



Policy Statements and Procedures

MANAGING STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

This Managing Student Attendance Policy is based on the 2006 Regulations by the Education (Student Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013. These amendments came into force on 1st September 2013 and were updated in September 2016.

The Rosedale Hewens Academy Trust is committed to providing an excellent educational experience for all its Students. We believe that high attendance is a key to Student achievement. It is our intent to ensure maximum attendance for each Student, as there is clear evidence of a link between poor attendance and low levels of achievement. Furthermore, the Trust is committed to ensuring that students and their parents, guardians or carers understand the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

We recognise that parents, guardians and carers have a vital role to play and that there is a need to establish strong home/college links and communication systems that can be utilised whenever there are concerns about attendance.

There will, inevitably, be occasional issues that impede full attendance and these will be identified and addressed appropriately and promptly. We will strive to work in partnership with parents, guardians, carers and students to resolve those problems as quickly and efficiently as possible.

2. POLICY OBJECTIVES

This policy aims to:

- Develop positive attributes in students towards regular attendance
- Recognise and reward students with good attendance and punctuality
- Include parents, guardians and carers in the process of improving attendance
- Resolve problems of non attendance in a professional and sensitive manner

3. PRINCIPLES

The Rosedale Hewens Academy Trust:

- Expects all students to attend college regularly, on time and properly equipped to learn.

- Expects all students to attend all lessons punctually.
- Expects parents, guardians and carers to ensure their children attend college regularly and on time, fulfilling their legal responsibility.
- Will act in accordance with: The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007
Amendments have been made to the 2007 Regulations in the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013.
Parents must, from 1 September 2013, pay £60 per parent, per child, within 21 days or £120 per parent, per child within 28 days. This brings attendance penalty notices into line with other types of penalty notices and allows local authorities to act faster on prosecutions.
- Expects parents, guardians and carers to notify their child's college on the first and each subsequent day of absence, informing the college of the reasons for absence and expected date of return.
- Expects parents, guardians and carers to request term time leave in writing to the Principal. Such requests will only be authorized in exceptional circumstances. **Please Note:** *The amendments make clear that Principals may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Principals should determine the number of college days a child can be away from college if the leave is granted. No more than five days can be authorized.*
- Will maintain an effective system of incentives and rewards which acknowledges the efforts of children to maintain or improve their attendance and timekeeping.
- Will encourage good attendance and will communicate with parents, guardians or carers as soon as possible if there is a problem with attendance or punctuality.
- Will set a good example in matters of attendance and punctuality and will promptly investigate all absenteeism and lateness.
- Will work in partnership with parents, guardians, carers and children to resolve issues which affect attendance or punctuality as quickly as possible.
- Will include child's attendance in reports to parents, guardians and carers on achievement at least annually.
- Will enforce the requirement to attend college punctually and reserve the right not to authorise term time absence where there are no exceptional circumstances approved by the Principal.

For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and be at college, on time, every day the college is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. Any loss of time at college can adversely affect a child's attainment and all students benefit from regular college attendance.

Attendance	Missing out on	Which means.....	Over 13yrs of schooling is.....
90%	1 day per fortnight	4 weeks per year	Nearly 1.5 years missed
80%	1 day per week	8 weeks per year	Over 2.5 years missed
60%	2 days per week	16 weeks per year	Over 5 years missed
40%	3 days per week	24 weeks per year	Nearly 8 years missed

It is a rule of this college that students must attend every day, unless there are exceptional circumstances and it is the Principal, not the parent, guardian or carer who can authorise the absence.

Understanding types of absence

Every half-day absence from college has to be classified by the college (not by the parent, guardian or carer), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required, preferably in writing. An email from a known address is acceptable.

Authorised absences are morning or afternoon sessions away from college for a genuine reason such as illness, medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall in college time, emergencies, religious holidays or other unavoidable cause (you may be asked to provide evidence for your child before this can be authorised).

The college recognises that there may be times where children of different faiths observe religious festivals that fall outside of college holidays and weekends, in these cases only the Principal can decide to authorise the absence. The request for an authorised must be submitted in advance.

Unauthorised absences are those which the college does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been given. This type of absence can lead to the Local Authority (Participation Service) using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. This may include:

- parents/carers keeping children off college unnecessarily e.g. because they had a late night or for non-infectious illness or injury that would not affect their ability to learn;
- absences which have never been properly explained;
- children who arrive at college after the close of registration are marked using a 'U'. This indicates that they are in college for safeguarding purposes however is recorded as an absence for the session;
- shopping trips;
- looking after other children or children accompanying siblings or parents to medical appointments;
- their own or family birthdays;
- holidays taken during term time without leave, not deemed 'for exceptional purposes' by the Principal- may result in college applying to the local authority to issue a penalty notice or if you have previously been issued a Penalty Notice, the college may request a direct prosecution by the local authority;
- day trips;
- other leave of absence in term time which has not been agreed

The Participation Officer

Parents, guardians and carers are expected to contact college 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 college may refer the child to the Participation Officer from the Local Authority. He/she will also try to resolve the situation by agreement but, if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed and unauthorised absences persist, these Officers can use sanctions such as Penalty Notices (currently £60 rising to £120 if unpaid after 21 days. If unpaid after 28 days a summons to Court will be issued for each unpaid Penalty Notice) or prosecutions in the Magistrates Court. The legislation is the Education Act 1996 sec. 444(1) and 444(1A).

"If any child of compulsory college age who is a registered Student at a college fails to attend regularly at the college, his/her parent is guilty of an offence."

Alternatively, parents or children may wish to contact the Participation Team themselves to ask for help or information. They are independent of the college and will give impartial advice. Their telephone number is 01895 250858 or participationteam@hillingdon.gov.uk

4. PROCEDURE

Registration Procedures

The Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 determine the admissions and attendance registers that all colleges and colleges must keep. They also regulate the power these educational establishments have to grant term time leave of absence.

By law, colleges and colleges are required to record in the attendance register, once at the beginning of the morning session and once in the afternoon, whether the student is present, absent, engaged in an approved, supervised educational activity off-site, or unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

Within The Rosedale Hewens Academy Trust all colleges use electronic registration to record morning and afternoon attendance. In addition, National Curriculum year groups 7 through to 11 and Post 16 are registered lesson by lesson.

Students arriving at college from 8:50am will be recorded late and must report to the Main Reception and sign the late book before attending assembly, lessons or other timetabled activity.

On occasions where there is an interruption to the availability of the electronic registration system, a teacher will call a register and enter the information on a paper register. This register is then returned to the member of support staff responsible for managing daily attendance who will enter it on the system as soon as it is available.

There are only three occasions when an attendance register can be altered:

1. If it is discovered that an error has been made
2. Where an unexplained absence has since been satisfactorily explained
3. Where a Student's name has been legally changed

Registration Symbols

The following symbols are used in registers in line with the Department for Education guidance:

		Code Description Student counted as if present in college for that session?
N	No reason yet provided for absence	No
O	Unauthorised absence	No
/	Present	Yes
L	Late (before registers closed)	Yes
U	Late (after registers closed)	No
R	Religious Observance	No
H	Family Holiday	No
E	Excluded	No
V	Educational Visit or Trip	Yes
P	Approved Sporting Activity	Yes
I	Illness	No
M	Medical/Dental Appointment	No
G	Family Holiday (NOT agreed)	No
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	No
B	Educated Off-site	Yes
C	Other Authorised Circumstances	No
D	Dual Registration	Yes
T	Traveller Absence	No
Y	Enforced Closure	Yes
Z	Student not yet on roll	No
#	College closed to Students	No

Absence Reporting

Non-attendance is an important issue that is treated seriously. However each case is different and The Rosedale Hewens Academy Trust acknowledges that no one standard response will be appropriate in every case. Consideration is given to all factors affecting attendance before deciding what intervention strategies to apply.

