

Hambleton & Richmondshire Pupil Referral Service



Sunbeck PRS Attendance Policy

Named personnel with designated responsibility for this policy:

Academic Year	Designated Senior Person	Nominated MC Member (if applicable)	Chair of Management Committee
2023-2024	Julie Price	Emma Lambden	Tom Kelly

Policy Review Dates:

Review Date	Changes Made	By Whom	Date Shared With Staff
20/12/2023	Person responsible, part time timetables	Julie Price	

Date Ratified by Management Committee	Review Date
15/04/2024	April 2025

Policy Source:	
North Yorkshire Council <input type="checkbox"/> The Key <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Written by The Sunbeck Centre <input type="checkbox"/>	Veritau <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please state) <input type="checkbox"/> Click or tap here to enter text.

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1. Aims

We recognise that many of our students come to us with a history of poor school attendance. We aim to improve this and secure more positive outcomes for all by taking a holistic approach to attendance and encourage our students to take advantage of the educational opportunities offered to them. Every staff member understands that attendance is their responsibility.

We aim to:

- To improve overall attendance of our students
- To promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence.
- To make attendance a priority for all those associated with the school, including parents, students, teachers and the management committee.

To achieve these aims for our students we are committed to:

- Providing a welcoming, stimulating and safe learning environment.
- Offering a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum.
- Reward those with excellent attendance and those with the greatest improvement.
- Offering support, guidance and training for all those who teach and work with our young people.
- Build strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets 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](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- › Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
- › Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
- › Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- › [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)
- › [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

It also refers to:

- › [School census guidance](#)
- › [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- › [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The Management Committee

The Management Committee is responsible for:

- monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis.
- holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data

The link member on the Management Committee for Attendance is: Emma Lambden.

3.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to Management Committee
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

3.3 The attendance lead

The school attendance lead is responsible for:

- Monitors attendance data across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Monitoring and analysing attendance data
- Reports concerns about attendance to the headteacher
- Hosting a fortnightly attendance meeting to review individual pupils' attendance data and support tutors in the development of attendance action plans.
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes.
- Works with LA attendance and enforcement officer to tackle persistent absence
- Advises the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The school attendance lead: Julie Price and be contacted via jprice@hrprs.n-yorks.sch.uk

3.4 Key Tutors/Teachers

Key Tutors are responsible for:

- monitoring individual attendance for their tutees
- Pursue absences with parents/carers, notify admin of the reason for absence
- Discuss attendance concerns with students, parents/carers and other agencies.
- Inform parents/carers and other involved agencies via text or email with the fortnightly attendance figures.
- Complete and keep up to date an attendance action plan for all tutees whose attendance falls below 95%
- Mentor pupils to overcome barriers to achieving good attendance
- Inform admin staff of attendance to Teams lessons or sessions off site, including the TMP.
- Confirm attendance at work experience, inform the admin staff. If absent investigate and inform admin of the reason for absence.

3.5 School Admin staff

School admin staff will:

- Complete attendance records for am and pm sessions.
- Take calls and texts from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis.
- Make initial contact with parents/carers re absence.
- Liaise with transport companies for non-attendance
- Contact alternative provisions to confirm attendance.
- Populate the attendance tracker with attendance figures from SIMs in advance of the fortnightly attendance meeting.

3.6 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every timetabled session.
- Call/text the school to report their child's absence before 9am on the first day of absence and each subsequent day of absence and advise when they are expected to return.
- Provide the school with at least 2 emergency contact number for their child.
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day.

3.7 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend every timetabled session on time.

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who authorised the amendment

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not.
- The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity.
- The nature of the circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 08:45 on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 08:45 and will be kept open until 09:30. The register for the second session will be taken at 12:45 and will be kept open until 13:15.

NB. Some pupils arriving by taxi are unable to arrive during these specific times. This is due to taxi contracts beyond our control and in such circumstances, attendance will be recorded accordingly.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence by 09:00 or as soon as practically possible (see also section 7). This needs to be via a phone call to main reception or the school mobile number.

