

Mercer County Head Start Policies and Procedures

P/P Topic:	Child Attendance	P/P #:	037
Part:	1304	PC Approval Date:	10/23/2008
Subpart:	Implementation and Enforcement	Last Reviewed Date:	10/23/2008
Section Title(s):	Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance	Implementation Responsibility:	Education Staff
Related Performance Standard(s):	1306.32(b)(5)	Monitoring Responsibility:	Family Advocates; Family/Community Partnership Manager

(A) Policy	<p>Families enrolled in Head Start are expected to ensure that their children maintain consistent attendance.</p> <p>This policy is designed to ensure that monthly average daily attendance in center based classrooms does not fall below 85 percent; that families are encouraged and supported in maintaining regular attendance; and that, if chronic absenteeism persists, another child is given the opportunity to attend Head Start.</p>
(B) Responsibility	Teacher and Teacher Assistant
(C) Procedure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Absences</u> Parents are required to call or send a note to account for each day that their child cannot attend class and to explain the reasons for the absence. If the reasons for an absence are not known by the end of each week, staff will attempt to contact the family by telephone, written communication, or personal visit as soon as possible. Attendance will be recorded daily in the classroom through the GE software system and tallied at the end of each month to determine compliance with 85 % attendance. • <u>Tracking Absences</u> Attendance will be taken daily in classroom and recorded as “present” or “absent”. Absences will be recorded as excused for child illness, Dr. appt., or death in the family. All other absences will be considered unexcused. • <u>Analysis of the causes of absenteeism</u> If the monthly average daily attendance rate in a center-based program falls below 85 percent, the Family and Community Partnership Manager must analyze the causes of absenteeism. The analysis must include a study of the pattern of absences for each child, including the reasons for absences as well as the number of absences that occur on consecutive days. This analysis will be included in the Family and Community Partnership Manager’s monthly report submitted to the Director.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>Attendance plans and alternative services</u> If a child has three or more consecutive absences family advocate staff will contact the family to discuss the reason for the extended absence. An attendance plan may be developed if appropriate. The attendance plan will be designed to assist the family with establishing regular attendance or, if necessary, to plan for alternative services. Staff will document all contacts with the child's family and any special family support activities, which are provided as part of the attendance plan.• <u>Withdrawal from the program</u> Families who do not agree to an attendance plan and reestablish regular attendance may be withdrawn from the program. Attendance may be established either by classroom participation or by participation in alternative services.
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