



# **Peacehaven Community** **School**

## **Attendance Policy and Targets**

This policy has been read and adopted by the Governing Body on:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

For and on behalf of the Governing Body

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Helen Cryer  
Headteacher

## **CREATING THE CONTEXT AND CONDITIONS FOR GOOD ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY**

**Peacehaven Community School seeks to ensure that all its pupils receive a full-time education which maximises opportunities for each pupil to realise his/her true potential.**

The school will strive to provide a welcoming, caring environment, whereby each member of the school community feels wanted and secure.

All school staff will work with pupils and their families to ensure each pupil attends school regularly and punctually.

The school will establish an effective system of incentives and rewards, which acknowledges the efforts of pupils to improve their attendance and timekeeping, and will challenge the behaviour of those pupils and parents who give low priority to attendance and punctuality.

To meet these objectives Peacehaven Community School will establish an effective and efficient system of communication with pupils, parents and appropriate agencies to provide mutual information, advice and support.

### **POLICY AIMS**

- 1 To improve the overall percentage of pupils at school.
- 2 To make attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with the school including pupils, parents, teachers and governors.
- 3 To provide support, advice and guidance to parents and pupils.
- 4 To further develop positive and consistent communication between home and school.
- 5 To implement a system of rewards and sanctions.
- 6 To develop a systematic approach to gathering and analysing attendance related data.
- 7 To promote effective partnerships with the Education Welfare Service and with other services and agencies.
- 8 To recognise the needs of the individual pupil when planning reintegration following significant periods of absence.

<b>ROLE</b>	<b>KEY RESPONSIBILITIES</b>	<b>TASKS</b>
Teacher / Mentor	Implement Attendance and Punctuality Policy	Register students within the first 10 minutes of each session.
Attendance Officer Ann Ford (AFO) SFST Worker/ Attendance	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Monitor the effective completion of registration by teachers/mentors</li> <li>2. Maintain accurate attendance and punctuality records using correct absence codes.</li> <li>3. Follow up unexplained absences by alerting parents using Truancy Call and absence letters.</li> <li>4. Monitor SIMS data daily and prepare reports for Secondary Behaviour and Attendance Service.</li> <li>5. Liaise with parents/ Head Teacher/ BESST/ social worker/ school nurse/ achievement co-ordinator regularly to identify and support students with attendance/ punctuality problems.</li> <li>6. Meet with Secondary Behaviour and Attendance Service regularly to refer and discuss concerns</li> </ol>	
Mandy Lewis – Assistant Head/Helen Cryer - Head Teacher	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Review attendance / punctuality targets.</li> <li>2. To be informed by the attendance officer on a regular basis of any students causing attendance / punctuality concerns</li> </ol>	
Wendy Ryan - Secondary Behaviour and Attendance Service	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To manage students with low attendance.</li> <li>2. To liaise with AFO/MBU at a scheduled meeting and discuss proposed action plans to agree a way forward.</li> <li>3. To help and work in partnership with school, parents and other relevant agencies to improve students identified with low attendance.</li> <li>4. To maintain records and report on student attendance problems.</li> <li>5. To prepare evidence for court action including application for Education Supervision Orders.</li> </ol>	

Every half day absence from school has to be classified by the school, (not by the parents), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of each absence is always required, preferably in writing.

**Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like illness or other unavoidable cause. An authorised absence requires communication from the parent/carer. Verbal, telephone or written messages are acceptable.**

**Unauthorised absences are those, which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no “leave” has been given. This includes:**

- **Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily**
- **Truancy before or during the school day**
- **Absences which have not been properly explained/requested**
- **Children who arrive at school too late to get an AM mark**
- **Holidays in term time**

**Please note: If you take a family holiday during term time (unauthorised or authorised), PCS will not authorise a student to participate in a school day trip or residential within the same 12 month period. In the case of an unauthorised holiday the Behaviour & Attendance Service will be notified of the holiday taken and a Penalty Notice will be issued. Please note that such a penalty is issued to each parent for each child taken out of school. A Penalty Notice is a fine of £50 which increases to £100 if not paid within the first 28 days. Thereafter, if the Penalty remains unpaid this may result in legal action.**

