



The Hollies Pupil Referral Unit

Attendance Policy

Issue Date: Nov 2016
Review Date: Nov 2017

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Principles:

Parents of registered pupils have a legal duty under the Education Act 1996 to make sure that children of compulsory school age attend school on a regular and full-time basis. Permitting unauthorised absence from Hollies Pupil Referral unit is an offence and parents may be reported to the Education Authority if problems cannot be resolved by agreement.

Every half-day absence from Hollies Pupil Referral Unit 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.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from Hollies PRU for a good reason: illness or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those which Hollies PRU does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This includes keeping children off unnecessarily; truancy; absences which have never been properly explained and children who arrive at Hollies PRU too late to get a mark.

All children are sometimes reluctant to attend school. Hollies PRU will support pupils and parents to help overcome any problems and work towards full attendance and aims to improve attendance by:

- Providing a safe and secure environment where pupils want to attend
- Offering a stimulating and positive learning experience
- Addressing social and academic needs to raise self-esteem
- Rewarding pupils for improved attendance

Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between Hollies PRU, the parents and the child. If a child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absences or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and may make things worse.

Parents are expected to contact Hollies PRU at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving problems together. This is nearly always successful. If problems cannot be sorted out in this way, Hollies PRU may refer the child to the Education Welfare Officer from the Local Authority

Each pupil's attendance and behaviour is discussed weekly at the Hollies PRU staff meeting. Referrals to EWO will be made following this meeting for any pupils it is felt it is appropriate for. Referrals will be made in between staff meetings if necessitated by the individual case. *We try to resolve the difficulties by agreement by, if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed, these officers can use the Penalty Notice Procedures or Courts Proceedings.*

Under the Penalty Notice Procedures if a pupil has 20 sessions of unauthorised absence during the previous and current term, the EWS may issue a fixed penalty notice. If improved attendance does not result the parents may face a fine or, ultimately, court proceedings. Attendance will be monitored daily by the Student

Support Manager and the Headteacher and at the half-termly PSP and target setting meeting.

Alternatively, parents or children may wish to contact the EWO themselves to ask their advice. They are independent of the Hollies PRU and will give impartial advice. Their telephone number is available from the school office or by contacting the Local Education Authority.

Procedures

Hollies PRU applies the following procedures in deciding how to deal with individual absences:

Illness and other legitimate reasons

If a child is unfit to attend Hollies PRU, parents should contact the school by telephone on the FIRST day. For pupils, dually registered with a High School the school will be informed that day by the Hollies PRU staff. If contact by the parent is not made, Hollies PRU staff will contact the parents to ascertain the reason for absence. Once the reason for absence is obtained, this will be recorded in the pupil's file and the appropriate mark made in the register. Absences will not be authorised without this procedure. In exceptional circumstances, further evidence of a child's illness, such as a doctor's note, may be requested. Other reasons for absence must be discussed with the Hollies PRU each time. It is NOT usually appropriate for Hollies PRU to authorise absences for shopping, looking after other children, day trips etc. Leave may however, be granted in an emergency (e.g. bereavement) or for medical appointments which must be in school time.

Family Holidays

Lateness

Children must attend on time to be given a mark for that session, unless the lateness is unavoidable. Parents are expected to ensure that children are present at registration. Late arrival after registration without good reason is counted as unauthorised absence.

Lateness due to transport

If lateness is due to taxi firms picking pupils up late the taxi firm will be contacted by Hollies PRU staff and reminded when the pupil needs to be at Hollies PRU. In exceptional cases pupils travelling long distances may be given permission to catch a bus that gets them to the Hollies PRU after 9.00am

Lateness to lessons

There is no excuse for pupils being late to lessons due to the small size of Hollies PRU building. If a pupil does not get to lessons on time they will be issued with a behaviour slip and invited to a behaviour meeting. *If a pupil is to be kept behind parents or carers will be informed by letter. The letter will state the reason for the detention, the date it will take place and its duration.*

Absconding from the PRU

Any pupil who has been registered at Hollies PRU and subsequently leaves the premises without permission will be deemed to have absconded. Parents or carers will be informed immediately and it will be explained to the parent that it is their responsibility to find their child. If contact cannot be made with the parent/carer, the police may be informed if there is a concern that the child may be missing, or at risk.

Rewards for attendance

If a pupil achieves 90% + attendance (including re-integration sessions) over half a term they will receive a certificate

If a pupil achieves 90%+ attendance (including re-integration) over a term they will receive a 'Certificate of outstanding Attendance'.

Summary

Hollies PRU has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance. Various initiatives may be taken from time to time as required. If a child is not in regular attendance, he/she is being deprived of their right to a full-time education. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend. At Hollies PRU we are committed to working collaboratively with parents and pupils, to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible.

The school will review this policy annually and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be implemented throughout the school.

Signed

Date

Chair of Management Committee

Signed

Date

Headteacher