



ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY

The school believes that:

Without good attendance students will not achieve their potential and benefit fully from the excellent quality of teaching and learning experiences the school provides. Irregular attendance leads to educational disadvantage and puts young people at risk of limited life chances.

National Statistics show that:

Attendance Rate	Chances of GCSSE success
93.5%	74.3% chance of 5 A*-C passes
92.5%	60.4% chance of 5 A*-C passes
91.5%	53.1% chance of 5 A*-C passes
90%	44.6% chance of 5 A*-C passes
88%	34% chance of 5 A*-C passes
Less than 88%	26% chance of 5 A*-C passes

We recognise pupil performance and well being go hand in hand – doing well in education is the most effective route for young people out of poverty and disaffection. Attending and achieving at school is a core requirement.

Improving and maintaining school attendance requires a committed partnership. This involves parents/carers and families, teachers and support staff, governors, the LA support services and other agencies working constructively and supportively with young people.

In order to fulfil this belief, the school adopts appropriate systems, to monitor attendance and to employ strategies that encourage good attendance. These systems are in accordance with appropriate legislation and relevant DfES and LA guidance (See Appendix E).

THE ROLE OF THE LOCAL EDUCATION AUTHORITY

The Local Education Authority has a statutory duty to ensure children who are of compulsory school age and registered at school, attend regularly.

Responsibilities:

- To provide education suitable to the child's age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs.
- To identify, develop and establish good practice in respect to the child's welfare and access to education throughout the authority.
- To enable all LEA services with responsibility for children to work together effectively in the best interests of the child through its Behaviour Support Plan.
- To fulfil its statutory duty through the Education Welfare Service whose primary responsibility is to ensure the regular and punctual attendance of all pupils.

THE ROLE OF THE EDUCATION WELFARE SERVICE

The service works in partnership with schools, parents, children and carers in order to achieve the best levels of school attendance and punctuality for all pupils. The Service and all schools work closely with other support services and relevant external agencies, in order to achieve these levels of school attendance.

Responsibilities:

- To allocate a named Education Welfare Officer (EWO) to each East Riding school who will work in close partnership with them.
- To uphold and enforce the law in respect of attendance, employment and the issue of entertainment licences.
- To provide support to children, parents/carers and schools in relation to improving attendance.
- To establish good working practices with all schools based on clear expectations.
- To monitor attendance across the East Riding of Yorkshire based on information from schools.
- To respond to written referrals from schools within an agreed time framework.
- To work with individual pupils in schools, parents and families at home consulting and referring to other agencies as appropriate.
- To support schools and agree targets to reduce absence.
- To maintain an effective working relationship with neighbouring authorities for all pupils for whom we have educational responsibilities.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF GOVERNORS

The governing body is required by legislation to see that registers are kept accurately. A report is submitted to the Governing Body each term, on various aspects of pupil attendance. Governors may, from time to time, wish to review the statistics and trends and support positive measures taken to improve attendance.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PARENTS

All parents/carers who have children of compulsory school age, are responsible in law for ensuring that their children receive an efficient education, 'suitable to their age, ability and aptitude and any special educational needs which they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise' (Section 7 Education Act 1996.)

It is helpful if parents acknowledge their responsibilities by:

- Registering their children in school if they do not intend to educate them at home.
- Ensuring their children attend punctually, regularly and stay at school.
- Meeting any social and emotional needs which affect access to education: either through family support or by seeking the assistance of other people or agencies.
- Ensuring a good attitude to learning and support for the home-school agreement.
- Working in partnership with the school and other agencies in the best interest of their child. This may include informing the school about significant changes or influences in the child's life which may impact on learning.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SCHOOL

The School aims to provide a welcoming and safe environment which encourages attendance and promotes the best performance from children. Any absence from school disrupts the continuity of learning and may lead to under-achievement or inappropriate behaviour.

Responsibilities:

- To promote the highest possible levels of attendance by pupils.
- To produce a whole-school attendance policy which should be communicated clearly to all pupils and parents and be applied consistently.
- To ensure all registers are completed promptly and accurately in accordance with Government and LEA guidelines (see Appendix A: 'Procedure-for-Marking Registers')
- To be alert to changes in attendance patterns and respond promptly to any issues which may lead to irregular school attendance.
- To pay particular attention to those pupils whose attendance is irregular and involve their Education Welfare Officer at an early stage using the agreed referral system.
- To communicate with and support parents/carers in promoting the regular and punctual attendance of their children (see appendix D).
- To work co-operatively in partnership with the Education Welfare Service and other appropriate multi-agency partners in supporting attendance based on clear expectations.
- To not exclude pupils for poor or non-attendance.
- To ensure all registers are available for inspection on request of the Education Welfare Officer.
- To only remove a child's name from the register in accordance with the regulations.

