



# HOUGHTON REGIS ACADEMY

## **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

## **STATEMENT OF PRINCIPAL**

Attendance at school needs to be regular for all pupils. It is a parent/guardian/carer's responsibility to ensure that their child attends school on a regular basis.

Punctuality and consistent attendance are life skills which need to be developed throughout the educative years.

### **AIM**

The Houghton Regis Academy aims to promote regular attendance and punctual arrival for the beginning of the Academy day.

We aim to positively reinforce good attendance and support parents of children with poor attendance.

### **PRACTICE**

#### **1. Procedures:**

- a) Registers will be completed accurately at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions and attendance regularly monitored.
- b) We use an electronic register system. Tutors take the register, marking whether the pupil is present or absent. The register will then be available for the Attendance Officer.
- c) Registers are marked at 8.45am and 1.20pm. Any child arriving at the Academy after these times will be marked as an unauthorised late.
- d) Pupils who arrive after this time should sign in at the Academy office. This information will be uploaded to the computer system.

#### **2. Absence:**

- a) Pupils are expected to attend the Academy at all times. If they are unable to do so, their parent/guardian/carer should inform the Academy immediately by phone or e-mail. The secretary will then inform the relevant member of admin staff who will add this information to the computer. It should be noted however, that only the Academy can authorise absence.
- b) If an explanation for absence cannot be given immediately, a letter or a telephone call should follow any absence. Letters should be handed in to the form tutor who will send this to the office with the register. The office then takes responsibility for uploading this data.
- c) We run a first day response system with all pupils via Truancy Call; this leaves a voice message during the morning if no reason for absence has been received and the child has also not arrived at the Academy. This means that parents/guardians/carers are contacted on days when their child is absent without a reason.
- d) All other absences will be followed up by telephone and letter at regular intervals by the office staff.

- e) If, when a parent/guardian/carer has been contacted, a pupil has apparently left for school and has not arrived, the police will be informed either by the Academy or by parents/guardian/carers and the Principal informed immediately.
- f) If a pupil is not present at the afternoon session when they have been present for the morning session, the form tutor will immediately send a note to the office who will contact parents/guardian/carers as necessary by phone to ascertain the whereabouts of the pupil concerned. If no contact can be made, or it is felt necessary, the police will be contacted.
- g) If for any reason, a pupil is absent from the Academy for a prolonged period of time (more than three days, including exclusions) work should be prepared by the form tutor in conjunction with Isolation Unit staff and should be available to be collected from the fourth day. In the case of illness parents/guardians/carers need to inform the Academy of the need for work on the fourth day.

### **3. Punctuality:**

- a) If a child arrived after the register has been taken but before the close of the registration period, they will be marked as an authorised lateness. If the child arrives alone after registration is closed, the marking is unauthorised. If the child is accompanied by a parent/guardian/carer, or has a note from a parent/guardian/carer, the marking is authorised. If a child is persistently late, the tutor should contact the parent /guardian/ carer to attempt to remedy the problem.
- b) The Academy will carry out intermittent late patrols with the Access and Inclusion Officer. The Academy's own Attendance Officer is present on the gate every morning to ensure punctuality and to deal with lateness. All significant or regular lates will be followed up by a sanction and a letter to parent/guardian/carers.
- c) The Access and Inclusion Officer and relevant Academy staff will also monitor the pattern of lates in registers and may take action with individual pupils and families.

### **4. Leaving the Premises:**

- a) Pupils will not be allowed to leave the premises at lunchtime unless a parent/guardian/carer has written a letter or contacted the Academy, giving permission. Once a letter has been submitted, a pass will be issued and the child's name added to the Midday Supervisor's list of pupils allowed to leave. Pupils should then sign out at the gate and sign back in again each lunchtime.
- b) Pupils leaving for medical appointments, due to illness in school or other authorised leave during the day, should be signed out when they are collected by the supervising adult and be signed back in at the office upon their return to the Academy.
- c) If a parent/guardian/carer is aware in advance that a child will need to leave the Academy early, arrive late or be absent for a period of time during the day, a letter should be sent in advance to advise the Academy.

## **5. Monitoring:**

- a) Tutors should be aware of the Register Check System which is in every classroom, to check their role in monitoring absence carefully.
- b) The Access and Inclusion Officer meets with Academy staff on a regular basis to monitor registers and attendance and to deal with any matters arising.
- c) The designated member of staff will provide all tutors with printouts of their registers on a fortnightly basis and with feedback from the meetings held with the Attendance and Inclusion Officer.
- d) Attendance is monitored also through Key Stage Co-ordinators meetings held on a fortnightly basis and feedback is sent to the Attendance Officer.

## **6. Good Attendance Strategies:**

- a) The Academy employs a range of strategies to promote good attendance including:
  - Phone calls and letters following up on unauthorised absences.
  - Pre-referral meetings.
  - Fast Track referrals in liaison with the Attendance and Inclusion Officer.
  - Referrals to the Attendance and Inclusion Officer.
  - Vouchers and certificates for improved and good attendance.
  - Attendance notice boards showing class attendance and improvements
  - Attendance assemblies on a termly basis with a range of prizes.
  - Class non-uniform days

As a strategy to combat unauthorised absences, the Academy also uses the initiative of fixed penalty notices; all monies received are paid to the Local Authority.

## **7. Holidays/time off in Term time:**

In line with the Education Act 2006, the Academy follows up-to-date guidance on holidays in term time. Only in exceptional circumstances will a holiday in term time be authorised by the Academy. A letter needs to be sent to the Principal outlining the reason for requesting an absence and each case is considered separately. Fixed penalty notices are used whenever appropriate.

## **8. Targets**

The Academy has clear attendance targets set in agreement with the Attendance and Inclusion Officer; these are monitored throughout the year. The Principal is responsible for agreeing these targets and entering into the Service Level Agreement with the Attendance and Inclusion Officer each year.