Responsible Committee/Individual	Headteacher
Author	Deputy Headteacher
Target Audience	All Stakeholders
Date Policy Agreed	Summer 2023
Review Date	Summer 2024

Rationale

Every child has a right to access the education to which he/she is entitled. Parents/carers and teachers share the responsibility for ensuring that attendance at school is maximised and that unjustified and unauthorised absenteeism is kept to a minimum.

The law relating to school attendance states in Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 that the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient full-time education suitable

        a) to age, ability and aptitude, and

        b) to special educational needs he/she may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

Hungerhill School is committed to maximising educational opportunities and achievement for all students. For students to gain the best from their time at Hungerhill, it is very important that they achieve excellent attendance and punctuality.

Students who have higher levels of attendance achieve better both academically and socially. Regular attenders find school routines, school work and friendships easier to cope with. Statistics show that 91% of students with fewer than six days absence achieved at least five good GCSEs. Of the students who had more than twelve days absence, only 36% achieved five GCSEs. In addition, there is a direct link between underachievement and attendance below 95%.

As a result of Covid-19 and multiple lockdowns, the school has responded with the implementation of an attendance strategy which carefully monitors attendance through a tiered framework of support, interventions and rewards.

Promoting Good Attendance and Punctuality

Aims
- To maximise the attendance of all our students in order to facilitate the highest standards of achievement
- To strive towards every student attending 100% of the time
- To promote excellent punctuality and attendance so that students are prepared for the disciplines of adult working life

What you can expect from Hungerhill School:

- We will promote excellent attendance and punctuality and will investigate any unexplained and/or unjustified absence.
- We will work closely with parents/carers where a student's absence is cause for concern.
- We will support students to achieve excellent attendance and punctuality.
- We will support students returning to school after prolonged absence.
- We will reward high and improving attendance.

What Hungerhill School expects from students:

- Attend the school on school days and be on time.
- Be punctual to all lessons.
- Ensure that they register for all timetabled lessons and inform the Student Reception, where appropriate, if they are not able to be registered.
- Ensure all messages and notes relating to absence, medical appointments etc from parents/carers are taken to Reception.

What Hungerhill School expects from parents/carers:

- Ensure their child attends school, punctually, dressed in full uniform and equipped to learn.
- Ensure their child attends every day school is open unless they are too ill to do so.
- Avoid keeping their child away from school for any reason other than illness or other authorised explanation.
- Avoid arranging holidays during term time.
- Immediately inform the Attendance Officer / school reception if their child is unable to attend (by 9.30am where possible), including the reason for absence and expected date of return.
- For safeguarding reasons, a call is required for **every** day of absence.

Registration:

- The law requires the register to be taken twice a day – at the start of the morning session and once in the afternoon session. This is at 8.40 am and at 1.10 pm.
- Students are expected to arrive no later than 8.30 am in order to be ready for the start of registration period at 8.40 am.
- Registers close at 9.10 am in the morning and 1:40 pm in the afternoon, after which students will be marked as unauthorised absence unless a satisfactory explanation has been received.
- Students are registered at the start of every lesson throughout the day.
- The register is marked using the DfE Attendance and Absence Codes. Guidance on applying the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006 can be found in 'Advice on School Attendance' published 2012 by the DfE.

Punctuality

- The school gates close promptly at 8.40 am.
- Any student arriving after this time should sign in at Reception.
- Students arriving after registration has closed will be given a 'U' for morning registration which is an unauthorised absence.
- Students who are late will be given a '30-minute same day' detention
- Any student who attends school after 9:30, without due cause, will be issued a 'same day one hour detention'.
- Failure to attend the 30-minute detention may result in the sanction being escalated.

- Continued repeated offenders will be reported to parents/carers and parents/carers will be invited into school for a Punctuality review.

How we Respond to Absence/Lateness

If a student is absent at morning registration without contact from a parent/carer to explain the absence, the school will contact parents/carers. We take our safeguarding responsibilities seriously and will always do our best to contact parents/carers to ensure that they are aware of their child's absence using the following methods:

Day 1 – Day 4
- **Text message**
- **Mobile calls using number of Contacts 1-4** (as identified by parents/carers on student registration form)
- **Home visit**

Day 5
- **Text message**
- **Mobile calls using number of Contacts 1-4** (as identified by parents/carers on student registration form)
- **Home visit**
- **Call to Police to request a safe and well visit**

Vulnerable Students/Open to Social Care

Day 1
- **Text message**
- **Mobile calls using number of Contacts 1-4** (as identified by parents/carers on student registration form)
- **Home visit**

Day 2

- **Text message**
- **Mobile calls using number of Contacts 1-4** (as identified by parents/carers on student registration form)
- **Home visit – potentially joint visit with safeguarding team**
- **Share with Safeguarding who will contact Key Worker/Social Worker**

Day 3 – Day 5

- **Text message**
- **Mobile calls using number of Contacts 1-4** (as identified by parents/carers on student registration form)
- **Home visit – potentially joint visit with safeguarding team**
- **Share with Safeguarding who will contact Key Worker/Social Worker**
- **Case discussion with Safeguarding – to decide if a request to the Police for a safe and well check is to be made prior to day 5.**

A continued absence totalling 10 days for any student will result in the child being reported as a 'child missing in education' to the Local Authority.