Operational principles and procedures

PUNCTUALITY

The School takes active steps to ensure the punctuality of pupils. Lateness is monitored and investigated. Morning registration opens at 8.40 am, when the students move into the tutor room and closes at 9.05 am. If a pupil arrives late but before 9.05 am they will be marked as late but present. Arrival after 9.05 will be recorded as unauthorised absence for which parental authorisation will be sought. Afternoon registration is at 1.25 pm, with the register taken by the subject teacher for period 4 also defaulting as the pm register mark.

The following procedure should be used to record lateness (please refer to Appendix B: Lateness)

- If a pupil arrives late while the register is still open they should be marked as 'late' but counted as present for that session.
- If a pupil amasses 15 minutes or more unexplained lateness during a period of one week they will be expected to attend a one hour after school detention. Parents will be informed via letter posted home. If the pupil does not attend the detention they will be expected to attend at an alternative time. Failure to attend two detentions will result in a fixed term exclusion of one day. (See appendix D : Parental letters)
- If a pupil arrives after the register has closed but provides a satisfactory explanation, they should be marked as 'authorised absence' for that session.

- If a pupil arrives after the register has closed, i.e. 9.05am and fails to provide a satisfactory explanation, they should be marked as 'unauthorised absent' for that session.
- If a pupil arrives late having missed registration, their presence on site should be noted in a book in the school office in any building for purpose of emergency evacuation.
- If a pupil arrives late for school in the morning on a regular basis (e.g. twice in one week), the pupil will be referred to the HOH for a sanction (one lunchtime in the Seclusion room). The HOH may involve the EWO if the matter remains unresolved, following involvement of parents. Persistent non-attendance (10 or more sessions within 13 weeks) may result in a Fixed Penalty Notice (see appendix)
- Year 11 students who return to school site after 1.20pm will be required to attend a 30 minute after school detention on the day they are late.
- Once students reach a total of three lates they receive a formal verbal warning and any further lates will result in their lunchtime pass being removed and the loss of the privilege of leaving the school site at lunchtime.

AUTHORISED ABSENCE

Only the school can authorise an absence. The fact that a parent has provided an explanation in relation to a particular absence does not oblige the school to accept the explanation offered as a valid reason for absence. The School will communicate to parents their policies with regard to the notification and categorisation of absence.

Some parents, such as those whose first language is not English, may experience difficulty in telephoning. In such cases schools should seek to make alternative arrangements, for example, through a neighbour, brothers or sisters or a community worker.

Absence should be **authorised** if:

- The pupil is absent with leave (defined-as '*leave granted by any person authorised to do so by the governing body or senior member of staff within the school*');
- The pupil is ill or prevented from attending by an unavoidable cause;
- The absence occurs on a day exclusively set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parent belongs;
- The school at which the pupil is registered is not within walking distance of their home; and no suitable arrangements have been made by the Local Education Authority for any of the following:-
 - The pupil's transport to and from school;
 - Boarding accommodation for the pupil at or near the school;
 - Enabling the pupil to become a registered pupil at a school nearer to their home.
- The pupil is the child of Traveller parents who temporarily leave the area giving reasonable indication of their intention to return;
- There is a family bereavement;
- The pupil has a local authority licence to take part in a public performance and the school has given leave of absence.
- The pupil is attending an interview with either a prospective employer or in connection with an application for a place at an institute of further or higher education or for a place at another school;

- The pupil is involved in an exceptional special occasion e.g. a family wedding. In authorising such absences the individual circumstances of the particular case and the pupil's overall pattern of attendance should be considered;
- Term Time Holidays for a duration of up to 10 days may be considered as per the East Riding Term Time Holiday Policy (See appendix F)

UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

An absence will be recorded as unauthorised if:

- No explanation is forthcoming from the parent or the school is dissatisfied with the explanation;
- The pupil is staying at home to mind the house or to look after siblings (the DfEE guidance suggests that absence in such cases should only be granted in exceptional circumstances);
- The pupil is absent for unexceptional special occasions e.g. the pupil's birthday;
- The pupil is away from school on a Term Time holiday for a period of time longer than that authorised by the Head Teacher;
- The pupil is on a family holiday without permission.
- In cases where a student has recorded 10 unauthorised absences within a 13 week period the Local Authority may issue a Fixed Penalty Notice (See Appendix C: Fixed Penalty Notices). This will be issued after an individual warning letter giving an opportunity for attendance to improve (see Appendix D: Parental Letters)

FAMILY HOLIDAYS AND EXTENDED TRIPS OVERSEAS DURING TERM TIME

(See appendix F for full guidance)

The school will:

- Follow the East Riding Term Time Holiday Policy as agreed by the School Governors.
- Regularly communicate to parents this policy regarding term-time holidays
- Actively discourage parents from planning term-time holidays
- Remind parents that they cannot expect leave of absence for the purpose of holiday to be granted as of right (school do have a discretionary power to grant up to 10 school days in any school year).

WORKING WITH AGENCIES & PARENTS

- Form Tutors or the Attendance Officer will alert HOH's or HT's of any concerns regarding attendance. EWO become involved if the problem is ongoing.
- The House Team, working with data compiled by the Attendance Officer will contact parents if they feel unable to authorise an absence on the basis of the evidence/reason provided by parents.
- HOH and HT will consult with Assistant Headteacher: Staff and Student Well-being to consider requests from parents for Term Time holidays.
- The Attendance Officer monitors attendance weekly, contacting parents and highlighting concerns to the House Team where necessary.
- The School, Education Welfare Service and other appropriate Multi-agencies work together closely to ensure all appropriate interventions take place.
- Education Welfare Officers liaise directly (on a weekly basis) with the House Team to identify potential and actual attendance problems (for 85%attendance and below).

- EWO independently checks attendance data regularly, to monitor pupil attendance generally and to watch over individual cases more particularly.
- EWO interviews pupils and visits parents as appropriate. EWO will be requested to see any pupil who truant.
- Attendance figures are provided to all parents on an annual basis, by way of the annual report.
- EWO creates and implements action plans for cases of ongoing non-attendance in consultation with HOH and other agencies, as appropriate. This may involve parenting contracts or Fixed Penalty Notices.

PROCEDURE FOR MARKING REGISTERS (see Appendix A: Marking of registers)

GENERAL POINTS:

- School registers to be called at 8.45 am using e-portal the school's electronic system. Staff will also complete electronic registers for every other lesson.
- Parents are asked to telephone the Attendance Officer to inform the school of any absence of their child from school.
- If a form tutor is suspicious about a pupil's absence from school, they should inform the House Team for further enquiries to be made. Office staff are alert to the possibility of false calls.
- All unauthorised absence is interpreted as truancy.

There are four broad classifications in attendance registers:-

- present
- authorised absence
- approved educational activity
- unauthorised absence

PRESENT:

symbols are:

/ present and punctual

L late (pupil arrived late to registration but before register closed). This is not classified as unauthorised absence. The number of minutes late to any lesson will be recorded on the E-portal system by the teacher.

V Educational trip or visit.

AUTHORISED ABSENCE:

The pupil has the authority of the school to be absent either given in advance (e.g. a hospital appointment or approved family holiday) or afterwards (e.g. notification of illness): This is shown by an appropriate symbol inserted by the Attendance Officer on receipt of a valid authorisation. Any doubts will be checked via the Head of House.

symbols are:

B Pupil attending another institution under a formalised dual registration arrangement (eg Alternative Learning Package (ALP))

C Other circumstances (bereavement, agreed special occasions, performances, other approved absences not covered by other codes)

H Family holiday (for which leave has been granted)

- I** Illness
- J** Interviews.
- R** Religious Observance
- T** Traveller absence
- M** Medical and dental appointments, confirmed illness

APPROVED EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITY:

The pupil is engaged in an educational, approved, supervised activity off-site. This includes work experience, field trips, sporting and drama activities and link courses. These are classified as present

symbols are:

- D** Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment /college)
- P** Approved sporting activity (participation in/attendance at) ALP
- V** Educational visit or trip (UK/overseas), and tuition at another institution/ school/venue
- W** Approved work experience
- S** Approved study leave

UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE:

This is used for truancy or where an unacceptable reason is given for the absence. This should be recorded in the register by the letter N

symbols are:

- N** Main marking for unauthorised absence
- O** Truancy confirmed only the attendance officer should input O when informed by teacher of HOH.
- G** Over 10 day's holidays

Appendix A: The marking of Registers (instructions for staff)

It is vital that an electronic register is taken every lesson and registration period using e-portal. The taking and recording of a register is a legal requirement. It is important we have an accurate record of those students present in school for health and safety reasons. It is also essential that an accurate record is kept in order for us effectively tackle truancy and ensure appropriate interventions are put in place.

