with the School Attendance Support Team every term.

3.0 School Expectations and Procedures

3.1 Recording and authorising absence

The school day starts at 8.40am and ends at 3.30pm. Attendance registers are taken every lesson but reported twice a day: once in the morning session and once in the afternoon session. On each occasion they must record whether each registered pupil is physically present in school or, if not, the reason they are not in school, by using the appropriate [attendance and absence codes \(p76 onwards\)](#).

If a pupil is unwell, parent(s)/carer(s) should call school and press 1 to notify us of student absence before 8.15am. Only the Co-Headteachers or designated staff member(s) acting on their behalf can authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence must be recorded as N in the first instance, and if necessary amended within 5 days.

3.2 Lateness

Morning registration will occur at the start of the first lesson at 8:45am and close at 9.15am. Any pupil arriving after this time will be marked as having an unauthorised absence unless there is an acceptable explanation. In cases, for instance, where the absence at registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate authorised absence code will be entered when medical evidence is provided. The afternoon registration opens at 1:45pm and closes at 2:15pm. Where possible, please avoid scheduling medical appointments after this time. Unauthorised absences from late arrivals can result in penalty notices and statutory legal action.

Pupils arriving after the start of registration but before the end of the registration period will be treated as present for statistical purposes but coded as late. This will be recorded with time of arrival and reason for the lateness. Pupils arriving late will be issued corrections and sanctioned in line with the Haggerston School Behaviour Policy. Parent(s)/carer(s) will be sent texts and may receive calls if their child is late to school.

If parent(s)/carer(s) are aware their child will be late, they should call school and press 1 to notify school. Corrections and sanctions may still be issued.

We will work with pupils and parent(s)/carer(s) to identify and remove the barriers leading to persistent lateness, and to improve punctuality.

3.3 First Day Absence

The school will endeavour to telephone or text the parent(s)/carer(s) on the first day of absence. Home visits will be conducted in certain circumstances e.g. vulnerable pupils. A further phone call may be made to gain an update and ensure attendance at school the following day.

3.4 Second/Third Day Absence

The school will endeavour to telephone or text the parent(s)/carer(s) on the second day of absence.

On the second/third day of absence, if a child is still away and there has been no parental contact, the Education Welfare Officer will make a home visit. On the third day, a MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub) non-contact warning letter will be sent.

The school will invite parent(s)/carer(s) in to discuss the situation with year/attendance/pastoral teams if absences persist.

3.5 On the 6th consecutive day of absence, or 6th day over the year due to illness with no medical evidence

We will request medical evidence after the 6th consecutive day of absence or 6th day over the year. If medical

evidence is not provided, the absence may not be authorised. The Education Welfare officer may also conduct a home visit.

3.6 10 consecutive day of absence

Any pupil absent with their absence being recorded in the attendance register in ways statistically recorded as unauthorised absence will be reported to the Local Authority and other statutory services where involved e.g. YOT (Youth Offending Team), social services and the police. This is a legal requirement. The school will include details of the action that they have taken to address the absence.

3.7 15 days of illness

All schools must make report to the local authority (a 'sickness return') where a pupil of compulsory school age has been recorded in the attendance register as absent using code I (illness) and the school have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil will be, or will have been unable to attend school because of illness for at least 15 school days during the school year, whether consecutive or not.

3.8 Severely Absent Students

We are required to report severely absent students (50% attendance or below) to the Local Authority and other statutory services where involved e.g. YOT (Youth Offending Team), social services and the police.

3.9 Communication

Good attendance relies on positive relationships and a partnership between the school, pupils and their parent(s)/carer(s). The intention of all communication around attendance and/or punctuality is to inform parent(s)/carer(s) so they are aware of absence or lateness; emphasise the link between attendance, attainment and well-being; and encourage parent(s)/carer(s) to communicate any barriers to good attendance and punctuality so support can be put in place to ensure pupils miss as little school as possible.