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

4.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary and are expected to attend school before and after the appointment.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code
- As most pupils travel from outside the local area the school acknowledges difficulties and issues with transport delays. In such circumstances, a pupil will not be detrimentally affected on their attendance record. However, if the delay is caused by the pupil not being ready for the taxi it will be recorded as above.

4.5 Following up absence

Where any child we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, the school will:

- Follow up on their absence with their parent/carer to ascertain the reason, by a phone call by either their key tutor or admin staff on the first day of absence and then at regular intervals afterwards.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not.
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session.
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer or to contact Police for a welfare visit.

4.6 Reporting to parents

The school will regularly inform parents/carers about their child's attendance and absence levels:

- Parents/carers will receive a fortnightly update via either email or text of the current attendance figures.
- Parents/carers receive a termly report including data on attendance.
- Key tutors will contact parents/carers were attendance issue arise, prior to receiving the termly report. This will include the discussion of an action plan.
- Parents/carers will be issue an early intervention letter if their child's attends drops below 90%.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to pupils during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion including the length of time the pupil is authorised absent for.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as circumstances linked to the welfare of the pupil.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)

- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents/carers belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart.
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travelers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travelers. Absence may be authorised only when a Traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision
- Other possible 'exceptional circumstances' where the headteacher of school may grant term-time holiday.
- Study leave.
- Flexi-schooling requests –see separate policy

5.2 Legal sanctions

The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

At The Sunbeck Centre we understand that many of our students arrive with a history of poor attendance. We support our students and parents/carers by:

- Discussing with parents/carers any previous issues at the induction meeting, for example, those that have been accessing alternative provisions and, on reduced timetables.
- Outlining our expectations and looking for ways to support attendance.
- Regular focus on attendance in form time by key tutors, including addressing the occasional absences for minor illness.

We celebrate good attendance by:

- Weekly - students with 100% attendance for the week earn a Dominos pizza on Pizza Friday.
- Half termly – a box of chocolates for those students with 100% attendance or those with the greatest improvement.
- Half termly certificates for 100% attendance and those who have the greatest improvement.

7. Attendance monitoring

The school monitors and analyses attendance and absence data to identify pupils that require support with their attendance.

7.1 Monitoring attendance

Fortnightly staff meetings are held to review attendance data. Discussions may include, but not limited to:

- Attendance action plans for those whose attendance has dropped below 92%.
- Potential referrals to external agencies for additional support.
- Reviewing timetabled provision and identifying any trends.
- Review meetings with parents/carers.
- Issuing early intervention letters.
- Emailing/texting all parents/carers with their child's most recent attendance figures.
- The attendance lead at our school monitors pupil absence on a fortnightly basis.

The school's attendance lead will report to the management committee on a termly basis with the headline figures. Pupils who fall below the persistent absence (10%) or severe absence (50%) thresholds will be identified and the case outline provided.

7.2 Analysing attendance

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the Management Committee.

7.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Email/text parents/carers on a fortnightly basis to inform current attendance figures.
- Provide termly reports which include attendance figures.
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies.

7.4 Reducing persistent absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

- Attendance action plans written for those pupils whose attendance is at risk of persistent absence, when attendance figures fall below 92% and discussed regularly with pupil and parent/carer.
- Early intervention letter sent home when attendance falls below 92%.
- Meeting with parent or carer if issues persist
- Initial warning letter sent home when attendance falls below 90% and will be closely monitored.
- If attendance drops below 50% then a student is said to have severe absence and all relevant services will be involved to produce a specific attendance support plan (including looking at consideration for an EHCP) or a whole family plan across agencies to help overcome the barriers to being in school.

Follow the procedures outlined in the North Yorkshire Attendance Policy – see Appendix 2

8. Part time timetable

Part time timetables are sometimes necessary to enable pupils to access education. **This is only ever a temporary solution** and these timetables are reviewed on a two-weekly basis by the tutor and Senior Leaders. This is also in conjunction with other providers such as connected agencies as well as parents.

Part time timetables are considered only to assist the pupil to engage in their education following a period of time absent from school, arriving at Sunbeck on a part time timetable or other issues, for example anxiety, cognition load and SEMH needs.

