



# MONKSEATON HIGH SCHOOL

## ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY POLICY

### Status:

<b>Statutory policy or document</b>	Yes
<b>Review frequency</b>	Annually
<b>Approval by</b>	Governing Body
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<b>Agreed to publish on school website</b>	Yes

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<b>Author</b>	<b>Creation / Revision date</b>	<b>Version</b>	<b>Status</b>
Deputy Headteacher (GBT)	January 2023	1.0	Final approved version for publication.
Deputy Headteacher (GBT)	January 2024	1.1	Review Removed references to requiring medical evidence. Updated procedures and celebrations.

## 1. Overview

Monkseaton High School recognises the vital role good attendance and punctuality plays in a student's school life and academic achievement. Regular attendance and being punctual will help students in their adult lives by preparing them to enter the world of work. Good attendance at school will also help students to develop social skills, make friends, and help them to communicate well with others. We recognize that parents have a strong role to play and that there is a need to establish strong home school links.

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

This policy applies to Monkseaton High School students and will take into consideration reasonable adjustments made to those students who need it to comply with the Equality Act and/or the SEND duties.

## 2. Our aims

- To work with parents/carers to ensure individual student attendance is as high as possible, supporting and challenging where needed.
- To ensure that students understand the importance of attendance and punctuality.
- To regularly monitor attendance patterns so that appropriate interventions can be put in place to support students and their families.

## 3. Why is attendance important?

The government is clear that students need to attend school regularly to benefit from their education. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind. Children with poor attendance tend to achieve less in both primary and secondary school. Absence from school will lead to gaps in knowledge and understanding and will eventually have an impact on exam grades. Evidence shows that good attendance is significantly correlated with higher performance and outcomes in examinations.

Attendance is essential for students to get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, wellbeing, and wider life chances. The students with the highest attainment at the end of key stage 2 and key stage 4 have higher rates of attendance over the key stage compared to those with the lowest attainment.

Good attendance and punctuality help to prepare students to enter the world of work. Regular attendance is also important to develop communication and social skills and to maintain friendships.

### What is the expectation?

All students should to attend school every day for the full day. Across the school year (190 days) this would be reported as 100% attendance.

96% attendance is the **minimum** that we would expect. If attendance falls to 90% or below, students are classed by the government as being a persistent absentee. One day's absence from school means that 5 lessons have been missed.

### Attendance percentages are not like examination results:

An attendance percentage needs to be 96%+ before it can be considered excellent. Consider the following examples over the course of a school year (190 days):

- 10 days absence = 95% attendance = 50 lessons missed
- 20 days absence = 89% attendance = 100 lessons missed
- 29 days absence = 85% attendance = 145 lessons missed
- 38 days absence = 80% attendance = 190 lessons missed
- 47 days absence = 75% attendance = 235 lessons missed

### A guide to excellent attendance:

Descriptor	Attendance	Information	Days/ Lessons lost
Excellent	100% ↓ 96%	Your child's attendance is above 96%. As well as being an excellent attender your child will almost certainly achieve the best grades for their ability and have real opportunity in further education or the world of work	<b>0-7.5 Days</b> <b>0-37.5 Lessons</b>
Good	95.9% ↓ 94%	Your child's attendance is 95.9-94%. Your child is likely to achieve their grades that will give them real opportunities to continue their studies or in the world of work	<b>7.5 -11.5 Days</b> <b>37.5 -57.5 Lessons</b>
Unsatisfactory	93.9% ↓ 90%	Your child's attendance is unsatisfactory. They are below the national government threshold of 95%. This will make it difficult for them to achieve their best.	<b>11.5 – 18 Days</b> <b>57.5 - 90 Lessons</b>
Concern	89.9% ↓ 80%	Your child is below 90% which means they are classed as <b>persistently absent (PA)</b> . Parents/Carers may face a fixed penalty notice.	<b>18 –38 Days</b> <b>90 – 190 Lessons</b>
Significant Concern	79.9% ↓ 50%	Your child's attendance is below 80%. You may face a fixed penalty or further legal prosecution if your child's attendance does not improve. Your child is missing so much time from school that it will almost be impossible for them to keep in touch with lessons or work.	<b>38 -95 Days</b> <b>190- 475 lessons!</b>

### 4. Responsibilities

- Parents/carers are responsible for ensuring that children attend school both regularly and on time.
- The school is legally responsible for reporting poor attendance to the Local Authority.
- The Local Authority has a duty to make sure that all parents/carers fulfil their responsibilities.
- Parents/carers are committing an offence if they fail to make sure that their children attend school regularly, even if they are missing school without their knowledge.
- Parents/carers can be fined up to £2,500 or imprisoned for failing to ensure that children attend school regularly.

- Parents/carers should ensure that school is updated with new contact details for themselves and their children including addresses, phone numbers (particularly mobile numbers) and email address changes.
- For enquiries about attendance or punctuality, parents/carers should contact the school's Attendance Officer, on 0191 2979700.

