



HARROGATE
GRAMMAR SCHOOL
EXCELLENCE FOR ALL

Policy: Attendance – Main School

Member of Staff Responsible

K Smith

Approved by Full Board on:

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1. Introduction

Every student has a right to access the education to which he/she is entitled. The School aims to work together with parent/carers, teachers and outside agencies to ensure that all students, registered at the school, attend both regularly and punctually. We all share the responsibility of ensuring that attendance is maximised and that rates of unjustified and unauthorised absenteeism are avoided. Our aim is to ensure that each student reaches his/her potential and in order to achieve this aim we promote high levels of attendance and excellent punctuality records.

Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance. For our children to take full advantage of the educational opportunities offered, it is vital your child is punctual and at school every day. The routines children develop around attendance and punctuality at school are the same as the expectations of any future employer in the world of work. High attainment, confidence with peers and staff, and future aspirations depend on good attendance.

Good attendance is important because:

- Statistics show a direct link between under-achievement and absence below 95%
- Regular attenders make better progress, both socially and academically
- Regular attenders find school routines, school work and friendships easier to cope with
- Regular attenders find learning more satisfying
- Regular attenders are more successful in transferring between primary school, secondary school, and higher education, employment or training.
- Being on time is also vital, as lateness can be disruptive for the student, the teacher and for other students within the group. (DFE – Department for Education).

2. Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Maximising attendance rates by encouraging, recognising and celebrating good attendance and ensuring that attendance at school is viewed positively.
- Investigating individual absences and ensuring that pupils and parents are clear that unauthorised absences are not acceptable.
- Working closely with pupils and parents, to help them overcome problems, which may prevent pupils from attending regularly.
- Providing parents with support and advice in order to maintain and improve attendance.
- Recognising and celebrating improvements in attendance and punctuality of individuals and families.

3. 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](#)

4. Responsibilities

Parents/Carers are responsible, in law, for ensuring the regular and punctual attendance of their children. We ask them to familiarise themselves with the Attendance Matters leaflet (Appendix 1) and to work closely with the School to overcome any problems which may affect a student's attendance and welfare.

At Harrogate Grammar School we encourage and value high attendance rates. However, the School will recognise the external factors which influence pupil attendance and will work in partnership with parents/ carers, the Attendance Manager and other relevant services to deal with any issues. The School will take a proactive approach in the promotion of good attendance, by defining expectations, with students and their parents/carers and will provide an effective and efficient system for monitoring attendance in accordance with the legal requirements.

4.1 Local governing body responsibilities

Acknowledging that regular, uninterrupted attendance is vital to the pupil's educational progress, the local governing body is responsible for:

- Setting attendance targets for the school annually
- Ensuring the promotion of good attendance is covered in improvement strategies throughout the schools, including SEND, safeguarding and raising attainment
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school, on at least a termly basis
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

4.2 Headteacher responsibilities:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils, including making appropriate training on the importance of good attendance readily available
- Issuing fixed penalty notices, where necessary

4.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance: Miss Gee

- Leading attendance across the school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Having an oversight of data analysis
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data

- Directing targeted intervention and support via Year Managers for pupils and families

4.4 The attendance officers:

- Monitor attendance data at the school and at an individual pupil level.
- Any unexplained absences noticed will be followed up immediately and parent/carers contacted
- Reports concerns about attendance to the relevant Director of School and Year Manager
- Works with the pastoral team/parents/social care to tackle persistent absence
- Communicate effectively with parents to discuss attendance and barriers to attendance