### **Registration Procedures**

1. The member of staff leading the session is responsible for completing the registration procedure.
2. Every session should be registered in the same way
  - Using Lesson Register linked to SIMS, the register should be taken and completed within 10 minutes of the scheduled start and sent immediately.
  - Staff should call out each student's name with the students replying verbally.
  - Students must sit in silence whilst the register is taken.
3. To use Lesson Monitor
  - Login & click on 'teacher' and type password.
  - Pull up the register for the day and click on the relevant period.
  - Sessions 1 – 6: To indicate a student is present use code '/'. To indicate a student is absent use code 'N'. (There are other codes that describe the types of absence. The Attendance Officer will enter these codes when they have confirmed the absence.)

The procedures for registration should be followed in the same way, however when the register is opened it will indicate if the student was present or absent for the previous session. If a student was marked present, code '/', and they are now absent, the absence code 'N' should be used and the member of staff should contact the Achievement Administrator immediately and follow the Truancy Policy if the absence has not been authorised. If the student cannot be traced their parents/carers should be informed. If parents/carers or other contacts cannot be contacted the police

should be notified.

- Staff should not change absence codes but inform the Achievement Administrators that there is a discrepancy in the codes. The Achievement Administrator will investigate and correct the AM or PM registers.
- Students who arrive at the session when the register is being taken should receive a 'late' mark, with time recorded in comments. To record this click onto the student's name and change the 'N' code to 'L'. (You will need to click the "Preserve/Un-preserve" button to change the mark from "N" to "L" if you have already saved your register. This is the only time you should need to use this button. Clicking this button before you take the register will allow you to incorrectly overwrite marks already entered by the achievement administrators e.g. ills, trips etc.)

### **Response to Absences -Aim**

We work to achieve and maintain good attendance rates and therefore our response to absence needs to be consistent and swift to be effective. A cornerstone of our strategies is the involvement of parents:

- Parents are provided with information on unacceptable reasons for absence; the message is clear i.e. absences are not allowed for reasons other than determined by the law.
- Parents are advised that they are expected to contact school early in the morning each day their child is absent;

### **A system of first day absence contact will:**

- Encourage early contact from parents.
- Reduce the number of short term absences.
- Reduce the number of students whose short term absence develops into long term absence.

### **Following up Absences**

1. On the first day, in all cases of absence, the Attendance Officer should:

- Activate Truancy call
- Enter satisfactory explanations for absence into Lesson Monitor
- Write to the students' parents if an explanation for absence is not received by the end of the day and attach the letter to SIMS

2. On the second day of absence the Attendance Officer should:

- Use the Truancy call or telephone parents / carers and advise them that their child has not registered and request an explanation for absence and continue this practice until contact is made
- Write a second letter to parent / carer and attach to SIMS
- Inform AFO to investigate as a matter of urgency if there are concerns about a student's well being

## Monitoring and Responding to Absence and Lateness

**Lateness** - Persistent lateness is often a significant indicator of under achievement.

- Lateness to school or lateness to lessons must be acted upon and parents made fully aware of the school's expectations concerning punctuality.
- Parents / carers are contacted every day by truancy call informing them the student was late into school
- Students make up lost learning time with their individual classroom teachers
- Dealing with lateness to particular lessons is a faculty area's responsibility
- Mentors will be advised that this has happened and will be asked to discuss with mentees why this has happened and how it can be resolved
- If persistent lateness continues, students will be expected to attend a 30 minute Time Management session after school (3.00 – 3.30). A letter will be sent to inform parents / carers of this session.
- During this session students will be encouraged to reflect upon how they use their time before school and will be expected to respond to constructive outcomes that arise from this session. This may also include signing a contract, where the student acknowledges the need to respond to these time management suggestions
- If lateness continues, parents / carers will be informed that the students punctuality has not improved. The expectation will be that students will make up lost learning time by extending their school day for a period of time or attending the next available inset day. A letter will be sent home and attached to SIMS, to inform them of this.
- If a student fails to respond to these strategies, parents / carers will be asked to come into school to discuss the problem with the Attendance Team which may include the Secondary Behaviour and Attendance Service.