## 5. How is attendance and absence recorded and reported?

Attendance is recorded every day. There are two points of the day when attendance is recorded – morning registration and afternoon registration (Period 4).

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parents/carers) as either **authorised** or **unauthorised absence**.

Structure	Time
Students arrive on site	08:45
<i>Registration and tutorial</i>	08:50 - 09:10
Period 1	09:10 - 10:10
Period 2	10:10 - 11:10
Break	11:10 - 11:30
Period 3	11:30 - 12:30
Lunch	12:30 - 13:15
<i>Period 4</i>	13:15 - 14:15
Period 5	14:15 - 15:15

**Authorised absences** are mornings or afternoons away from school for reasons such as illness, medical/dental appointments, emergencies or other unavoidable causes. The list is not exhaustive and is always at the discretion of the Attendance Officer and Leadership Team. Where possible, we ask that medical/dental appointments are arranged for out of school time.

**Unauthorised absences** are those which the school does not consider to be reasonable. Typical reasons for unauthorised absence are:

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Shopping trips or birthdays
- Day trips and holidays in term time
- Parent looking after other children so child unable to come to school
- Childcare/babysitting
- Tiredness
- Mental health /anxiety days, unless diagnosed by a medical professional
- Current attendance under 90%.

Whilst any student may be off school because they are ill, in some cases there may be other issues which means that they are reluctant to attend school. If a student is reluctant to attend school, we encourage parents/carers to highlight this and work with us to support their child. In this first instance this should be discussed with the Year Leader.

### Persistent Absence

In September 2015, the Department for Education (DfE) announced that any student whose attendance falls below 90% will be classed as a Persistently Absent (PA) student. Therefore, if a student misses 19 or more days over an academic year they will be classed as being persistently absent. 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.

If a student is classed as PA:

- Parents/carers will be informed of this by letter and will be invited to a meeting with the Year Leader in order to set targets for attendance and to explore opportunities to support the student and their families.
- Parents will be notified by letter once their child's attendance falls below 93%.
- Their attendance will be monitored by the Attendance Officer.
- All future absences will be marked as unauthorised unless in exceptional circumstances which have been discussed with the Attendance Officer or the Leadership Team.

## 6. Punctuality

Monkseaton High School recognises the vital role that good punctuality plays in a student's school life and academic achievement. Punctuality is a habit that enables future success, therefore we need to ensure that punctuality is excellent.

Students should arrive at school for 8:45am daily. If there is a genuine reason why a student may arrive late to school we ask that parents / carers inform us of this.

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.

A student regularly arriving late to school will lose valuable learning time. For example,

- 10 minutes late each day loses nearly 7 days of learning each year
- 20 minutes late each day loses nearly 13 days of learning each year

If a student is late 2 x per week a call back will be issued to make up for lost time.

## 7. Encouraging and Celebrating Good Attendance

Every student has an aim of having 96%+ attendance as a minimum. There is evidence to show that good attendance is significantly correlated with higher performance and outcomes in examinations. It is important that all our students attend school as much as possible to ensure that they are able to fully succeed with their learning and the opportunities presented to them.

<b>% of Students achieving five 9-4 grades including English and Maths</b>	<b>Attendance</b>	
65%	100%-96%	Excellent Attendance
62%	95.9%-94%	Good Attendance
58%	93.9%-90%	Concern
38%	89.9%-80%	
20%	79.9%-70%	Significant Concern
<b>12%</b>	<b>69.9% - 50%</b>	
<b>5%</b>	<b>49.9% and less</b>	

We believe in celebrating the success of our students and this includes attendance:

- A draw will be made fortnightly to award a student in each year group for 100% attendance.
- A gift voucher is awarded half termly to one student with 100% attendance (this is a random draw).
- Year Leaders will email tutors each week with the attendance percentage of their registration group.
- Students will receive their attendance each week in tutorial so they can reflect on their current attendance.
- Every half term Class Chart points are awarded for 100% and 96% +attendance.
- The Attendance Officer will reward improving attendance for targeted students with a range of prizes.
- Students with the most improved attendance since the previous half term will receive a prize and a certificate.

## **8. Communication with Parents and Carers**

- 100% half termly attendance - 10 Class Charts points
- 96% half termly attendance – 5 Class Charts points
- 93% and below – warning letter and conversation with parents/carers with regards to support the school can offer (action plans, Early Help Assessments etc.).
- Regular texts home to inform parents of their child's attendance
- 90% and below – letter to parents/carers and a review of any plans/support in place. Referral to local authority where appropriate.

## **9. Absence and Punctuality Procedures**

### **Absence**

- Where absence is known in advance, parents/carers 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 **each day** of absence.
- Parents/carers 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.
- Receipt of an absence note does not automatically authorise absence. The only legally acceptable reasons for not being in school are illness and medical appointments. Wherever possible medical or other appointments should be made for times outside of the school day.
- 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.
- 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.
- If we still have not received a valid reason we will send a letter home requesting for a reason to be provided.