4.5 Parents'/Carers' Responsibilities:

- By law, all children of compulsory school age (between 5 and 16) must receive a suitable, full-time education. Until the age of 18, a student must stay in full-time education for example at a school or college, start an apprenticeship or traineeship. As a parent you are responsible for making sure that this happens, either by registering your child at a school or by making other arrangements which provide a suitable full-time education. Once your child is registered at a school you are responsible for making sure he or she attends regularly. If your child fails to attend regularly – even if they miss school without you knowing – the Local Authority may take legal action against you.
- Parents/Carers must ensure that their child arrives at school in time for the start of registration at 8.50 am.
- Parents/Carers should ensure that, if their child is to be absent from school for any unavoidable reason, such as sickness, they must contact the school as soon as possible, on the first morning of absence by phone or by email. The school should be made aware on a daily basis of any absence.
- When the student returns from absence the parent/carer must send an email stating the dates of absence and the reasons for absence.
- Parents/Carers may not authorise their child's absence – only the school can do this, on the basis of the explanation provided by the parents/carers. (Should parents/carers fail to provide a satisfactory reason for their child's absence; the school will record such absence as unauthorised.)
- Parents/Carers must take every step to avoid booking family holidays during term-time. Taking holidays in term time means that students lose important school time – both educationally and for other school activities. It is difficult for them to catch up on work at a later date. If this is **absolutely unavoidable**, parents/carers should complete a Request for Absence form, available from Reception or on the website and return this to the Attendance Officer at Reception, at least three weeks in advance of the period for which leave is to be requested. (Leave will only be granted in exceptional circumstances – as outlined in Section 3).

4.6 The School's Responsibilities:

- The School will record and monitor attendance in accordance both with the statutory requirements and with the principle that regular, uninterrupted attendance is vital to the student's educational progress.

- Registers will be taken electronically at 8.50 am and at 1.45 pm. Registers officially close at 9.30 and 2.30. Students arriving after 8.50 am and 1.45 pm, without good reason, will be recorded as late for that session and this will be recorded in Arbor. An electronic register is taken in all lessons. Should a student arrive late to the lesson without a good reason, the teacher will also record this in Arbor.
- Registers will be completed in accordance with the DFE register codes and procedures. (See Appendix 1).

5. Types of Absence

The school appreciates that there may be times when the student has to miss school, because he or she is ill. **Authorised Absence** is where the school has either given approval in advance for the child to be away, or where an explanation, offered afterwards, has been accepted as a justification for absence. Only schools can authorise absence. Should the school staff have reason to doubt that the explanation offered about a particular absence is genuine or acceptable; the absence must be treated as unauthorised.

5.1 Examples of reasons for authorised absence:

- Illness, medical or dental appointments (although we do ask parents/carers to organise routine appointments outside the school day)
- Days of religious observance
- Study leave
- Exclusion
- Traveller child travelling
- Family bereavement
- Involvement in a public performance
- Service personnel returning from active deployment
- Where inflexibility of the parents' leave or working arrangement is part of the organisational or company policy. This would need to be evidenced by the production or confirmation from the organisation/company
- Where leave is recommended as part of a parents' or child's rehabilitation from medical or emotional problems. Evidence must be provided
- When a family needs to spend time together to support each other during or after a crisis
- 'Special occasions' (the nature of such special occasions will be determined by school on an individual basis)
- Lateness (when the student arrives after the register has closed.)

5.2 Unauthorised absence

Unauthorised Absence is where no explanation has been given for the child's absence or where the explanation offered is considered, by the school, not to fall in the authorised category. Longer periods of absence (e.g. consisting of 5 school days or more) will require medical evidence.

Any absence is damaging to the continuity of learning; we therefore only authorise absence in exceptional circumstances after careful consideration, where students have a history of regular attendance.

5.3 Absence in term time

Parents/carers must obtain permission from the Headteacher if they want to take their child out of school during term time and this must be for no more than ten school days.

A Planned Absence form must be completed at least 14 days in advance of the requested absence and there must be exceptional circumstances.

The Headteacher will make the final decision regarding the authorisation of the absence, but may delegate this to the Deputy Headteacher

A parent/carer can be fined for taking a child on holiday during term time without the School's permission.

If a request is declined, and the child is absent from school during that period, the household could receive a warning letter or be issued with a £60 penalty notice for each child taken out of school.

