HARMONIZE ACADEMY

ATTENDANCE POLICY

POLICY WRITTEN BY:	**PRINCIPAL**
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Trust, Respect, Compassion, Forgiveness

ATTENDANCE POLICY

AIMS

One of the key tasks of Harmonize Academy is to maximize attendance rates and a goal of regular attendance is actively pursued. Attendance is a key indicator of improved outcomes for students and is a sign that Harmonize Academy is engaging students. It is understood that Harmonize Academy and parents work in partnership to encourage the regular attendance of students and that whilst parents are primarily responsible for ensuring that their children attend school, Harmonize Academy is responsible for supporting good attendance. Parents are regularly reminded that any unjustified absence is not acceptable.

Parents are required to support Harmonize Academy Behaviour Support Plan and to sign the parental contract in support of their children attending school.

LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

This policy refers to the requirements of the working together to improve school attendance from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures.

HARMONIZE ACADEMY SUPPORTS ATTENDANCE THROUGH:

1. Close liaison with parents, we will contact parent/carers by text if their child does not turn up for school by 9:30am. If we get no response our EWO will make a home visit on the first day of non-attendance to find out why their child has not come in for school.
2. Clear policies on absence and clear expectations of students' attendance targets are discussed at pre-admission interview.
3. Close monitoring of students' attendance at registration am and pm is recorded on SIMs and is reported to referring schools and local authorities.
4. Employing a full-time Educational Welfare Officer to monitor attendance daily.
5. Rewards (attendance certificates, weekly vouchers for 100% attendance and letters/texts home).

AN INDIVIDUAL APPROACH

Where it is found that a student is regularly not attending or consistently arriving late:

- Meetings with parents/carers, student, staff, APT/School staff and EWO encourage a team approach and help isolate any factors that may contribute to poor attendance.
- Realistic and specific targets are set, that are reviewed with all involved.
- Tangible rewards for improved and outstanding attendance.

COMMUNICATION

- The student and Parent(s)/Carer(s) are informed of attendance policy and expectations at the initial interview.
- If attendance is foreseen to be an issue, individual targets will be negotiated.
- Attendance expectations are highlighted in the student and parent/carer contracts.
- House posters display attendance for individuals and house groups to promote good attendance as a team and individually.
- The above points also include punctuality.

GOOD PRACTICE INDICATORS THAT RELATE TO GOOD ATTENDANCE

- Teachers are seen to be interested in young people and to enjoy their company;
- Classrooms are orderly;
- The curriculum is matched to the students needs and abilities;
- Lessons are well prepared and offer a range of teaching styles;
- Students have regular, good feedback on their work;
- There are a range of both formal and informal rewards;
- Sanctions are fair, proportionate and understood;
- Uniformity and consistency exist amongst staff are acceptable/unacceptable behaviour;
- Staff members are alert to slippage's in individual attendance;
- Staff members are alert to critical points of transition.

ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

1. MONITORING

- A register is taken for each lesson in school and monitor at am and pm.
- Lateness and poor attendance are monitored daily.
- Performance indicators are set relevant to each student's attendance history and a whole school contract.
- Attendance is analysed weekly, termly and annually.
- The attendance policy is highlighted with students, parents/carers at the initial interview.
- Recognition and rewards are given to those who attend and whose attendance is improving.
- Personal attendance registers may be used to heighten individual student awareness of patterns of attendance.

2. ABSENCES

FORESEEN ABSENCE
Parents must inform Harmonize Academy of any future, expected absence, and gain assurance from Harmonize Academy that the reason given for absence is authorised.

UNFORESEEN ABSENCE
Where possible, parents should inform Harmonize Academy of child's reason for absence on the first day of absence and, where possible, the date of intention to return should be given.

Where the parents fail to contact Harmonize Academy about their child's absence we will contact parents/carers either by text, telephone or home visit in order to secure an explanation of absence.

3. REASONS FOR ABSENCE

ILLNESS
Genuine illness constitutes an authorised absence. It should always be supported by a text, telephone call from parents/carers. Long term absences should be investigated and confirmation of illness sought through a medical certificate. If a student is absent for a prolonged period or Harmonize Academy notices a pattern of absence emerging, parents/carers will be contacted to discuss any problems and to help support the student to attend school.

SPECIAL OCCASIONS / HOLIDAYS
Harmonize Academy will exercise its discretion as to whether or not to authorise absence in these circumstances and will have to consult the referring school or LA to get permission from them to authorise absence.

FAMILY BEREAVEMENT
Harmonize Academy will respond sensitively to a request for leave of absence. Where, however, the student is absent for more than the agreed period contact will be made.

APPOINTMENTS- MEDICAL & DENTAL
These are discouraged in school time. Students are expected to return promptly to the school and resume studies on completion of the appointment. If a student fails to return from a morning appointment and misses afternoon registration without adequate explanation, the afternoon absence should be treated as unauthorised.

4. PERSISTENT ABSENCE

Students at risk of becoming persistently absent
Harmonize Academy will identify students at risk of poor attendance and work with identified students, parents and carers to understand and address the reasons for absence. Support will be offered.

Persistently absent students
Harmonize Academy will support students at risk of becoming persistently absent and where absence becomes persistent, put additional targeted support in place to remove any barriers. Appropriate interventions will be put in place. Where there are safeguarding concerns, Harmonize Academy would seek support through statutory children's social care.

Severely absent students
Harmonize Academy will support students who are severely absent and work with appropriate agencies as required.

Support for cohorts of students with lower attendance than their peers
Harmonize Academy will use data to identify cohorts with, or at risk of, low attendance and develop strategies to support them.

Support for students with medical conditions or SEND with poor attendance
Harmonize Academy will maintain the same ambition for attendance and work with students and parents to maximise attendance.

Support for students with a social worker
Harmonize Academy will work with the student's social worker to identify unexplained absences and inform them of any change in roll status.

5. LATENESS

This should be actively discouraged. Attention is been paid to emerging patterns of late arrival, is monitored and may provide grounds for prosecution.

6. PERMISSION TO LEAVE DURING THE DAY

- No child may leave Harmonize Academy during school hours unless authorised by a parent/carer and a good reason is given
- All students must bring a note or medical appointment card which must be shown to our EWO or member of the Senior Leadership Team
- Absent during lessons is monitored and is referred to Senior Leadership Staff to deal with.
- No students are allowed out at break or lunch time.
- If a child is ill the Senior Leadership staff should be notified immediately, and they will ensure parents/carers and relevant agencies are informed, and will arrange for students to be picked up or to make their own way home from school.

See also: HA Communication with Parents and Carers Policy