



THE HESSE FEDERATION OF SCHOOLS

ATTENDANCE POLICY AND PROCEDURES



Effective Date: May 2010

Date of minuted approval by the governing body: 13 May 2010

Review Committee: Curriculum and Standards

Review Date: May 2012

Background

For a number of years schools have published figures for overall absence and unauthorised absence. Local authorities were instructed in Summer 2008 that from this point overall absence and persistent absence would be published (AAT).

The persistent absence indicator was developed because student level data revealed that absence is highly concentrated among relatively few students who account for a large proportion of all absence nationally. 'Persistent absentee' students miss the equivalent of 20% or more of school over a typical school year.

The percentage absence (% PA) is the number of student enrolments with 20% or more absence expressed as a percentage of the total number of student enrolments. For the school year 2007 / 08 this has been done for the Autumn and Spring terms combined.

The Data for Hesse High School

Overall Absence

2005 / 06 - 7.3% 2006 / 07 - 7.1% 2007 / 08 - 7.2% 2008 / 09 - 4%

PA % 2007 / 08 - 6.3%

PA Thresholds - set by LA

2008 / 09 - 7.0% 2009 / 10 - 6% 2010 / 11 - 5%

Aims

We aim to achieve the highest possible attendance by our students. Good attendance is an essential prerequisite to achieving high standards and we will take every opportunity to promote the importance of attendance with students and parents.

Promoting Good Attendance

The Hesse Federation seeks to take every opportunity to raise the profile and importance of good attendance with both students and parents.

Half termly attendance figures are published for Penshurst pupils and those with full attendance are awarded a certificate. Attendance figures for tutor groups (HHS) are published monthly and those with 100% attendance are listed publicly and congratulated.

Recording Attendance

Student attendance is recorded electronically. Absence and attendance codes used are provided by DCSF (guidance for schools and local authorities, May 2008), see appendix (a).

In line with DCSF guidelines registers will close to students 30 minutes after the register was taken. As a result students registering after 9.15 am and 1.45 pm will be recorded as code U (an unauthorised absence).

In addition students will be registered electronically for each lesson by the class teacher.

Monitoring Attendance

Day to day monitoring of attendance

- Parents are regularly reminded by the school that it is preferable for the school to be informed by telephone if a student is legitimately absent from school. This is done by information on the school's website, newsletters, annual letter to parents during the Summer holiday and information given to parents when students start the school (home-school agreement).
- Attendance is checked twice daily by the school's Attendance Officer and contact is made with parents on the first day of absence. If contact cannot be made a letter is posted requesting a reason for the absence. If a response to the letter is not received then the absence is recorded as unauthorised.
- **Whenever a student absence is recorded as unauthorised parents are sent a letter explaining that this has been done and providing the opportunity to discuss the absence further (appendix b). When a student has 10 unauthorised absences in a 13 week period the Attendance Officer will liaise with the EWO to initiate a penalty notice.**

Longer term monitoring of attendance

- The Education Welfare officer spends two days each week working with the school and is informed of any concerns re student absence / welfare issues. The attendance officer works closely with the EWO to monitor students with an attendance of 80% or less on a fortnightly basis to resolve any issues and put together attendance plans for students when needed.
- **At the end of the Autumn term students with an attendance of 85% or less and not already on an attendance plan are sent a letter and attendance certificate from school indicating a concern re poor attendance (appendix c).**
- **Students are closely monitored over the first half of the Spring term and if a significant improvement is not made the parents are invited to attend a school-led panel run by an Assistant Headteacher and the school's Attendance Officer. During this meeting the reasons for absence are examined and support offered from the school to help improve attendance. If the student's attendance does not significantly improve over the next half term the matter will be passed to the EWO who will probably initiate a full attendance panel.**
- **The monitoring of the 85% or lower attendance students will continue at half termly intervals and follow the above procedures.**

Holidays During Term Time

The school informs parents (home-school agreement) that parents should not normally take students on holiday during term time.

On occasions when parents approach the school with a request for holiday absence the following will take place.

- **The parent will be asked to visit the school to discuss the request and complete the holiday form (appendix d) with the Headteacher (or member of the school leadership team).**
- **Following the parental interview, except in exceptional circumstances, a parent shall not be granted more than 10 days leave of absence in any school year.**
- **If parents keep a student away for longer than was agreed, any extra time is unauthorised.**
- **If the school does not agree an absence and the student goes on holiday the absence is unauthorised and a fixed penalty notice will usually be issued.**

Internal Truancy

All students are registered electronically in each lesson by means of lesson monitor. The Attendance Officer checks the register three times daily and if staff have given a student an N mark they are e-mailed to double check that the student(s) was not in fact present. In cases of suspected internal truancy the Attendance Officer will either investigate the circumstances further and/or contact the student's Head of Year.

Maintaining High Standards of Punctuality

Staff are given regular reminders re the accurate marking of registers in terms of students arriving late.

If a student receives two or more lates per week they will be given an after school detention as follows

- **2 lates = 20 minutes**
- **3 lates = 30 minutes**
- **4 or more lates = 40 minute detention with a member of the senior leadership team.**

A half-termly review of students who are regularly late may result in further action from the Head of Year.

The Attendance Officer will monitor late arrivals to lessons 1 to 4 and 6 on a daily basis and pass on concerns to the Head of year who will take appropriate action.