North Yorkshire County Council will be issuing all Penalty Notices requested by schools in the area which meet the criteria of ten or more unauthorised sessions (which equates to 5 days) leave (in a block or accumulatively over a four month period) taken without the permission of the school, and where the reason given does not meet any criteria for exceptional circumstances.

6. Promoting Attendance

6.1 Celebrating Success:

- The School promotes good attendance and punctuality through assemblies, commendations and awards
- The School offers praise to individual students whose attendance and/or punctuality improves.
- 100% Attendance letters are awarded to students termly.
- Prizes are awarded to students who have 100% attendance during the five years at Harrogate Grammar School

6.2 Supporting Students:

- Support is available and put in place for those students who are unable to attend school and links are made via the Attendance Manager, Learning Support and the Year Manager. We also work with the relevant outside agencies to support the student
- All issues which may cause a student to experience attendance difficulties are promptly investigated by the Year Managers and appropriate action taken
- Students who have been absent for any extended period of time will be reintegrated back into school through a back to school meeting with a Year Manager followed by a structured and individually tailored programme, as a short-term measure to ease the transition. The School has its own Attendance & Wellbeing Support Worker and Attendance Officer who work closely with the Year Managers on attendance and punctuality. The Attendance & Wellbeing Support Worker will contact parents/carers, make home visits and support both parents/carers and students on attendance and punctuality matters.
- Visits to feeder primary schools are made in order to ensure the fullest support for all pupils during secondary transfer and in order to help identify any students who may need special help

6.3 Keeping Parents/Carers and Students informed:

If a child is absent from school:

- Parents/ Carers are informed by the Attendance Officer if a student has not been registered for a session and there has been no word of explanation from home or if the child absents themselves without permission. The Year Manager liaises with the Attendance & Wellbeing Support Worker and the Attendance Officer if there is an attendance concern. Parents/ Carers are regularly and fully informed of all concerns regarding attendance and punctuality via a phone call, e-mail, letter or half termly report.
- The Year Managers, Assistant Headteacher, Attendance & Wellbeing Support Worker and Attendance Officer communicate regularly with parents/carers on attendance matters.
- Attendance information is given to the students in assemblies and to parents/carers via the school website or the school prospectus. Letters, emails and leaflets are sent to parents/carers if there are concerns. More serious concerns are discussed with parents/carers at meetings. A document "Attendance Matters" (Appendix 1) has been produced by the School and this is available on the School's website. Parents/Carers are asked to familiarise themselves with this. The contents of this are advertised to students.
- Any issues of internal truancy are reported to parents/carers and dealt with seriously by the Year Manager and followed up with appropriate consequences according to the school's Positive Achievement System.
- We aim to reduce the likelihood of occasional non-attenders becoming persistent non-attenders.
- Each year attendance targets are set for the school. A half-termly report is prepared for Senior Staff and Governors which enables trends to be monitored and addressed.

