



Monkseaton High School

Student Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Our vision: To create a confident, inclusive, collaborative learning community where high quality teaching and learning, honesty and respect for others, drives collective will to bring out the best in every child in our care.

Monkseaton High School recognises the vital role good attendance and punctuality plays in a student's school life and academic achievement. At Monkseaton High School we consistently strive to encourage all of our students to work towards a goal of 100% attendance. We expect students to attend regularly and have excellent punctuality in order to take advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. The continuity of regular attendance and punctuality will enable a student to make good progress and reach their potential. We recognize that parents have a strong role to play and that there is a need to establish strong home school links.

If there are problems identified which affect a student's attendance, we will investigate, identify and strive, in partnership with parents and students, to resolve those problems as quickly and efficiently as possible.

In order for this policy to be successful, every member of the school community must make attendance a high priority.

Principles

Good attendance and punctuality will be promoted by:

- Providing a welcoming and caring ethos, characterised by positive relationships and mutual respect.
- Applying the school attendance and punctuality guidance consistently.
- Establishing and maintaining a high profile for attendance and punctuality.
- Building effective communication links between parents/carers, students and school
- Inspiring and motivating teaching.
- An appropriate and relevant curriculum, which meets the needs of all students.
- All parties having an understanding of legal requirements, school expectations and roles and responsibilities.
- An emphasis on partnership working, particularly in respect to working with our most vulnerable students and families.
- An acceptance by all members of the school community that there is a shared responsibility for promoting good attendance and punctuality.
- Frequent positive reinforcement of the importance of good attendance and punctuality.
- Effective registration and response to absence/punctuality procedures.
- Effective procedures for the early identification of vulnerable students followed by prompt and appropriate action planning
- Promoting equality and opportunity for all

Aims

- To optimise levels of attendance and punctuality.
- To involve other agencies in order to improve attendance and punctuality and to provide support, advice and guidance where appropriate.
- To recognise and support the needs of individuals following significant periods of absence.
- To ensure positive and consistent communication between home and school with regard to attendance
- To implement a clearly defined system of rewards and sanctions.
- To clearly define roles and responsibilities in monitoring attendance and punctuality.
- To have a system whereby data is gathered and analysed regularly and then used to inform improvements
- To work closely with outside agencies to support the most vulnerable students and to optimize their attendance via weekly pastoral meetings.

Expectations, roles and responsibilities

School:

Within school, responsibility for promoting good punctuality and attendance is shared by all staff, in addition to the pastoral team. The Leadership Team will monitor all aspects of attendance including an annual review of the guidance. Attendance is given a high profile within the school through assemblies, newsletters, the school website, notice boards and student council. Attendance figures will be tracked and shared with all students weekly during their registration period.

Absences can only be authorised by a teacher or authorised representative of the school. A satisfactory explanation from parent/carer by telephone notifying us on the day of absence will in most cases be acceptable. If we do not have a reason provided for an absence, parents/carers will be contacted by a text message asking for someone to call the school regarding the absence. In the event that we still do not have a valid reason for absence this will be followed by a phone call and in some cases a home visit. Further explanations may be sought in some circumstances and the school may choose not to authorise absences where they feel insufficient evidence is available to substantiate absence

Unexplained/unjustified absences will be unauthorised after two weeks (10 school days) in accordance with DFE guidelines. Any attendance below 90% is unsatisfactory and when this occurs, the pastoral team will check for any particular patterns. Initial intervention will include contact with home and interviews with the student. Parents/carers of students at risk of PA will be invited into school half termly to discuss the students attendance and to set targets for the following half term. This will be continue to be monitored throughout the year.

If attendance continues to drop, parents will be contacted and, if necessary, an appointment made for a meeting with the Head of Year and/or a member of the leadership team. Students who are persistently absent will be subject to extensive interventions and may be put forward for statutory sanctions

Students:

Students are expected to attend school punctually every day, unless this is unavoidable. Students are reminded of expectations and their own responsibility for their attendance and punctuality at regular intervals by form tutors and senior members of staff. Students should arrive at school for 8:50am daily.