The school asks that parents/carers ensure that school have the most up to date contact details at all times. All absence notes will be retained.

Authorised Absence

Authorised absence is where the school has given approval for absence in advance or where the explanation given afterwards has been accepted as satisfactory justification for the absence. Parents/carers may not authorise absence; only the school can do this.

Wherever possible, students should attempt to arrange non-school activities outside of their school timetable. Where this is not possible, the following is a list of reasons for absence which would be authorised:

- An unavoidable medical or dental appointment
- Exceptional family circumstances e.g. family bereavement and/or attendance at a funeral
- A religious observance
- Involvement in a public performance
- Exclusion

Medical/dental and other appointments should be arranged out of school hours wherever possible. Where this is not possible, students should, where practically possible, come to school before the appointment, sign out and return to school after the appointment. Evidence of medical/dental appointments will be required.
Following an explanation from parents/carers regarding a student's absence, the school will decide whether or not it accepts the explanation and authorise/un-authorise accordingly.

Absence which hasn't been explained will remain as unauthorised. Parents/carers should not take their children out of school for days out, to attend sporting events, etc.

We may undertake a home visit for absences of two or more days regardless of whether parent/carer has informed us of the absence.

Irregular Attendance and Persistent Absence

Where a student's absence is cause for concern, the school will inform parents/carers by text, letter and/or invite the parents/carers into school or visit parents/carers at home.

A student becomes a Persistent Absentee when they miss 10% of their schooling across the academic year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parents'/carers' fullest support and co-operation to tackle this. Any student whose attendance has reached the PA threshold, or is

at risk of moving towards that threshold, is given priority for intervention. Intervention may be via:

- An Attendance Support Plan to improve attendance which may involve referrals to other agencies (for example Early Help) alongside meetings between relevant school staff and parents/carers. If parents/carers are unable to attend meetings, the action plan will still go ahead.
- Where parents/carers fail to co-operate with support and strategies provided by the school, further advice may be sought from the Local Authority which could lead to legal sanctions being imposed including fine and court orders.

Persistent Absence data is communicated to the Local Authority via the School Census on a termly and annual basis.

Leave of Absence during Term Time

Any absence interrupts the continuity of student's learning. Government Legislation now states that only exceptional circumstances warrant an authorised leave of absence. This means there is no longer a provision in law for the Headteacher to authorise a holiday. Only exceptional circumstances warrant an authorised leave of absence.

Please refer to the Department for Education for the latest guidance. Parents/carers are strongly urged not to take students out of school for holidays during term time.
https://www.doncaster.gov.uk/services/schools/holidays-during-term-time

Even where the circumstances are considered exceptional, please be aware that:

- Your request may will not be authorised during exam key assessment periods (these could be throughout the year).
- Your request will not be authorised during the month of September.
- Your request will not be authorised for any student in Year 11.
- Your request will not be authorised if your child's attendance is below the respective school's attendance target of 97% for the 12 months prior to application.
- Your request will not be authorised if your child has unauthorised absences.
- Your request will not be authorised where a previous holiday has been taken.
- Your request will not be authorised where there are coursework deadlines or controlled assessments (these could be throughout the year).

All requests for holiday leave need to be requested on a 'Leave of Absence' form available on request from student reception. All factors that are to be considered will need to be included on or attached to the form. Therefore, if a parent/carer believes they have exceptional circumstances, then evidence will need to be provided at the time of the form submission. Exceptional circumstances will not be considered after the leave has been taken.

The school has the right to serve a Penalty Notice on parents/carers who insist on taking their children out of school without authorisation. Penalties require each parent to pay a fine of £60 per child if paid within 21 days, or £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days (with effect from September 2013). Failure to pay within the specified timescale could result in prosecution in the Magistrates Court for failure to ensure regular school attendance. This legislation also applies to any student taking leave of absence without prior notification to the school.

Promoting Good Attendance and Punctuality

- It is the belief that all students are more likely to have excellent attendance if the curriculum is engaging and personalised to meet their needs. The curriculum is monitored and revised on an annual basis so that it meets the ability needs of all students.
- Students are regularly informed of their attendance levels and, if appropriate, how they can improve.
- The school will make reasonable adjustments to attendance targets for those students who are classed as disabled, as stated under Section 20 of the Equality Act 2010. The school will work with parents to identify an attendance target which is aspiration yet achievable and does not disadvantage the student in comparison to their peers.
- Where appropriate, students whose attendance falls below the attendance target of 97% will be set a target for improvement and progress towards these targets will be regularly reviewed.
- A threshold system based on the number of days missed, or number of separate absences by individual students, will be used to identify those students at risk of not meeting their attendance target. This will be followed up by text, phone call, letter, or invitation to a meeting with key staff in order to discuss how we can work better together to help them. Attendance Support Plans will be put in place as appropriate.
- Students, parents/carers and staff are regularly reminded about the importance of good attendance.
- Parents/carers are encouraged to contact the Attendance Officer/Student Support Team at any time to discuss their child's attendance.
- Regular meetings will be held with the appropriate members of staff/external agencies to identify and support those students whose attendance is a cause for concern.
- Students who have been absent for extended periods of time will be supported as appropriate to re-integrate back into school.
- Effective links are made with primary schools to facilitate the smooth transition to Hungerhill School.
- Students/Parents/Carers will be informed of their year-to-date attendance every week.
- Parents/carers will be informed of their child's year to date attendance every week.
- Students' attendance will be reported on student reports.
- Students will be rewarded throughout the year for good and improved attendance.