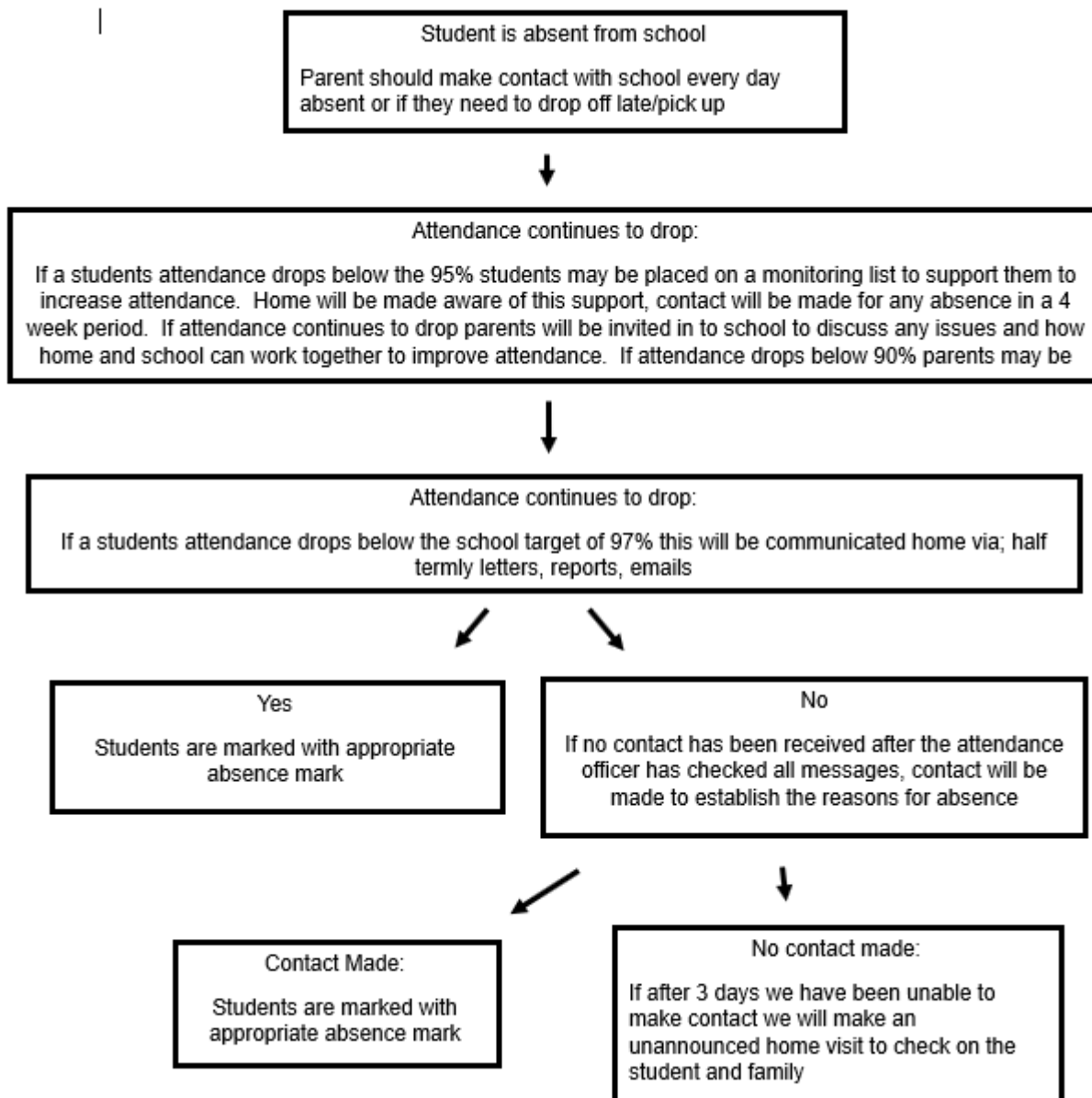
The School employs a number of strategies to promote regular, punctual attendance. It must be emphasised that constant vigilance over a continuous period of time is essential

7. Monitoring Attendance

7.1 Arrangements

- The School focuses on and monitors those students who fall below the 97% attendance mark and takes further action when attendance falls below the 90% mark.
- Regular, structured meetings are held with the Attendance Manager and Year Manager in order to identify and support those pupils whose attendance and punctuality are a source of concern. The importance of early identification and intervention cannot be overemphasised.
- As part of this process, persistent absentees are recorded. The Attendance Manager is informed and a student who gives cause for serious concern is moved onto the School Attendance Pathway (See below)
- The School keeps a range of attendance data which is collected and analysed on a weekly, termly and annual basis.

- Termly reports are made by the Headteacher to the School's Governing Body, on the issue of attendance and punctuality



7.2. Persistent absenteeism

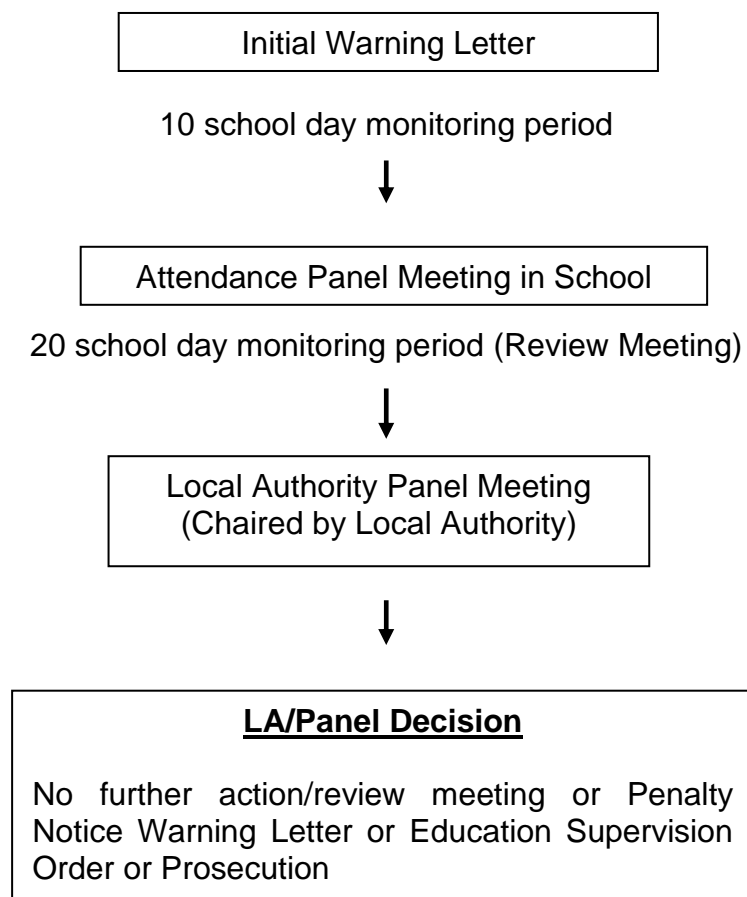
The DfE sets the persistent absence threshold at 10%, meaning any pupil with an attendance level of 90% or below will be deemed a persistent absentee.

We understand that there are often complex factors in play but it is our aim to reduce the likelihood of occasional non-attenders becoming persistent non-attenders, using the strategies within this policy. Where the school has serious concerns about a pupil's attendance, the parent/carer will be informed by letter of those concerns and a period of four weeks' detailed monitoring established.

If there is no improvement or the attendance rate is 90% or less at the end of a four-week monitoring programme, the school may elect to begin the School Attendance Support Pathway. This procedure has been set up by North Yorkshire County Council and replaces Fast Track to Attendance.

7.3. School Attendance Support Pathway

School Attendance Procedure – Time Restricted



If at any stage in the above procedure your child's attendance improves significantly, the school will not proceed to the following stage. (Normally 95% and above during the monitoring period).

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

8. Attendance expectations

90% attendance is the equivalent to 19 days absence in a year. These pupils are missing four weeks of school a year, making it very difficult for them to keep up and achieve their best.

Pupils with 80% attendance are missing a day for every week of school.

By promoting attendance expectations of 97% or higher, we aim to help our pupils enjoy a fulfilling and successful education experience and establish a positive working ethos early in life.

At Harrogate Grammar we committed to our aim of all students having 97% attendance or better to support them in becoming the very best versions of themselves and experiencing personal success and excellence throughout their time at school.

