



# **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

**September 2022**

# ATTENDANCE POLICY

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## Expectations

Regular and punctual attendance at school is a prerequisite to students' personal wellbeing, academic achievement and career success. Ensuring excellent attendance is a team effort in which students, parents and the academy all have important roles to play.

**Students** are expected to:

- attend the academy regularly
- attend the academy punctually
- attend the academy appropriately prepared for the day ahead

**Parents/guardians** are expected to:

- ensure the regular attendance of their child at the academy, in accordance with their legal responsibilities
- ensure that children arrive at the academy punctually, prepared for the day ahead
- contact the academy on the first day of a child's absence
- avoid all unnecessary absences, such as holidays, during term time

**The academy** will:

- keep regular and accurate records of attendance for all pupils
- contact parents as soon as possible when a pupil fails to attend without parental explanation
- promote good attendance and reduce absence
- promote good punctuality, both to school and to lessons
- provide a welcoming atmosphere and a safe learning environment in which children want to learn
- act early to address patterns of absence
- support parents to fulfil their legal duty of ensuring their children of compulsory school age attend regularly
- refer cases of persistent absence to the local authority's education welfare officer

## Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [school attendance guidance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#) (and [2010](#), [2011](#), [2013](#), [2016](#) amendments)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

## Roles and responsibilities

### *The local governing body*

- Monitors attendance figures for the academy
- Holds the Principal to account for the implementation of this policy

### *The Principal*

- Has overall responsibility for the implementation of the attendance policy
- Fosters a welcoming atmosphere and a safe learning environment in which children want to learn
- Monitors school-level absence data and reports it to governors
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

### *The Vice Principal (Safeguarding & Welfare)*

- Ensures the effective implementation of the attendance policy on a day-to-day basis
- Leads the academy's strategy to improve attendance and reduce persistent absence, including systems for intervention and reward

- Ensures a joined-up approach between the pastoral team, the attendance officer and the local authority attendance improvement officer
- Analyses patterns of attendance over time
- Advises the principal on when to issue fixed-penalty notices

#### *The Attendance Officer*

- Acts as the first point of contact for staff, students and parents in all matters relating to attendance
- Maintains accurate records for AM/PM session attendance and attendance to lessons
- Records the details of the reason provided by parents for any student being absent
- Sends a daily message to the parents of any students who have not arrived at school and for whom a reason for absence has not been provided
- Monitors registration marks throughout the day to identify anomalies and/or potential truancy
- Provides accurate daily attendance figures to the leadership team in a timely fashion
- Reports immediately to the vice principal (safeguarding and welfare) who is also the designated safeguarding lead any non-attendance that could pose a safeguarding concern
- Monitors student-level attendance data to identify attendance concerns and any patterns of non-attendance
- Administrates the academy's attendance intervention system, by sending letters, scheduling meetings and maintaining accurate records of student-level attendance interventions
- Liaises with the vice principal (safeguarding and welfare) and the pastoral team to improve attendance and reduce persistent absence

#### *The Pastoral Team (Heads of Year and Pastoral leaders)*

- Promotes and celebrates excellent attendance within their year groups
- Immediately draws to the attention of the attendance officer any information received relating to student absence
- Model excellent attendance and punctuality to their students

#### *Tutors*

- Take an accurate register straight away at the start of the day
- Promote and celebrate excellent attendance within their year groups
- Immediately draw to the attention of the attendance officer any information received relating to student absence
- Model excellent attendance and punctuality to their students

#### *Class teachers*

- Take an accurate register within the first 10 minutes of every lesson
- Inform the Attendance Officer and On Call if a student is absent from their lesson but had been marked present in earlier lessons
- Model excellent attendance and punctuality to their students

### Registration procedures

#### *Statutory registration (session marks)*

The academy records statutory registration marks at the beginning of the AM session and once during the PM session every day. The register for the AM session is taken at 08:30, by when students are expected to present, and it is kept open until 09:30. AM session marks are based on Tutor Time registers and are checked against Period 1 registers for accuracy. PM session marks are based on Period 4 registers.

For every session, every student will be recorded as being:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

For any students who arrive late,

- If the student arrives before the AM register closes, they will receive a 'L' mark. This counts as a present mark.
- If the student arrives after the AM register closes, they will receive a 'U' mark. This recognises the student as being in the building for practical purposes, but counts as an absent mark in law.

The academy uses the DfE attendance codes as outlined in Appendix 1.

Registration marks are retained for three years from the date on which they are recorded.

