



Let Your Light Shine
Matthew 5:16

Attendance Policy, Implementation and Procedures	
This policy sits alongside the Safeguarding policy in the Team Drive, Policies, Non-curricular Policies.	
Policy Reviewed by: Full Governing Board	
Cycle of Policy Review: Annual (September)	Policy Ratified:

Background

Registered pupils of compulsory school age are required by law to be in school.

The Academy, in accordance with its values of friendship, respect, happiness, understanding, honesty and responsibility, recognises that regular attendance enables children to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. Furthermore, the Academy recognises that regular or persistent absence from school may be an indicator for child abuse. Monitoring of pupil attendance is essential in order to support children in being safe and realising their potential.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to support Academy staff in monitoring absence and acting upon frequent or persistent absence and supporting regular attendance, in order to keep children safe and enable access to all educational opportunities and structured progression in learning. Whilst The Academy recognises that individual pupils and families may experience difficulties; its aim is to achieve regular attendance. Where necessary staff will work together with parents and the Education Welfare Officer to achieve this aim.

Scope

This policy applies to all children on the Academy's register and all staff recording and monitoring absence.

Definitions and abbreviations

Authorised Absence: Authorised absence is where the Head Teacher has either given approval in advance for a pupil to be away or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as a valid reason for absence.

DDSL: Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

DSL: Designated Safeguarding Lead

Education Welfare Officer: Education Welfare Officers deal with issues that stop children from going to school.

Frequent absence: Attendance is between 90 and 95 %

Persistent absence: Attendance is below 90%

Policy

Attendance is monitored on a twice daily basis using classroom registers.

The home school agreement emphasises parental responsibility with regard to attendance and readiness for the school day.

All pupils must have more than one emergency contact number.

The Head Teacher ensures that any absence is accounted for.

The Head Teacher ensures that persistent absence is followed up with families. Conversations with families regarding absence are recorded in Confidential Safeguarding notes on Scholarpack and the impact reviewed at least weekly by the DSL and DDSL and at least monthly by the DSL/DDSL and the Chair of Governors.

The Academy identifies and records trends in absences, explanations of absences and actions taken to prevent potential risk to the child.

The Academy takes action in accordance with its Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy if a concern is identified.

The Governing Body reserves the right to issue a fixed term penalty where an absence is not authorised.

Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

Authorised absence

All absences should be justified by parents and approved by the Head Teacher if they are to count as authorised absences.

The following ***may be*** valid reasons for authorising absences:

- Illness which prevents attendance
- Family bereavements
- Medical and dental appointments where proof is available
- Days of religious observance
- Sporting events

Only in exceptional circumstances will other explanations be accepted as valid. For example, where the absence is judged to be of significant emotional or spiritual value that out-weighs the loss of teaching time. Each application will be considered on a case-by-case basis however any authorised absence is unlikely to exceed ten days. Previous attendance records will be taken into account. If a child's attendance for the previous year has been less than 95%, authorisation is unlikely.

All requests for authorised leave of absence should be received by the Academy in writing at least 5 working days prior to the start of the planned absence period.

The Academy will only authorise absence retrospectively on rare and unavoidable occasions if satisfied with the explanation offered.

The Academy is alert to emerging patterns of authorised absence that may disrupt continuity of learning.

Unauthorised Absence

All other absence must be regarded as **unauthorised**.

Absence of pupils for which no valid reason has been provided or which has not been approved by the Head Teacher, will be treated as unauthorised.

Pupils' Registration Regulations

A pupil's name may not be deleted from the attendance register unless all necessary safeguarding procedures have been followed and agreement has been reached with the Local Authority.

Roles and responsibilities

It is the responsibility of all staff working in the Academy to support attendance and to take problems seriously that may lead to non-attendance.

Parents

It is the parent's responsibility to inform the Academy as soon as possible of reasons for a child's absence. The Academy requires that on the first day of absence, the school office will be contacted by 9.15 am. Notification of absence may be by telephone, parental notes or personal contact. The Academy should be notified of the reason for absence and where it is a matter of being unwell, the nature of the illness and when the child is expected to return to school.

Class Teachers

If a child is absent without explanation, the teacher taking the register will advise the School Office as soon as the registers close at 9.20am and 1.15pm.

All absences are followed up immediately by the School Office if no explanation is received from an authorised contact by 9:30am at the latest on the first day of the absence.

The School Office

The School Office will advise the teachers in class if they have been contacted by parents/carers to say that the child will be absent.

Arrivals after 8.55am are recorded as late.

Arrivals after 9.20am, when the register is closed, are recorded as an unauthorised absence, subject to any valid reason being identified later.

The School Office will contact parents and carers to establish why the child is absent if no explanation has been presented.

The School Office will advise the Head Teacher if they cannot contact the absent child's parents or carers or if they have any other concern regarding the absence.

The Senior Leadership Team and Designated/Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads

The Senior Leadership Team and Designated Safeguarding Lead undertake a register scrutiny each weekly to identify patterns of absence and lateness which may be a cause for concern.

Children will be categorised as:

Categories	Severe Absence	At risk of severe Absence	Persistent Absence	At risk of Persistent Absence	Expected Attendance
Percentage of school sessions attended	0-50	51-79	80-90	91-94	95-100

Parents are made aware of their child's attendance in January regarding the previous term, Easter for the year to date, on the Mid-Year report and at the end of the year on the End of Year report (July). Where attendance or lateness is a cause for concern parents are notified in writing following scrutiny of the register by the Leadership Team.

If a child's attendance falls below 95%, their absence will be monitored each week until it improves. Parents of children with attendance below 90% or 5 or more incidents of lateness are written to by a member of the Leadership Team and if no improvement occurs invited to a meeting with the Head Teacher to discuss how attendance/lateness can be improved.

The Head Teacher

When parents have been written to with regard to concerns about attendance or lateness and where no improvement has been seen, the Head Teacher will meet with them to explore ways of improving attendance and punctuality.

If there is no improvement in attendance the Local Authority Attendance team will be contacted by the Head Teacher and consulted. This is to help parents and the Academy to meet their statutory obligation regarding school attendance.

Where there is an absence that is unexplained and no contact can be made with the family or close contacts, the Head Teacher will make a home visit accompanied by another member of staff and/or report their concern for the child's safety to the Police and/or Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP) according to the circumstances.

Authorised and unauthorised absences will be reported annually in the school website.

The Governing Board

Authorised and unauthorised absences will be reported annually in the governors' Annual Report.