Parents and carers:

Parents are expected to follow school procedures with regard to attendance and punctuality and support the school's efforts to promote good attendance at all times. It is an expectation that parents will support the school by engaging in intervention strategies and support sanctions. Where absence is known in advance, parents are asked to advise us in writing. For all other absences, parents/carers are asked to contact school by telephone, before 8.30 am on the first day of absence. Parents who have concerns regarding their child's welfare, including attendance and punctuality, are asked to contact school promptly to allow for early intervention and to ensure appropriate support is put into place.

Parents are expected to provide the school with up to date contact numbers for all adults named on a student's contact list; it is essential that these are updated regularly.

Holidays during term time

Please be aware that Headteachers can no longer grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are **exceptional** circumstances (each situation will be considered on an individual basis). Parents should seek permission for a leave of absence during term time prior to the leave, fully explaining the reasons for the request. This permission should be sought at least three weeks in advance. Leave of absence forms are on the website or available from the front office.

We will reply to all applications in writing stating whether or not the absence has been agreed. If the leave is not granted, the reason for not authorising a request will be clearly stated, as well as the possible consequences of disregarding the refusal. If a parent removes their child from school without requesting a leave of absence or without authorisation from the Headteacher, we will inform the parent in writing that a referral is being made to the Local Authority requesting a Penalty Notice to be issued. Parents will be made fully aware of a Penalty Notice being issued, and that failure to pay could lead to prosecution.

Punctuality

Monkseaton High School recognises the vital role that good punctuality plays in a student's school life and academic achievement. We expect students to arrive on time for school daily in order to take advantage of a relaxed and organised start to their day. If there is a genuine reason why a student may arrive late to school we ask that parents inform us of this.

Latecomers after 9.00am will be met at the door by the attendance officer and their names recorded. Students should then go directly to registration. The attendance officer will send a late text to parents/carers to notify them. Any time that has been missed will be made up on Friday after school with the relevant PRAL. This will be monitored over time and contact with home will be made by the tutor in the first instance.

Latecomers after 9.10 am are to report to School Reception who will mark them as L (late) and then students will go to their current lesson. The attendance officer will send a late text to parents/carers to

notify them. Any time that has been missed will be made up on Friday after school with the relevant PRAL. This will be monitored over time and contact with home will be made by the tutor in the first instance.

Persistent Absentees

A pupil becomes a persistent absentee when they miss 10% or more of schooling across the year for **whatever reason**. Absence at this level can cause a significant disruption to any student's education, and we expect parents/carers support and co-operation to improve this. We monitor all absence thoroughly and any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark, or is at risk of moving towards that mark, is given priority. Parents/carers will be informed of this by letter and will be invited to a meeting with the tutor in order to set targets for attendance and to explore opportunities to support the student and their families. PA students are tracked and monitored carefully through our pastoral system.

Use of Penalty Notices

School may request the Local Authority to issue Penalty Notices in respect of unauthorised absence in accordance with the local code of conduct.

Penalty notices may be used to tackle unauthorised absence in the following circumstances:-

- For all cases of unauthorised absence where attendance is below 90%
- For any situation where unauthorised leave of absence is for a holiday during term time. In relation to term time holidays, the child's level of attendance will not be an influencing factor. If the leave of absence is refused by the school, then a Penalty Notice can be issued.
- In cases where a student is persistently late for school after the register has closed.
- In cases where a student's parents/carers fail to work with the school and the Attendance and Placement Service to improve attendance.
- If a student is absent for 10 or more half-day sessions (five school days) of unauthorised absence during any 100 possible school sessions – these do not need to be consecutive.
- Absence for any public examination, or formal school assessment, test or examination where dates are published in advance.

Further details are available in the leaflet "Penalty Notices" from North Tyneside Council's Education, Welfare & Placement Service.

Use of the Fast Track System

The Fast Track Process will be used when a student's percentage attendance is exceptionally low. Attendance will be monitored by the school for four weeks; parents/carers will be notified of this by letter. At the end of this period if there is no improvement the case will be referred to the Attendance and Placement Service who will consider whether the case should be referred for a court hearing. The result of this can be a substantial fine or in some cases, imprisonment.

Please note

Details of the school's expectations concerning attendance and punctuality are included in the schools 'Attend to achieve' booklet.