Once all AM registers have been completed each day, the Attendance Officer prints a copy of the fire registers and keeps these on a clipboard in the Attendance Office. This should be taken to the student assembly point in the event of the fire alarm sounding.

In accordance with the academy's business continuity plan, the Attendance Officer and the Vice Principal (Pastoral) each keep a hard copy of tutor group lists and emergency contact details. These can be used for paper-based registration in the event of a power outage or IT failure. The hard copies are stored securely and are updated once a half term by the Attendance Officer.

### *Class registers*

Class teachers must take an accurate register within the first 10 minutes of every lesson. Teachers must inform the Attendance Officer and On Call if a student is absent from their lesson but had been marked present in earlier lessons that day. If a teacher is unable to take the register on SIMS, they should take a 'paper register' and ask a student to take it to the Attendance Office.

### Unplanned absence

If a child is absent from school for an unplanned reason (e.g. illness), the parent/carer must notify the school by 08:30 on the first day of the absence by telephoning the main academy switchboard and following the directions for absence reporting.

The attendance officer will record absence due to illness as authorised unless the academy has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness. If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the academy may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. The academy will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily. If the academy is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this.

If a reason for absence hasn't been provided by 09:30, the following procedure will be followed until such time as contact with parents can be made:

Action	All students	Vulnerable students
1. Attendance Officer to send a text message and email asking parents to contact the academy	Day 1 onwards	Day 1 onwards
2. Attendance Officer to call the parents	Day 1 onwards	Day 1 onwards
3. Attendance Officer to inform the pastoral team	Day 2 onwards	Day 1 onwards
4. Attendance Officer to call the student's emergency contacts	Day 2 onwards	Day 1 onwards
5. Welfare manager to contact key worker/social worker	n/a	Day 1 onwards
6. Attendance Officer to inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead	Day 3	Day 2
7. Attendance/pastoral & Welfare Team to conduct a home visit	Day 3	Day 2
8. Report the case to the local authority as a Child Missing Education (CME)	Day 10	Day 10

Any of these actions can be brought forward if the academy has concerns about the safety of a child.

### **Planned absence**

Absence for the following reasons will be recorded as authorised, so long as a parent/carer informs the Attendance Officer in advance:

- Medical/dental appointments. (We encourage parents make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.)
- Religious observance (where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong).
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes

### ***Leave of absence***

Leave of absence for holidays or international travel is granted solely at the discretion of the Principal, and will only be granted in 'exceptional circumstances'. Each leave request will be considered on its individual merits, taking into account the relevant circumstances and context. All applications must be received by the academy at least three weeks before the intended period of leave. Travel arrangements should not be made until the leave request has been authorised by the Principal. If leave is taken without prior authorisation, consideration will be given to issuing a Fixed Penalty Notice to each parent.

### **Promoting excellent attendance**

The academy promotes excellent attendance in the following ways:

- by providing a caring and welcoming learning environment
- by responding promptly to a child's or parent's concerns about the academy or other students
- by publishing and displaying regularly-updated attendance statistics
- by celebrating good and improved attendance (e.g. certificates at termly Rewards Assemblies and at the annual academy Awards Evening)
- by monitoring students, informing parents/guardians in writing of irregular attendance, arranging meetings with them if necessary and referring the family to EWS if the irregular attendance continues.

### **Tackling poor attendance**

The Department for Education defines persistent absence as a student missing at least 10% of possible sessions (i.e. having attendance of 90% or below). This equates to missing half a day of school every week or missing a full day of school every fortnight. If sustained over a long period of time, 90% attendance is equivalent to missing four weeks of school every year or half a year of school between Year 7 and Year 11.

If a student's attendance drops below 93%, the student is at risk of becoming a persistent absentee. A meeting will be arranged between parents and a member of the pastoral and attendance team to discuss the nature and frequency of absences, and how the student's attendance can be improved. A letter will also be sent to the parents to explain that any future absences owing to illness will need to be supported by medical evidence.

If a student's attendance drops below 90%, the Attendance Manager meet with the parents to explore the reasons for absence in detail, to set improvement targets and to emphasise that parents have a legal obligation to ensure that their child attends school regularly.

Following a meeting with the Attendance Manager, if it is established that the poor attendance or punctuality cannot be justified in law and if there is not an immediate and significant improvement, legal proceedings will be commenced. This can take two forms:

- a) **Penalty notice:** The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice will take into account:
- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
  - One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
  - Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If issued with a penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority. If the payment is not made after 28 days, the local authority can decide to prosecute.