Procedure

The register should be marked and sent within the first **15 minutes** of a session. Full guidance on the marking of registers using e-portal can be found in the **staff handbook section 5.1**. All staff should be familiar with this information. Some important points are noted below:

- The only codes necessary are present, absent or late codes. Any other codes will be entered by the Attendance Officer.
- Only mark a student as present if they are actually present in your classroom. Only overwrite a pre-populated code if the student is marked as absent but is in fact present.
- If a student arrives after the register has been taken it must be amended. If the student has a valid reason for the late arrival mark the student as present. If the student has no reasonable reason for the lateness use the late code. Choose the code nearest to the amount of time the student is late (i.e. if 7 mins late use L5, if 9 mins late use L10)
- Curriculum areas that have difficulties using the electronic system (i.e. PE or music lessons) should liaise with the Attendance Officer and Assistant Headteacher: Inclusion to find the most effective alternative method.
- In the event of a power failure or electronic problems with the system, a paper register should be taken and sent to the attendance officer at the end of the lesson.

Any concerns or queries regarding the use of the electronic system should be directed to the Information Services team.

Accuracy

It is essential that all registers are taken accurately. Problems can occur when:

1. Morning registration and p4 registers are not completed. We have to report on data taken from the system for these times, it is essential these registers are completed on time.
2. Registers are inaccurate. On some occasions students arrive late (after the register has been completed). If the register is not amended it is recorded as an unauthorised absence.
3. Students have an alternative/part-time timetable. If a student has an alternative timetable for any reason and does not attend normal lessons it is essential that a mechanism for the student to gain a mark be arranged. It may be that they report to a building office or the LRC.
4. Students removed from lessons by staff. If a member of staff takes a student out of a lesson to interview etc the student often misses getting their mark. It would be helpful if the member of staff could let the Attendance Officer know that they have the student with them.

School Trips and Visits

It is also essential we have an accurate record of all students who are present but on school visit. The procedure is as follows:

- Before any type of school visit occurs the school visits co-ordinator should be consulted and appropriate paper work including risk assessments should be completed.
- The trip organiser must publish a list of students expected to attend the school visit in the staff room prior to the visit. It is vital a copy of this list is sent to the attendance officer.
- The trip organiser should also add a note to 'This Week' informing all staff the trip is to take place and where the list of names of those attending can be found.
- **On the day of the visit a paper register should be taken clearly indicating those students present and attending the visit. This should be sent to the Attendance Officer before the students leave site for the visit.**

Procedure for incomplete Registers

- The Attendance Officer will email a list of all registers incomplete by 3.30pm daily.
- These registers must be completed as soon as possible by the staff named on the list.
- SLT staff linked to curriculum areas will have oversight of this process.
- Any registers still not completed must be discussed with the SLT link member.
- Any member of staff who has difficulty completing a register must contact the Attendance Officer or Assistant Headteacher: Inclusion.

Appendix B: Lateness

It is essential that students are on time to lessons and registration to ensure a crisp start to the session. Punctuality is an expectation and should be the norm. Accepting lateness is not encouraging good basic habits and preparing students for the future. Lateness must not be tolerated and must be recorded and sanctioned.

Lateness Monitoring Procedure:

1. Tutors/class teachers mark student lateness every registration/lesson unless a genuine reason for lateness is given.
2. Each tutor receives a weekly punctuality record for members of their tutor group.
3. Tutors identify any student exceeding 15 mins of lateness in one week. If no genuine reason is given the tutor refers student for a lateness detention by indicating on the list and returning to the building office. Nil returns should also be made.
4. Office sends returns to the Student Services Admin Assistant who sends

letter home requesting that students attend one hour detention, which takes place on Thursday evenings.

5. Detention managed by SLT.
6. Failure to attend detention is noted by Student Services Admin Assistant who sends a further letter requesting the student attends a detention.
7. Failure to attend second detention will result in one exclusion/seclusion.