Calls/ texts are sent on each day of absence if we have not spoken to parent(s)/carer(s) about the reason. Calls may also be made to parent(s)/carer(s) when they have called the school already to check their child's well-being and ensure attendance at school the following day if they feel well enough.

Pre-emptive calls may be made to parent(s)/carer(s) at 7.45am each morning for students who were absent or late the previous day, to check their child's well-being and encourage attendance to school.

Daily late texts are sent to parent(s)/carer(s).

Letters are sent home to parent(s)/carer(s) to inform them of attendance and/or punctuality concerns, and to work in partnership with pupils and their parent(s)/carer(s) to remove barriers to attendance and/ or punctuality through collaborative support.

If there is no improvement, further letters will be sent to invite parent(s)/carer(s) in for a formal meeting at which concerns about attendance and punctuality are shared, reasons discussed, collaborative support and actions agreed. This meeting is recorded through an attendance contract with timelines. Where that is not successful, or it is not engaged with, the law protects pupils' right to an education and provides penalty notices (fines) and a range of legal interventions to formalise attendance improvement efforts.

3.10 Promoting and Incentivising good attendance and punctuality

We consistently communicate our high expectations of all pupils' attendance and punctuality, and the benefits of these habits. We reward good and improved attendance and punctuality through assemblies, tutor time, texts/ calls home, citations and prizes.

4.0 The position regarding family holidays and/or extended trips/holidays

The legal position is that under regulation 12 of the Education, Schools and Further Education Regulations 1981, no parent can demand leave of absence for a holiday as of right. The power is discretionary.

At Haggerston we do not authorise holidays and/or extended trips/holidays overseas in term time for the reasons set out above. If students are taken out of school for a holiday, then this will be coded G and referred to the local authority for a Penalty Notice. A Penalty Notice carries a fine of £80 per parent, per child. If the fine is not paid within 28 days, it rises to £160 per parent, per child. There is no right of appeal by parents against a penalty notice. If not paid, local authorities must decide either to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

In exceptional circumstances, a parent(s)/carer(s) must make a case for taking the child away from school during term time, which means that the parent/carer has to show why their child should be treated differently from the norm. The application must be made in writing and sent directly to the Co - Headteachers. However, making a case does not mean that leave will be granted. If they are satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances based on the individual facts and circumstances of the case, then the Co-Headteachers will determine how many days leave your child may be allowed.

5.0 Legal Action

We take a support first approach to improving attendance and/ or punctuality. Where that is not successful, or it is not engaged with, the law protects pupils' right to an education and provides penalty notices (fines) and a range of legal interventions to formalise attendance improvement efforts; these are:

1. The school may ask the Local Authority to issue a Penalty Notice on its behalf. A Penalty Notice carries a fine of £80, per parent(s)/carer(s), per child. If the fine is not paid within 28 days it rises to £160 per parent(s)/carer(s), per child. If not paid at all, court action will be initiated. A second penalty notice can be issued to the same parent(s)/carer(s) in respect of the same child within 3 years. A third penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent(s)/carer(s) for the same child in a 3 year period. If the threshold is met for a third time, alternative action will be taken. A 'Notice to Improve' letter will be sent before a penalty notice is issued.
2. The school may ask the local authority to initiate court action under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996, which could lead to Parenting Orders, Education Supervision Order, fines of up to £2,500 and/or a community order or imprisonment for up to 3 months.
3. In some cases, action may be taken under the Children Act 1989 to protect the welfare and development of the child.

6.0 Monitoring

The attendance and punctuality of all pupils is regularly monitored by the Year/Attendance/Inclusion/Safeguarding/Student Services team led by the Senior Attendance Champion with responsibility for improving attendance. This is shared with the Secretary of State, Senior Leadership Team, CST, Governors, LA and and other statutory services where involved e.g. YOT (Youth Offending Team), social services and the police.

7.0 Policy documentation control

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