- (b) **Prosecution:** The academy will support the Education Welfare Officer in bringing a prosecution under Section 444 Education Act 1996, or in applying to the Family Proceedings Court for an Education Supervision Order. The maximum penalty on conviction for a first offence is £1000.00.

The academy would prefer to avoid such proceedings and encourages parents to work collaboratively with the academy's pastoral team and the education welfare officer.

A summary of the above approach to improving attendance, including the thresholds for the various levels of intervention, can be found in Appendix 2.

### **Lateness and punctuality**

The academy day starts at 08:30. Any students arriving after 08:30 will be classified as late. Any students arriving late between 08:30 and 08:45 should register with the attendance officer at the main entrance. Students arriving after this time should sign-in at reception.

Students arriving at the academy late will be expected to attend a 15 minute late detention at the end of the day.

If a student persistently arrives at the academy late, consideration will be given to the issue of a Fixed Penalty Notice in the sum of £50.00 or a referral to the education welfare officer for prosecution.

### **Removing a student from the academy's roll**

A student may only be removed from the academy's roll following authorisation from the Principal and only on one of the grounds prescribed in Regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended). The Attendance Officer will oversee the process for removing a student from the academy's roll and will prepare all documentation in relation to this (see Appendix 3).

If there are any safeguarding concerns, the Attendance Officer will defer to the Designated Safeguarding who will:

1. Inform the Principal of the safeguarding concerns before a decision is made as to whether to remove the student from the roll
2. Share all relevant information with the new school/local authority
3. Forward the Child Protection file to the new school/local authority
4. Archive the CPOMS record

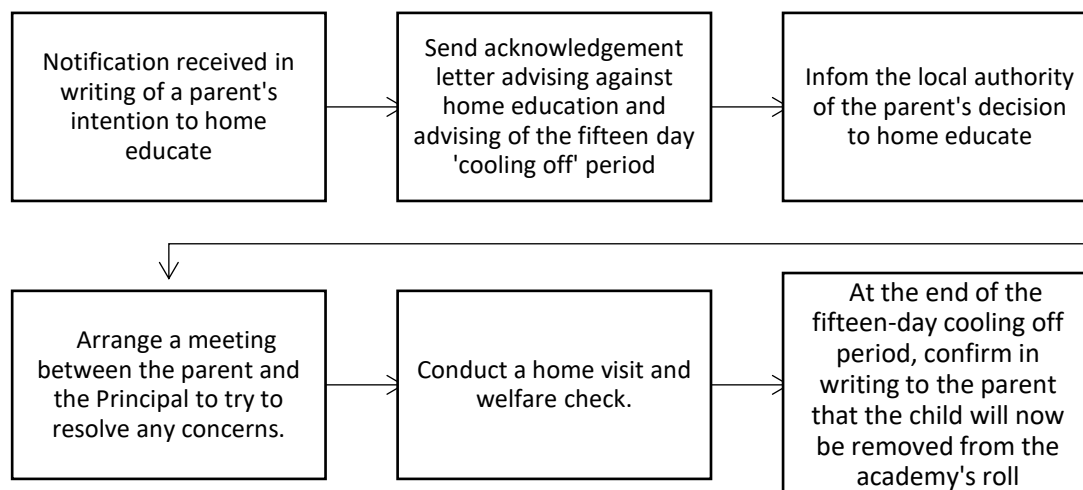
The Attendance Officer will always inform the local authority whenever a student is removed from the academy's roll. Whenever it is not confirmed as to where a child will continue receiving their education, the Admissions Officer will refer this to the local authority as a Child Missing in Education (CME)

All documentary evidence and communications relating to the removal of a student from the academy's roll will be retained by the Admissions Officer.

### ***Elective home education***

Although the academy recognises a parent's legal right to home educate their child, the academy will always

strongly advise against this. Whenever a parent notifies the academy of their intention to home educate their child, the following process will be followed:



### Safeguarding

Robust attendance procedures form a key part of effective safeguarding practice. The following aspects of the academy's attendance procedures help to ensure the safety of all students:

- The Attendance Officer is the central point of contact for all matters relating to attendance. The Attendance Officer liaises regularly with the pastoral team, the Vice Principal (Safeguarding and Welfare) and the local authority's Attendance Improvement Team.
- In every instance where a parent does not provide a reason for their child's unplanned absence by 09:30, the Attendance Officer will send an email and text message to the parent and then seek to contact them by telephone.
- In the event that a parent is still uncontactable on the third day of a student's absence, a home visit will be conducted
- For vulnerable students, the social worker will be informed on the first day of absence. If the parent is still uncontactable on the second day of a vulnerable student's absence, the DSL will be informed and a home visit will be conducted.
- If a child fails to attend school for ten days and the parents can't be contacted, the academy will report this to the local authority as a Child Missing in Education (CME).
- The support of the local authority's Education Welfare Officer is engaged to help improve the attendance of persistent absentees
- A student may only be removed from the academy's roll following authorisation from the Principal and only on one of the grounds prescribed in Regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended)
- The Admissions Officer will always inform the local authority whenever a student is removed from the academy's roll. Whenever it is not confirmed as to where a child will continue receiving their education, the Admissions Officer will refer this to the local authority as a Child Missing in Education (CME)



## Appendix 1 – Statutory Attendance Codes

### In 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 visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

### Authorised absence

Code	Definition	Scenario
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 a holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that 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 GCSEs
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school

### Unauthorised absence

Code	Definition	Scenario
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
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

### Administrative codes

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 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, for example, half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

## Appendix 2 – Thresholds for attendance intervention

% Attendance	Description	Interventions
100%	Excellent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Certificate awarded in the termly Rewards Assembly</li> <li>- Invitation to the annual Academy Awards Evening</li> </ul>
96% - 99.9%	Good	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Normal monitoring</li> </ul>
93% - 95.9%	Average	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Tutor phonecall home to reinforce the importance of good attendance</li> </ul>
90% - 92.9%	Cause for concern	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Fortnightly attendance monitoring (Review in AIG meetings)</li> <li>- Parental meeting arranged with a member of the pastoral team to explore the reasons for absence and to set a target for improvement</li> <li>- Letter home to explain that all future absences owing to illness must be supported by medical evidence</li> </ul>
Below 90%	Persistently absent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Referral to the Education Welfare Officer</li> <li>- Daily attendance monitoring (Students' name on the PA list for checking at the gate each morning)</li> <li>- Consideration given to a fixed penalty notice or prosecution, if there is not immediate and significant improvement</li> </ul>

### Appendix 3 – Removal of a student from the academy’s roll

Full name of student		Year Group	
Date of Birth		UPN	
Name of parent/carer		Telephone number	
Address (whilst in attendance at the academy)			
Number of exclusions		Total days of exclusion	
% attendance		Pupil Premium	Yes / No
SEND	Yes / No	LAC	Yes / No
Safeguarding concerns	Yes / No	If unsure, check with the Designated Safeguarding Lead If yes, the steps outlined overleaf must be followed	

Tick	Reason for Removal	Information required	Date to be removed from roll
	Transfer to a new school	Name of new school: Location: Confirmed start date:	The start date at the new school
	Education otherwise that at school e.g. Elective Home Education	Date of letter received from parent: Date of response letter sent by academy: Date the academy notified the LA: End of 15 day cooling off period:	The date that the initial letter was received from the parent
	Move to a new location that is not a reasonable distance to travel	New address:  Distance from the academy: Date of move:	The date of the move
	Permanent exclusion	Date of permanent exclusion: Date of end of appeal period:	The date of the permanent exclusion
	Death of a student	Date of death:	The date of the death
	In custody for more than four months	Date of being taken into custody: Date four months later:	The date of being taken into custody
	Certified medical condition prevents return to school before ending compulsory school-age	Date of medical evidence:	The date of the medical determination
	Failure to return 10 days after 10 days of holiday leave	Last date of holiday leave: Date 10 days later: Date reported to LA as CME:	The last date of holiday leave
	20 days of continuous unauthorised absence and the academy has undertaken all reasonable checks to locate.	Last date in school: Date 20 days later: Date of home visit: Date reported to LA as CME:	The last date in school

Principal	This student should be removed the academy’s roll with effect from:  .....	Admissions Officer	Date removed from roll: .....
	Signature: .....		Date LA notified: .....
			Signature: .....

**Evidence of all relevant communications must be appended to this form**

Safeguarding protocol

Nature of safeguarding concern(s)	
Share information with new school/LA (Append evidence)	Date of discussion with the new school/LA: Name of academy representative: Name of new school/LA representative:
Forward the Child Protection File (Append evidence)	Date of posting: Date of confirmed receipt: Name of receiver:
Archive records	Date of archiving the CPOMS record:
Sign-off by Designated Safeguarding Lead:	I am satisfied that all necessary steps have been taken to safeguard this student before removing them from the academy's roll:  Signature of DSL: _____ Date: _____