In every case, early intervention is essential to prevent the problem from worsening. It is essential that parents, guardians and carers keep the college fully informed of any matters that may affect their child's attendance; they are reminded of this duty.

Prior to the engagement of the Participation Team and Family Support Worker, the college may issue letters to parents, guardians or carers clearly defining the concerns within college regarding a Student's absence. It is hoped that a quick response and change in levels of absence will prevent the need for Participation Team or Family Support Worker involvement.

Illness and Medical Appointments

- Every effort should be made to arrange medical appointments outside college hours.
- An appointment card or verification by the doctors/ dentist/hospital is required. If it is necessary for a child to be out of college for this reason, the child should be returned to college directly after the appointment.

- If a child is absent due to vomiting then they should not return to college for the next 24 hours after the last time that the child is sick. This is to reduce the risk of infection to other children and adults at the college.
- Medical certificates are required for absence greater than five days. This must be provided within 5 college days and failure to provide this information within the time limit will result in your child's absence being unauthorised and may lead to a fine or legal action.
- Where illness occurs immediately before or after a college break, medical evidence must be provided within 5 college days of a return to college. Failure to provide this information within the time limit will result in your child's absence being unauthorised and may lead to a fine or legal action.

First Day Absence

When a child is absent, the form tutor or class teacher will record the absence in the electronic or paper register. As part of the Trust's Safeguarding Procedures, the college will endeavour to contact the parent, guardian, carer or other emergency contact if no message has been received regarding the reason for the absence to check on the safety of the child.

Parents, guardians or carers should inform their child's college before 8:50am on the first day of absence giving the reason and likely duration of the absence

On their return to college, Students should bring in either a note in the Student planner or a note from their parent, guardian or carer explaining the reason for absence. The note must be signed by a parent, guardian or carer and should be handed to their form tutor or class teacher.

The member of support staff responsible for managing daily attendance will run an attendance report at approximately 10am to identify any absence where parents, guardians or carers have not contacted the college. Contact will be made with these parents, guardians or carers via telephone or Truancy Call which is the automated system used by some colleges within the Trust for those Students who are absent without reason. If contact cannot be made with the parent, guardian or carer a letter will be sent home requesting the reason for absence.

Continued Unreported Absence

If contact has not been made by the third day of absence and a note has not been received, the college will work with the Educational Welfare Officer and/or Family Support Worker to organise a home visit as a matter of priority.

Intervention in cases of Absence

Under 96% - Principal discusses concerns with the parent, guardian or carer.

Under 95% - letter sent to parent, guardian or carer regarding attendance concerns. The Assistant Principal or other senior leader responsible for Student attendance matters, discusses concerns with the parent, guardian or carer.

Under 90% - Persistent Absence

A Student becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the college year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parent's fullest support and co-operation to tackle this.

We monitor all absence thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and you will be informed of this immediately. All PA cases are also automatically made known to the Participation Officer.

Persistent absence is a serious problem for children. Much of the work children miss when they are absent during term time is never made up, leaving these children at a considerable disadvantage for the remainder of their college education.

Where absence is classified as persistent, a letter will be sent to the parent, guardian or carer and a referral made to the Participation Officer. A meeting will be arranged with the Participation Officer, Family Support Worker, parent, guardian or carer and the senior member of staff responsible for Attendance (e.g. Vice Principal). An Attendance Improvement Plan will be drawn up at the meeting; this will be part of an Individual Learning Behaviour Plan or Pastoral Support Plan.

Where there is no identified medical issue – a letter will be sent to the parents, guardians or carers informing them that all subsequent absences will not be authorised unless covered by a medical certificate.