Staff Roles and Responsibilities:

All members of the staff have a role to play in improving attendance and punctuality and reducing absence.

Subject Teachers will:

- Welcome and value the attendance and punctuality of all students to lessons.
- Ensure all students are accurately registered.
- Ensure that students know the register is being taken.
- Identify student absence to lessons and take appropriate action this may include contacting home.
- Identify any absence trends or concerns and will raise these with the appropriate members of staff.

- Issue a late mark to any student who arrives late to lesson without authorisation e.g. a note from another member of staff.

Form Tutors will:

- Discuss absence and attendance regularly with students, by use of the weekly attendance updates and ask students to keep track of their attendance in their student planner.
- Meet with students returning from absence for a supportive conversation.
- Identify any absence trends or concerns and will raise these with the appropriate members of staff.
- Ensure that all absence notes or verbal messages are sent to the Attendance Officer.
- May contact parents/carers to offer support for recent absences.

Pastoral staff and Heads of Year will:

- Track attendance for their Key Stage / Year group.
- Monitor the quality of discussions at Form Tutor attendance conversations.
- Discuss absence and attendance concerns with students and set targets for improvement.
- Provide additional support for disadvantaged students when required.
- Liaise with the Attendance officer, Student Support officers contact parents/carers where attendance concerns have been identified.
- Support students to improve their attendance.
- Promote attendance through assemblies.
- Work with other members of staff to share information and support students and their parents/carers to improve attendance.
- Arrange for work to be sent home if the student will be absent for a known period of time.
- Arrange a suitable reintegration for student who returns from a prolonged absence, which may include: liaising with the student and parents/carers about support needed, informing all relevant staff of the circumstances, consider a personalised programme of return, if appropriate.
- Conduct home visits to support the attendance of students in their year group.

Attendance Officers/Attendance Team will:

- Take the lead on raising the profile of attendance throughout the school, including improving attendance and punctuality and reducing persistent absence.
- Monitor registration on a daily basis.
- Receive calls and messages from parents/carers regarding student absence.
- Issue the cumulative attendance report to achievement coordinators and form tutors on a fortnightly basis.
- Monitor absence and attendance regularly and implement the attendance threshold procedure when required.
- Ensure that registers are being completed and inform SLT Link at weekly Attendance meetings (where there are persistent concerns).
- Identify any absence trends or concerns and will liaise with the appropriate members of staff.
- Contact parents/carers where attendance concerns have been identified and provide support to improve their child's attendance, including making home visits.

- Support students to improve their attendance.
- Work with outside agencies, including the Local Authority, where appropriate to improve attendance of individual students.
- Provide data to the Headteacher, Senior Leaders and the Governors on a regular basis.

The Headteacher and Senior Leaders, including the Governing Body will:

- Ensure that the attendance policy is implemented and regularly reviewed.
- Ensure the whole School ethos promotes excellence in attendance and punctuality.
- Monitor the curriculum to develop ways of improving the provision of educational experience.
- Utilise attendance data to inform strategic planning.

The school will promote attendance through assemblies. It will work with other members of staff to share information and support students and their parents/carers to improve attendance. The Headteacher, Senior Leaders and the Local Governing Body, including the Local Authority will ensure that the school attendance policy is implemented and regularly reviewed. They will report to the Local authority on attendance. The school will monitor the curriculum to develop ways of improving the provision and will utilise attendance data to inform strategic planning.

Appendix 1: Attendance Codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
****	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances

E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

Appendix 2: How We Respond to Absence/Lateness

How we Respond to Absence/Lateness

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- Home visit

Day 5
- Text message
- Mobile calls using number of Contacts 1-4 (as identified by parents/carers on student registration form)
- Home visit
- Call to Police to request a safe and well visit

Vulnerable Students/Open to Social Care

Day 1
- Text message
- Mobile calls using number of Contacts 1-4 (as identified by parents/carers on student registration form)
- Home visit

Day 2
- Text message
- Mobile calls using number of Contacts 1-4 (as identified by parents/carers on student registration form)
- Home visit – potentially joint visit with safeguarding team
- Share with Safeguarding who will contact Key Worker/Social Worker

Day 3–Day 5
- Text message
- Mobile calls using number of Contacts 1-4 (as identified by parents/carers on student registration form)
- Home visit – potentially joint visit with safeguarding team
- Share with Safeguarding who will contact Key Worker/Social Worker
- Case discussion with Safeguarding – to decide if a request to the Police for a safe and well check is to be made prior to day 5.