To enable pupils to engage with education it may be useful to introduce a 'Blended Learning' package. This consists of time in school completing curriculum lessons and then working from home completing work set by

teaching staff from Sunbeck. This will provide pupils with an individual full-time provision. This is also a temporary solution and will again be reviewed on a two-weekly basis.

If a pupil attends part of the day, they may be expected to complete work from home. It may be paper-based or on TEAMS. This will be arranged with parents/carers at the attendance meeting or induction and work will then be provided on a weekly basis. Pupils will be expected to return the work in order for it to be marked and assessed. If a pupil has no access to a laptop one may be provided. If a part time pupil does not attend school and does not access Teams, the Attendance Lead will follow the same PACE caution process and tutors will follow the same safeguarding checks as for the full-time learners. (Appendix 2)

9. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum 2 years by the Attendance Lead. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full Management Committee.

10. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy

Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness

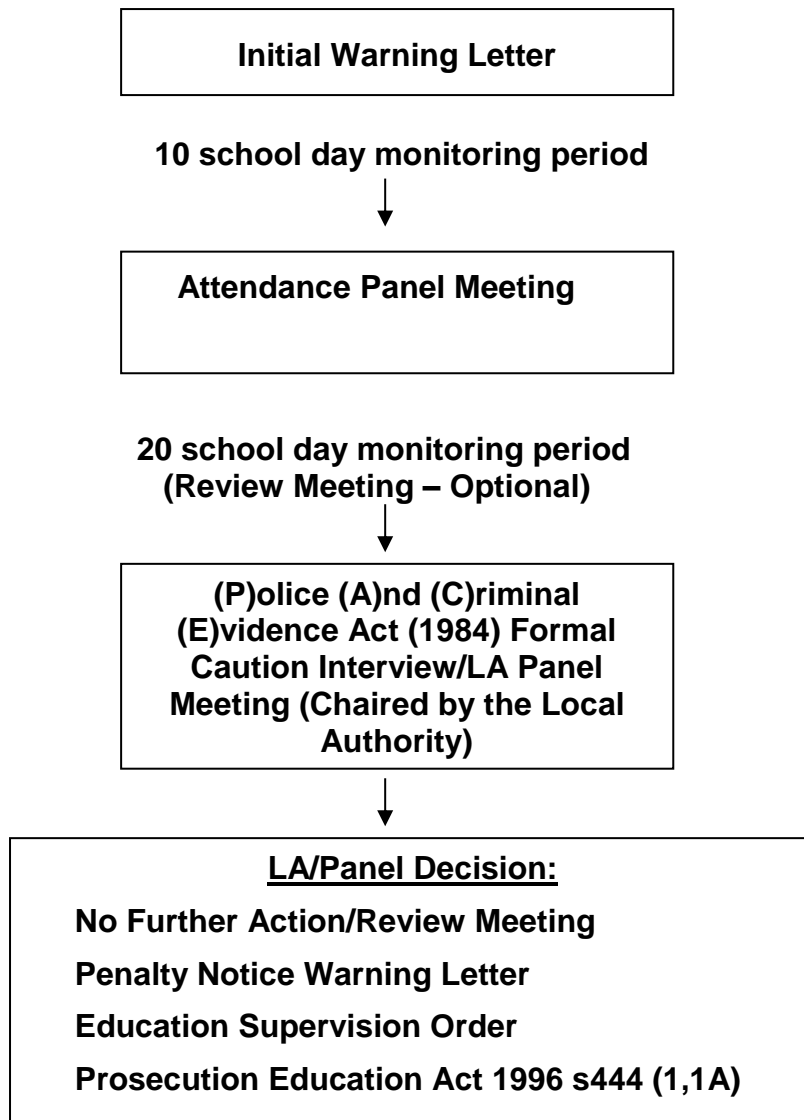
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

Appendix 2:

Flow Chart of School/LA Attendance Procedure – Time restricted

The following procedure will be undertaken by the school should there be no significant improvement in your child's attendance and unauthorised absence continues to be recorded.



If at any stage in the above procedure your child's attendance improves significantly the school will not proceed to the following stage.

However, your child's attendance will continue to be monitored by the school and should there at any time in the future become further concerns the above procedure will be continued onto the next stage or recommenced from the first stage depending on the severity of the situation.