### **Monitoring**

- Each week AFO/MBU will review attendance and punctuality data and will identify concerns and follow up. AFO/MBU will meet with Secondary Behaviour and Attendance Service regularly to agree priorities for SBAS support. AFO/MBU will advise the Achievement Co-ordinator and BESST about individual students attendance and punctuality concerns.
- Some students are at greater risk of poor attendance and punctuality and we have to do more work with them to ensure they are able to take full advantage of the opportunities available. We focus attention on potential attendance problems and act on them before they become severe. This is a long term strategy that will begin when the student joins PCS and continue to the conclusion of their school career
- Primary records and liaison should be used to identify potential poor attenders who should be targeted for close monitoring from the beginning of term
- At the end of the first term Year 7 students with attendance of less than 90% and with more than four interrupted weeks (other than holidays) will have letters sent to parents and attached to SIMS

Poor attendance will result in a staged response involving both students and parents/carers.

## **PCS Response to Attendance and Punctuality Issues**

### **Follow Up**

There is a range of situations where the school needs to respond:

- Unexplained or 2 days explained absence
- Below 90% attendance
- A pattern of absence, over a period of weeks
- Persistent lateness covering more than two sessions within a monitored period

The Attendance Team will:

- Raise the profile of attendance and punctuality and recognise the efforts of individuals with difficulties
- Provide the opportunity for students to take responsibility to monitor their own attendance
- Provide opportunities for communication with students and parents and for enhancing home school links
- Provide information for students and parents about the level of attendance, or degrees of improvement expected
- Individual Student Attendance certificates are printed and distributed at Academic Review Meetings, Subject Teacher Consultation and end of year reports

Parents are expected to contact the school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school may refer the child to the Secondary Behaviour and Attendance Service from the Local Education Authority. The Secondary Behaviour and Attendance Service will try to resolve the situation by agreement but if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed, the Secondary Behaviour and Attendance Service could use court proceedings.

### **Rights and Responsibilities of Parents**

Parents have a responsibility for ensuring their child attends school regularly and punctually. Parents have a right to be provided in good time with the necessary information from the school which would enable them to meet these obligations, this includes:

- The times of the school day
- School dates and holidays
- School procedures relating to attendance and punctuality
- School expectations regarding lateness
- Prompt communication of matters causing concern

The school expects that all parents communicate with the school giving a reason:

- In advance of any planned absence
- Immediately following any unplanned absence

Further non-compliance on the part of the parents should be documented in SIMS.

### **Secondary Behaviour and Attendance Service**

The Secondary Behaviour and Attendance Service provides an important bridge between home and school, by working with families to try to establish any underlying reasons for poor attendance and punctuality.

PCS will work in partnership with the Secondary Behaviour and Attendance Service sharing a common agenda.

It is appropriate that the Secondary Behaviour and Attendance Service are brought in at the stage where Attendance Officer / parent discussions at school have not led to any significant improvement in attendance at school. To facilitate this work it is essential that all action is clearly documented.

### **Re-Integration of Long Term Absentees**

For each student a re-integration action plan should be drawn up by a combination of the following staff – Secondary Behaviour and Attendance Service / SLT / Achievement Administrators / AFO. This action plan will acknowledge the reasons for the student's absence and may involve a reduced timetable in the first instance and temporary additional support.

### **Rewards**

The importance of good attendance should be regularly promoted through the mentoring programme and CTM's.

In Years 7-11 good attendance, where the pupil achieves the attendance target over each term, will be rewarded with attendance certificates.

Individual certificates are available for improved attendance / punctuality. Once a term students who achieve 100% attendance will be entered into a prize draw.

### **Summary**

The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures, if requested, to parents and to promote attendance. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend. School staff are committed to working with parents to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible.