

# Attendance Policy



HEARTS ACADEMY TRUST

Updated	January 2024 following guidance from the Local Authority
Next Review	January 2027

HEARTS Academy Trust is committed to providing a happy, caring and safe learning environment for all within a values led context, where everyone feels valued and grows in confidence and independence.

We promote **HAPPINESS** through a creative, exciting and practical curriculum, which generates a love of, and interest in, learning and a resilience and hope which supports us through challenging times.

Great value is placed on pupils' self **ESTEEM** which is developed through a positive and motivated attitude to learning, a healthy lifestyle, good social skills, self-discipline and a positive self-image.

We promote the highest standards of **ACHIEVEMENT** in all areas of the curriculum and help all pupils to fulfil their potential regardless of gender, race or ability.

We foster **RESPECT and RESPONSIBILITY** for all by establishing good relations between the school, home and community. Pupils are taught respect for themselves, others and the environment. They are also taught to take full responsibility for their own choices and responsibility for themselves and their community.

We encourage **TRUTH** and honesty in all aspects of school life – relationships, work and the curriculum and learn to trust and accept others' individuality and uniqueness.

We develop **SPIRITUALITY and SERVICE** so that calm, quiet, reflective times which support deep thought are part of school life and beauty is appreciated. We promote a service culture that reflects our duty to support and show compassion to all members of the community and not just ourselves.



*Children at the HEART*

## Introduction and Background

### **Attendance policy of an SEMH Enhanced Provision (The Atrium)**

The Atrium recognises that positive behaviour and good attendance are essential in order to raise standards of pupil attainment and to give every child/young person the best educational experience possible.

The DfE has produced guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools, and local authorities: Working together to improve school attendance.

The Atrium Attendance Policy outlines how we provide additional or 'enhanced' support to our referring schools.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance>

Pupils who attend the Atrium also attend their school for part of each school day. The Atrium, 'enhances' the provision provided already by schools by offering a bespoke social, emotional and mental health package of support.

**Legal Obligations:** All pupils attending the Atrium are solely on role with the referring school.

'Guest pupil' refers to the roll status of pupils attending any Enhanced provision as outlined in the service level agreement. All pupils attending the Atrium are guests.

Referring schools have a legal duty to comply to requirements related to attendance reporting and intervention.

The Atrium supports school's legal duty by:

- Calling parents if pupils have not arrived within 15 mins of session start times
- For a start time of 9.30am, parents will be called at 9.45am
- For a start time of 12.30am parents will be called at 12.45

If a pupil is unable to attend the session, the Atrium will ask parents if they have notified their school and remind them of their responsibility to do so. In addition, a member of the Atrium staff will phone the referring school to report this absence.

***The Atrium will always notify the referring school even if parents have communicated, they have already done this.***

**Registers:** The Atrium keeps a register of attendance which is used to track pupils, identify any patterns and as an indicator of progress or concern.

### Attendance issues

**Risk and actions:** tracking attendance highlights where there are concerns. Running along side the Atrium register, is a log of these concerns and any actions taken to improve attendance. The Atrium offers targeted support for pupils, families and schools facing challenges in attending.

Examples of support offered and actions taken:

- **Drop-in support:** Parents are invited in to discuss their challenges. Appointments do not need to be made and the Head of Provision will prioritise this as non-attendance is high risk for the vulnerable pupils at the Atrium.
- **Small step plans:** These are developed with parents and the referring school to outline supportive steps to improve attendance. These plans are solution focussed and look at potential barriers and how to mitigate these. They are reviewed weekly through the working partnership plan and a weekly phone call to the key school lead (as outlined in the working partnership agreement). At the heart of any small step plan are relationships and our trauma perceptive values: Compassion, Kindness, Hope,
- Connection and Belonging.
- **Staff training:** This is often part of small step plans. Atrium staff provide outreach support to referring schools including modelling working alongside pupils to reduce stress and build connections, reviewing

provision in place to ensure it meets need and revisiting Adult Response Plans to ensure there is a consistent approach and pupils feel safe to attend.

- **Signposting of other services and agencies.** The Atrium can support referring schools by attending meetings with Family Solutions, social workers and any other professionals supporting. They can also seek advice via the SEMH panel in terms of signposting support.

### **Persistent Absenteeism (PA)**

A pupil is defined by the Government as a '**persistent absentee**' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for any reason; this can be authorised or unauthorised absence. Absence at this level will cause considerable damage to any pupil's education and we need the full support and co-operation of parents to resolve this.

**Persistent poor attendance:** Where attendance is persistently low in both settings and the measures outlined above are unsuccessful, the Atrium will discuss these concerns at the SEMH panel. In such cases, the referring school will liaise with their Education Access Specialist to consider additional educational provision other than in school.

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure it is supportive and effective at improving attendance for all **guest pupils** attending the Atrium.