Persistent lateness will be reported to the Education Welfare Officer.

Arrival to school after morning registration has closed will result in an unauthorised absence mark. The reason for this lateness must be verified by a parent/carer. 10 or more missed registrations within a period of 13 weeks will result in a Fixed Penalty Notice.

Appendix C: Fixed Penalty Notices

Section 23 of the Anti Social Behaviour Act 2003 empowers designated LEA officers, head teachers and police to issue Fixed Penalty Notices in cases of unauthorised absence from school.

Fixed penalty notices need to be used wisely and as **a tool to improve attendance**.

A Penalty notice can only be issued for unauthorised absence and will be restricted to two per pupil per academic year. In cases where families contain more than one poor attending pupil multiple issue must be considered carefully. There is no **restriction on the number of formal warning letters** a parent may receive.

Issue is appropriate in the following circumstances:

- Overt truancy (including pupils caught on truancy sweeps)
- Parentally-condoned absences
- Excessive holidays
- Excessive delayed return from extended holidays without prior school agreement
- Delayed return to school after an exclusion
- Persistent late arrival at school (after the register has closed)

Procedure:

1. Students moving towards 10 sessions (5 school days) lost to unauthorised absence within the previous 13 weeks will be identified by the EWO.
2. The student will be discussed with House Team at the weekly meeting and absences double verified.
3. A warning letter issued by the school will be sent home giving an opportunity for the situation to improve (see appendix D)
4. If attendance does not improve a referral form is completed by the EWO with the relevant HOH. This is sent to County Hall with a certificate of attendance.
5. The liable person will receive a formal warning from County Hall of the possibility of a Penalty Notice being issued and given 15 school days to improve.
6. If student has another unauthorised absence within the 15 day period the EWO alerts County Hall – who will issue the Fixed Penalty Notice. The parents then have 28 days to pay the £50 Penalty.

Appendix D: The framework of legislation and guidance'

The legal framework governing school attendance and the responsibilities of the parents, schools and the LEA is set out by a succession of Education and other Acts, Guidance and Regulations.

For further reference, major legislation and guidance include the following:

- 1) Children Act 1989 Section 36: Education Supervision Orders.
- 2) Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995 (as amended). Schools must maintain two registers:
 - a) an admission register, which serves as the school roll and
 - b) an attendance register.
- 3) Education Act 1996 Sections 7 and 437-448: Brings together all legislation on school attendance including duty of parents to secure education for their children whether at school or otherwise.
- 4) DFEE Guidance (1998) 'School attendance and the role of the Education Welfare Service.'

APPENDIX E

Term Time Holidays

At Driffield School we are committed to working with all other East Riding of Yorkshire Schools and East Riding of Yorkshire Council to reduce the number of school days missed due to term time holidays. The agreement set out below has been drawn up and published as a term time holiday policy that all head teachers shall adhere to when considering any parental requests.

Time off school for family holidays is not a right

However, head teachers may authorise term time holidays in specific circumstances but will require evidence.

Circumstance 1:

When parents take their holiday in term time owing to their contractual arrangements e.g. farmers, factory workers, and tourist trade workers;

Evidence:

A letter from the employer stating this is the case.

Circumstance 2:

Where there have been medical or emotional issues involving a child or parent and a health professional has recommended that the family need rehabilitation time;

Evidence:

A letter from the medical professional stating this is their recommendation.

Circumstance 3:

Where emigration is being considered;

Evidence:

Proof of investigation.

Circumstance 4:

Where the family needs to leave the area to attend the ceremony of a relative;

Evidence:

Formal invitation and/or a case put forward to the head teacher.

The head teacher will not under any circumstance authorise holidays:

- In the first six weeks of any academic year;
- Year 6 transition days;
- Year 6 assessment weeks;
- Year 9 options time;
- Any time during years 10 & 11;
- At any time specified by the school (this will be communicated to parents by each school
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Consequences of taking an unauthorised term time holiday

If your request is declined and you take your child out of school for ten unauthorised absence sessions, each parent within your household will be issued with a £50 penalty notice for each child taken out of school. If the penalty notice remains unpaid after 28 days, it will increase to £100. If after 42 days it remains unpaid, you will be summoned to appear before a Magistrate to explain why your child has unauthorised school absences. A fine of up to £1000 may be imposed.