Unauthorised Absence/Continued Persistent Unauthorised Absence

This is likely to lead to the issue of penalty notices and other legal consequences. The Local Authority issue penalty notices according to Government guidelines. Effective September 2012, if paid within 21 days, the charge on Penalty Notices for non-college/college attendance is £60 per parent, per child, which will increase to £120 per parent, per child, if payment is made within 28 days of issue. After 28 days, unpaid fines will result in parent(s) being issued with a summons and legal action being taken.

Truancy

Truancy checks will be carried out as part of the First Day Absence procedures and when the daily Attendance Report is run by the member of support staff responsible for managing daily attendance. Additional random checks will be run and checks will also be made when there is information that a Student may be truanting from college. When a Student has truanted from college the appropriate senior member of staff with responsibility for attendance will;

- Interview the Student and issue appropriate sanctions;
- Inform parents, guardians or carers, Educational Welfare Officer and Family Support Worker in the case of persistent truants for them to take appropriate action.

If staff are suspicious that a child might be truanting, action is taken immediately. If truancy is suspected, the Principal and the Participation Officer are notified. Parents, guardians and carers are contacted, either by telephone or a home visit. We encourage parents, guardians and carers to bring their child to college, so that the reasons for truancy can be discussed and, we hope, resolved. Every effort will be made to find out if there are any worries or problems in college that might make that child not want to attend. If problems are identified, these are discussed and resolved with the class teacher, other members of staff who come into contact with the child and, where appropriate, with other students.

Long Term Student Absence

The senior member of staff with responsibility for attendance will:

- Produce and implement a Long Term Absence, Support and Reintegration Programme. This will include scheduling a reintegration meeting with parents, guardians or carers, the student, the

Educational Welfare Officer, Family Support Worker and if necessary representatives of external support agencies.

- Wherever possible make arrangements for appropriate work to be sent home for any student who is likely to be absent for a long period. This may also include online units of work.
- Ensure arrangements are in place for the student to receive additional time and support to catch up on work missed.

Authorising Absence

Parents, guardians or carers do not have a legal right to term time leave for their child. Term time is any time that any college within the Trust has stipulated as college days within an academic year.

Parents, guardians or carers requiring leave of absence for their child/children during term time must put their request in writing and address it to the Principal at least 2 weeks before the time of requested absence. Student term time leave of absence will be only be granted in exceptional circumstances.

Absence for the following are examples of reasons that may be authorised where parents, guardians or carers have confirmed the absence:

- Illness
- Religious observance
- Family bereavement
- Medical appointment (appointments should be made out of college hours where possible. Appointments made within the college day should be accompanied by a medical letter or appointment card)

Absences may be recorded as unauthorised when due to:

- Family holidays
- Truancy
- Absences for reasons such as shopping, hair/beauty appointments, birthdays, no uniform, etc.
- Absences which have not been properly explained

Punctuality

The Rosedale Hewens Academy Trust also encourages its students to demonstrate excellent punctuality, which will be recognised and rewarded through Achievement Assemblies.

Lateness

The college day starts at 8:45am, in order for a prompt start to be made registers are completed by 9:00am. A Student will receive a late mark if they arrive after 8:50am. Any Students arriving at college after 9:00am must sign in at Reception. Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If a child misses the start of the day they can miss work and do not spend time with their class teacher getting vital information and news for the day. Late arriving students also disrupt lessons, can be embarrassing for the child and can also encourage absence. Good time-keeping is a vital life skill which will help our children as they progress through their college life and out into the wider world.

Persistent lateness to college will be referred to the Participation Team. This may mean that you could face the possibility of being issued with a Penalty Notice if the problem persists.

If your child has a persistent late record you will be asked to meet with the Principal and /or the Attendance Officer, but you can approach us at any time if you are having problems getting your child to college on time. We expect parents, guardians and carers and staff to encourage good punctuality by being good role models to our children and celebrate good class and individual punctuality.

Holiday Leave:

Taking holidays in term time will affect your child's education as much as any other absence and we expect parents, guardians and carers to help us by not taking children away in term time. Remember that any savings you think you may make by taking a holiday in term time are offset by the cost to your child's education and fines or legal action taken against you.