Appendix 1 – Attendance codes

Code	Full name	Description
The student is counted as present.		
/ or \	Present am or pm	Present in school during registration.
L	Late	Late arrival before the register has closed
The student is counted as present, at an Approved Educational Activity.		
B	Educated off Site	The student is at an off-site supervised educational activity approved by the school.
J	Interview	At a job interview, or interviewing with another educational establishment.
P	Sporting Activity (Approved)	Pupil is taking part in a sporting activity that has been approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school.
V	Educational trip	A residential trip organised by the school or a supervised strictly educational trip arranged by an approved organisation.
W	Work Experience	A student in the final two years of compulsory education is attending work experience.
The student is counted as absent, authorised.		
C	Other Authorised Absence	Only exceptional circumstances warrant an authorised leave of absence.
E	Excluded	If a student is excluded but still on the admission register, they should be marked E, for up to the sixth consecutive day of any fixed period (referred to as 'suspensions' by the DfE from Autumn 2021) or permanent exclusion.
H	Family Holiday (Agreed)	A leave of absence for a family holiday is granted entirely at the head teacher's discretion.
M	Medical/Dental Appointments	The student is absent due to a medical or dental appointment that could not be made outside of school hours.
R	Religious Observance	The student is absent for religious observance on a day designated by the religious body.
S	Study Leave	Study leave should be used sparingly and only granted to Year 11 pupils for public exams. Students should still be able to come into school to revise.
I	Illness	This illness code can be used for any form of illness, if you don't want to distinguish Covid-19 illness.
I01	Illness	This code maps to the statutory mark of I. This is for students absent due to non-coronavirus related illness

		(unless the truthfulness of the claim is in question). This code should not be used for medical or dental appointments.
I02	Confirmed case of Covid-19	This code maps to the statutory mark of I. This is for pupils who have a confirmed case of coronavirus.
The student is counted as absent, unauthorised.		
G	Family Holiday (Not Agreed)	The Holiday was not authorised by the school or in excess of the period determined by the headteacher.
N	No Reason	The reason for the absence has not been provided. If no reason for an absence is provided after a reasonable amount of time, it should be changed to O.
O	Unauthorised Absence	If the school is not satisfied with the reason given for absence they should record it as unauthorised.
U	Late (After Register Closes)	Schools should keep registers open for a reasonable amount of time, after which the student should be marked with a U.
These codes are not counted so will not affect attendance figures.		
D	Dual Registration	The student is registered at another school and attends it during this lesson e.g. students at a pupil referral unit. Schools should only record attendance and absences for sessions the pupil is scheduled to attend at their school.
X	Non-statutory school age absence	Sessions non-compulsory school-age children are not expected to attend. This code should only be used for early years students who have not yet passed the 1st January, 1st April or 1st September following their 5th birthday.
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	The school is closed due to an unavoidable cause or the student is unable to travel to the school. It can also be used where the pupil is in custody (for less than four months). This code is collected for statistical purposes but does not contribute to your attendance figures.
Z	Pupil Not On Roll	This code can be used when setting up registers in advance of pupils joining. Schools must take attendance for pupils from the first day the student should be attending the school.

Attendance Level	100%	97 - 99%	96%	91 - 95%	90% and below
What does this mean?	Your child has the best possible chance of succeeding at school.	Good chance of achieving target grades. Small gaps in learning will be evident.	Although above 95%, your child will have some lost learning from missed lessons.	Your child will have significant learning, potentially affecting their achievement, progress and friendships.	Your child is "persistently absent". Persistently absent children statistically do not do as well academically.
What will happen as a result?	Your child will be recognised in school assemblies with certificates.	Your child will be recognised in school assemblies.	Your child's attendance will be monitored as this is the minimum attendable level.	Your child's attendance will be monitored closely and absence will not be authorised without medical appointment cards.	You may be visited at home by the Attendance Manager. Attendance will be monitored and you will be invited into school for a School Attendance Panel. A fine may be incurred or legal action started.
What do I need to do?	Keep up the good work.	Only book medical appointments outside of school hours where possible.	All appointments out of school hours. No term-time holidays. Do not keep your child off unnecessarily; we will contact you if your child needs to come home.	All appointments out of school hours. No term-time holidays. Do not keep your child off unnecessarily; we will contact you if your child needs to go home. Bring in appointment cards for all medical appointments that cannot be moved. Request a meeting if you are concerned with your child's attendance.	Attend a meeting at school to discuss attendance. Contact school for support and advice. Work with the Attendance Manager to improve your child's attendance. Engage in any support offered.

Where can I go if I am concerned about my child's attendance?