## **Punctuality**

Students are expected to attend school punctually every day. We appreciate that there may be occasional instances where this may occur due to circumstances outside of a student's control. Should this be the case, parents/carers are asked to contact the school.

- Latecomers after **8:55am** 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.
- If a student is late to school twice in a week, a call-back will be set. If punctuality continues to be poor students may be placed on a punctuality report.
- This will be monitored over time and contact with home will be made by the tutor in the first instance.

## **10. Leave of absence and holidays during term time**

Students should only be taken out of school for a planned absence in exceptional circumstances.

Parents/carers 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 available on the website or from the front office in school.

We will reply to all applications in writing stating whether or not the absence has been agreed. If a parent/carer removes their child from school without requesting a leave of absence or without authorisation from the Headteacher, the absence is unauthorised and may result in a Penalty Notice being issued by the Local Authority (and if issued, failure to pay could lead to prosecution).

Please understand that Headteachers cannot grant or authorise any leave of absence during term time, unless there are exceptional circumstances. Taking your child on holiday or to visit relatives is not an exceptional circumstance and therefore will not be granted.

## **11. Penalty Notice**

School may refer to the Local Authority who will 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.

## **12. Support for Students with Attendance Below 90%**

Where absence escalates and students miss 10% or more of school (equivalent to 1 day or more a fortnight across a full school year), schools and local authorities are expected to work together to put additional targeted support in place to remove any barriers to attendance and reengage these students.

This support may take the following forms;

- Attendance meeting in school
- Offer of voluntary support – Early Help Assessment (EHA see below)
- Formal support – Parenting Contract
- Education Supervision Order – legally binding
- Attendance Prosecution

### **Early Help Assessments (EHA)**

We recognise that poor attendance could be a sign that there are more serious issues going on in a student's life. This may be linked to problems at home and/or in school.

Parents/carers should make school aware of any difficulties or changes in circumstances that may affect their child's attendance and or behaviour in school, for example, bereavement, divorce/separation, incidents of domestic abuse. This will help the school identify any additional support that may be required.

An EHA identifies the issues you are worried about as a family that may be impacting upon school attendance. Following this, a Team Around the Family (TAF) will be held to formalise support that can be put in place to improve attendance



## Appendix 1: Equality Impact Assessment

<b>1. Name of the change, strategy, project or policy:</b>	Attendance and Punctuality Policy		
<b>2. Name of person completing this form:</b>	Marie-Anne Dowson (Business Manager)		
<b>3. Has the policy/practice been assessed to consider any negative impact on the key groups?</b>			
Yes.			
<b>4. Where negative impact has been identified, please complete questions 5-9, if none is identified, please sign and proceed to question 9.</b>			
<b>Equality Target Group (circle):</b>	<b>Negative impact – it could disadvantage</b>	<b>Reason/Mitigation against impact</b>	
<i>Race</i>	<i>No evidence of negative impact</i>		
<i>Religion/belief</i>	<i>No Evidence of negative impact</i>		
<i>Disability</i>	<i>No Evidence of negative impact</i>		
<i>Gender</i>	<i>No Evidence of negative impact</i>		
<i>Gender</i>	<i>No evidence of negative impact</i>		
<i>Reassignment</i>	<i>No evidence of negative impact</i>		
<i>Sexual Orientation</i>	<i>No Evidence of negative impact</i>		
<i>Age</i>	<i>No Evidence of negative impact</i>		
<i>Pregnancy/Maternity</i>	<i>No Evidence of negative impact</i>		
<i>Marriage &amp; Civil Partnerships</i>	<i>No Evidence of negative impact</i>		
<b>5</b>		Yes	No
<b>(a) Is the impact legal/lawful?</b>		N/A	N/A
<b>(b) Is the impact intended?</b>		N/A	N/A
<b>6 Could you minimise or improve any negative impact? Use the space below to detail how.</b>			
No negative impact is anticipated from the implementation of this policy			
<b>7 Is it possible to consider a different policy/strategy/action, which still achieves your aim, but avoids any adverse impact on equality?</b>			
No.			
<b>8. In light of all the information detailed in this form; what practical actions would you take to reduce or remove any adverse / negative impact?</b>			

*School will ensure that its data collection is as accurate as possible to identify students that may have one or more equality characteristics to consider in any decision making.*

**PART B) To be completed when assessment and consultation has been carried out**

<b>9a) As a result of the assessment and consultation completed in Part A above, state whether there will need to be any changes made to the policy, project or planned action. NO</b>				
<b>9b) As a result of this assessment and consultation, does the school need to commission specific research on this issue or carry out monitoring/data collection? NO</b>				
<b>9) Have you set up a monitoring/evaluation/review process to check the successful implementation of the policy, project or change?</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>✓</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Annually</b>

**Signed: .....M-A Dowson.....**

**Date: .....18.01.24.....**