There is **no** automatic entitlement in law to time off in college time to go on holiday.

1. It is widely known that the link between a child's attendance and attainment is irrefutable.
2. Early poor attendance habits follow through into secondary college and employment.
3. Graduates earn, on average, double that of young people that leave college with no qualifications.
4. All Hillingdon colleges are encouraged to adopt a policy of not authorising Holiday Leave.

Exceptional Leave:

There is no entitlement in law for Students to take time off during the term to go on holiday. In addition, the Supreme Court has ruled that the definition of regular college attendance is "in accordance with the rules prescribed by the college".

The Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 were amended in September 2013. All references to family holidays and extended leave have been removed. The amendments specify that Principals may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are "exceptional circumstances" and they no longer have the discretion to authorise up to ten days of absence each academic year.

It is a rule of this college that a leave of absence shall not be granted in term time unless there are reasons considered to be exceptional by the Principal, irrespective of the child's overall attendance. Only the Principal or his/her designate (not the local authority) may authorise such a request and all applications for a leave of absence must be made in writing on the prescribed form provided by the college. Where a parent, guardian or removes a child when the application for leave was refused or where no application was made to the college, the issue of a penalty notice may be requested by this college.

Exceptional circumstances' will be interpreted as being of unique and significant emotional, educational or spiritual value to the child which outweighs the loss of teaching time (as determined by the Principal). The fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional' are events that are "rare, significant, unavoidable and short". By 'unavoidable' we mean an event that could not reasonably be scheduled at another time.

We will not consider applications for leave during term time:

- at any time in September. This is very important as your child needs to settle into their new class as quickly as possible;
- during assessment and test periods in the college's calendar affecting your child;
- when a student's attendance record already includes any level of unauthorised absence or they have already been granted authorised leave within that academic year.

Whilst any child may occasionally have time off college because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend college. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the college, the parents, guardians and carers and the child. If a parent, guardian or carer thinks their child is reluctant to attend college then we will work with that family to understand the root problem and provide any necessary support.

The Participation Team will issue Penalty Notices for any unauthorised absence. Penalty Notices can be issued to each parent/carer concerned. Please note that it will be per parent per child. Payment within 21 days of receipt of notice is £60 and £120 if paid after this period but within 28 days. If the Penalty Notice remains unpaid you will each receive a summons to Uxbridge or Ealing Magistrates Court. If unauthorised leave is repeated the Participation Team will summons each parent, guardian or carer to Court without a Penalty Notice being issued.

Performance Licences

The applicant for a Performance Licence (usually the production company or theatrical agent) is obliged to seek the view of the college when applying for an absence request. Such a request will only be considered by the college when the child's attendance is at least 90% and the child is making at least expected levels of progress. A request may be declined if either of these thresholds is not met or if the timing of the requested absence could be detrimental to the child's education.

Deletion from Roll

For any Student leaving *the college, other than at the end of Year 6*, parents, guardians and carers are required to complete a 'Students moving from college' form which can be obtained from the college office. This provides college with the following information: Child's name, class, current address, date of leaving, new home address, name of new college, address of new college. This information is essential to ensure that we know and safeguard the whereabouts of all our Students. In such cases, the Participation Team should be notified.

Children Missing Education

In Children Missing Education - Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities (2016), children missing education are defined as those who are not on a college roll or receiving suitable education otherwise than at college. Those who are regularly absent or have missed 10 college days or more without permission may be at risk of becoming 'children missing education'.

There will not always be a safeguarding concern for children and young people who are missing education. Most children and young people are moving colleges supported by their parents, guardians and carers, colleges and local authority admissions services. A smaller number, however, are at risk of dropping out or disengaging from education and being out of college, they are at risk of exploitation, going missing and significant harm

As a result of daily registration, colleges are particularly well placed to notice when a child has gone missing. If a member of college becomes aware that a child may have run away or gone missing, they should try to establish with the parents, guardians and carers what has happened. If this is not possible,

or the child is missing, the designated safeguarding teacher/advisor should, together with the class teacher, assess the child's vulnerability.