Year 7 Manager - Mr Manning x 6546

Year 8 Manager - Mrs Ellenthope x 7051

Year 9 Manager - Mr Thudley x 7458

Year 10 Manager - Mrs Wilkinson x 6540

Year 11 Manager - Mrs Oliver x 7050

Sixth Form—Mrs Warren, Mrs Armstrong
Turner, Mrs Ingleton

Attendance & Wellbeing Support Worker

Mrs Lighthody 01423 535645

Student Attendance Office

01423 535635

HGS.Attendance@hgs.rklt.co.uk



Harrogate Grammar School, Arthurs Avenue,

Harrogate, North Yorkshire HG2 0DZ

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ATTENDANCE MATTERS

Securing good attendance at school is a key feature in ensuring a child's success

Our Expectations

At Harrogate Grammar School we are striving for excellence and expect high levels of attendance and punctuality from all our students.

A target of 100% attendance is expected unless students have genuine reason for absence such as illness or exceptional circumstances.

There is a clear link between attendance and attainment at school.

Parents/carers are asked to contact school as soon as possible and before 9:30am if a child is to be absent from school stating the reason for absence, daily contact is required to keep us informed of progress.

Out of school hours, parents/carers can leave a message on the school absence messaging service.

It is at the discretion of the Headteacher for any absence to be authorised and we request that any absence of 5 days or more on medical grounds is authenticated by a letter from your GP.

Any student who is absent without us being notified will be followed up on a daily basis as a Safeguarding precaution. Contact will be sent to parents/carers to inform them if a student has not registered at school.

Any student with attendance below 97% is a concern and all students with an attendance rate below 90% will be added to the school monitoring system and offered individualised support. You will be informed of any concerns.

We are here to support you and your child

What is a Persistent Absentee?

A persistent absentee is defined as missing 46 or more sessions across the school year (typically more than 12 per cent of the available sessions). Therefore their attendance is less than 88%.

If a student becomes a persistent absentee, the school will discuss this case with the Attendance and Wellbeing Support worker and a referral will be made. There is a statutory duty to follow up and act where a student's attendance figures are less than 90% in any one academic year.

Raise Your Child's Attendance, Raise his/her Chances!

Attendance over the whole year	= days missed	= weeks missed	Number of lessons missed	Absence over 5 years
95%	10 days	2 weeks	58	¼ year
90%	19 days	4 weeks	110	½ year
80%	38 days	8 weeks	220	1 year
70%	57 days	11.5 weeks	330	1 ½ years
60%	80 days	16 weeks	464	2 years
50%	100 days	20 weeks	580	2 ½ years

What can I do if my child doesn't want to attend school?

- Talk to your child to establish what the problem might be, let us know and we will request support from the appropriate member of staff.
- Check your child's email/Arbor for homework notifications.
- Check Arbor for any negatives for lates—often poor punctuality results in poor attendance.
- Only allow your child to stay at home for genuine illness—you will know.
- Help your child to catch up with missed work.
- Inform school of any issues outside of school which might prevent your child from wanting to attend or which may impact on their ability to concentrate in school such as bullying, bereavement, parental separation, debt, housing issues, mental health issues.
- Praise and reward good attendance.

How can we help?

- Pastoral Support—Help with your child's relationships, wellbeing and behaviour within school
- Learning Support—If your child has specific learning needs or just requires more than the usual in class support.
- Health Issues — If your child has an ongoing health issue we can arrange support.
- Support In School — Within school we have trained Child Protection Officers, and an Attendance & Wellbeing Support worker who are on hand to support with wider issues. We also have links to outside agencies.

Absence in term time

Parents/carers must get permission from the Head Teacher if they want to take their child out of school for any reason.

A Planned Absence form must be completed at least three weeks in advance of the requested absence and there must be exceptional circumstances

The Headteacher will make the final decision regarding the authorisation of the absence or may delegate to the Deputy..

A parent/carer can be fined for taking a child on holiday during term time without the School's permission.

If a request is declined, and the child is absent from school during that period, each parent/carer could receive a warning letter or be issued with a £60 penalty notice for each child taken out of school.

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