In the circumstances of a child going missing who is not known to any other agencies, the Principal should inform the Children Missing Education (CME) Officer of any child who has not attended for 10 consecutive college days without provision of reasonable explanation. Prior to doing so, the college should have made enquiries to ascertain whether the child is still residing at the home address and is not attending or whether the child is missing.

The college will use the Local Authority CME processes to manage any child missing in education. These processes are outlined here: <https://leap.hillingdon.gov.uk/article/6895/Children-Missing-Education>

Equal Opportunities

That every member of the college community experiences equal chances, irrespective of ethnic origin, race, religion, colour, nationality, political beliefs, disability, age, sex or sexual orientation.

That every member of the college community is valued as an individual and that everyone understands that stereotyping, discrimination, prejudice and racism will not be tolerated.

Summary

The college has a legal duty to publish its absence figures and its Attendance Policy to parents, guardians and carers and to promote attendance. College attendance data must be available to the Local Authority and the Department for Education. Equally, parents, guardians and carers have a duty to make sure that their children attend.

All college staff are committed to working with parents, guardians and carers and Students as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible.

Regular attendance supports optimising your child's attainment.

5. MONITORING AND REVIEW

The success of The Rosedale Hewens Academy Trust's Attendance Policy is evaluated through self-evaluation and review through:

- The regular monitoring of Progresso Student registration
- The regular monitoring of college procedures and practice by the Participation Officer
- The regular review of the relevant priorities and actions within the College Development Plan
- Formal and informal feedback from parents, guardians, carers and staff following Academic Tutoring and other meetings
- Analysis of Student tracking data and test results for individual Students and cohorts
- Standing agenda item at Local Advisory Board (LAB) meetings

6. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Parents, guardians and carers:

- To ensure their child attends regularly and punctually
- To contact college on the first and each subsequent day of absence
- To avoid holidays and any other absence so far as possible during term time
- To cooperate and participate in interventions and support offered by the college or other agencies

Principal:

- Take the lead in ensuring attendance has a high profile within the college
- Take overall responsibility for ensuring the college conforms to all statutory requirements in respect of attendance

Designated Staff:

- Input and update the attendance registers
- Regularly identify and monitor Student, class and whole college attendance and punctuality levels, particularly that of vulnerable groups
- Liaise with other agencies as appropriate

All College Staff:

- Provide a welcoming atmosphere for children and provide a safe learning environment
- Provide a sympathetic response to any Student's concerns
- To be aware of factors that can contribute to non-attendance
- To see Students' attendance as the responsibility of all college staff
- Participate in training regarding college systems and procedures

The Local Advisory Board:

- Adopt the Trust Policy and review annually
- Monitor the consistent implementation of the Attendance Policy

Definitions

Every half-day absence has to be classified by the college as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of each absence from parents, guardians or carers is always required, preferably in writing or by telephone.

Authorised Absence

An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from college for a legitimate reason and the college has received notification from a parent, guardian or carer. For example, if a child has been unwell and the parent, guardian or carer writes a note or telephones the college to explain the absence. Only the college can mark an absence authorised.

Unauthorised Absence

An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from college without the permission of the Principal.

Unauthorised absences are those, which the college does not consider reasonable and for which no authorisation has been given. This includes:

- Parents, guardians or carers keeping children away from college unnecessarily.
- Truancy before or during the college day.
- Absences that have never been properly explained.
- Holidays not agreed by the Principal.

7. LINKS WITH OTHER POLICIES AND DOCUMENTS

This Policy links with the:

- Behaviour and Relationships Policy and Procedure
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Home/College Agreement

This policy was last reviewed in September 2024.

Due for revision under new statutory guidance, Autumn 2024:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66bf300da44f1c4c23e5bd1b/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance_-_August_2024.pdf

Review due, August 2025.