



ATTENDANCE POLICY

Introduction

This Academy is a member of the Active Learning Trust (ALT) and all our Academy policies reflect the ALT vision of working in collaboration to facilitate participation and learning for all. The Academy demands the highest standards of attendance from all our students so they may develop their full potential during their time at Academy. It is our aim to maintain a culture of excellence, attendance and punctuality. Missing out on education has a significant effect on students' life opportunities. Everyone associated with the Academy – students, parents, all teaching and support staff and external agencies must do all in their power to ensure that excellent attendance and punctuality are an integral part of the Academy's work. We are committed to providing an education of the highest standards for all our students and endeavour to provide an environment where all students feel valued and welcome. Parents and students play a part in making our Academy so successful. Parents and teachers share the responsibility for supporting and promoting excellent Academy attendance and punctuality. It is our duty to consistently strive to achieve a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to students and their parents/carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance. For our children to take full advantage of the educational opportunities offered, it is vital your child is at the Academy, on time, every day the Academy is open unless the reason for absence is unavoidable. The routines children develop around attendance and punctuality at the Academy are the same as the expectations of any future employer in the world of work. High attainment, confidence with peers and staff and achieving further aspirations all depend on good attendance and we thank you for supporting us in to achieving the highest possible levels of attendance.

1. Statement of Intent

- 1.1. The Academy aims to work together with Parents/Carers to ensure that all students registered at the Academy attend both regularly and punctually.
- 1.2. The purpose of these procedures is to provide a framework for the registration of all students, including those with disabilities and/or specific needs, so that they can take full advantage of the educational opportunities available and also, to ensure that the structure of the Academy day provides the best possible framework for teaching and learning.
- 1.3. Registers are legal documents and must be completed accurately and kept in a safe place in case of legal proceedings or an emergency. They must be retained and made available if required for three years.

2. Parents/Carers' Responsibilities

- 2.1 As parent/carer(s) it is your legal responsibility, as stated under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996, to ensure that your child attends the Academy at which he/she is registered regularly and punctually.
- 2.2 Parents/Carers should ensure that if their child is to be absent from Academy for any unavoidable reasons such as sickness, they should contact the Academy as soon as possible, but no later than **9.00am**, on the first morning of absence. Contact can be made by either: emailing office@leacademy.org, sending a text via Academy gateway, or leaving a message on 01353 223300 (Option 2 to report a child's absence).
- 2.3 Parents/Carers should ensure that their child arrives at the Academy in time for the start of registration **8.30am** and **12:10pm**. If a child arrives later than 8.50am and 12.15pm they should report directly to the Academy office so that they can be registered as present as part of or safeguarding arrangements. **Lateness is monitored and will be recorded as unauthorised if a child arrives after the times set out above.**
- 2.4 We are keen to ensure that we promote the highest attendance possible for all our young people as this is a fundamental life skill that will ensure young people's future success. Not only is it vital that our young people establish the very best habits and routines to ensure their success as future employees but there is also very clear

national data that clearly shows the impact that poor attendance has on young people achieving the best possible outcomes and educational achievements. In short, if children are not at the Academy we cannot teach them, and this will affect their academic achievement at all levels. As a result of this we are taking a very firm and consistent view when parents seek permission for an absence from Academy for their child due to circumstances other than genuine illness. All parents can expect that all requests from parents seeking permission for leave of absence for their child will be refused and therefore unauthorised. Permission may be sought where there are exceptional circumstances such as attending the funeral of a close family relative. An 'Absence Request Form' should be completed for all absences and can be obtained from the Academy office.

3. Academy Responsibilities

- 3.1 The Academy will record and monitor attendance in accordance both with the statutory requirements and with the principle that regular, uninterrupted attendance is vital to a child's educational progress.
- 3.2 Registers will be called twice daily at 8:30am and 12:10pm. Registers will close at 8:35am, should a child arrive between 08.35-08.50am they will be marked with an 'L' for late, should a child arrive after 08.50am they will be marked with a 'U' as unauthorised (arriving after registers close). Should a child arrive after 12:15pm again they will be marked with an 'L'. Five consecutive L's and U's over a term will result in a Restorative Intervention meeting for students.
- 3.3 Teachers will complete registers in accordance with the guidance contained in the register. Registers are reviewed with EWO (Education Welfare Office) whose responsibility is attendance, at regular intervals.
- 3.4 Should a class teacher have particular concerns about an individual child's attendance or punctuality, **their** concerns should be brought to the Deputy Head.
- 3.5 If a child is absent the office staff will enter the appropriate code in the register. If no explanation has been received by **9.00am** from the child's Parents/Carers then, on safe guarding grounds, the Academy will endeavour to make contact with the parent which will result in an automatic unauthorised absence. The Academy will contact **all** emergency phone numbers, and should no contact or explanation be made, the Academy may follow up with a home visit. If a home visit fails to resolve the situation, the Academy will phone the police and social worker (if one has been appointed to the family).
- 3.6 The Deputy Head and Attendance Officer will regularly collect attendance data and will use this data during meetings with the Academy's Education Welfare Officer (EWO). These meetings will agree on attendance thresholds and targets and will identify respective tasks and follow-up actions for both the Academy and the EWO. The DfE deem 90% or less attendance will be classified as a persistent absentee pupil. Where absence falls below acceptable levels, the Academy will require evidence, medical or otherwise for any illness or other absence from Academy.
- 3.7 The Academy will employ a number of strategies to promote regular, punctual attendance:
 - The Deputy Head and class teachers will communicate regularly with Parents/Carers on attendance matters;
 - Appropriate personal encouragement or congratulation will be offered to individual children and classes;
 - Clear attendance information will be entered on the Academy's website
 - Local Authority Parents/Carers leaflets will be sent to all new Parents/Carers.

REWARD OF GOOD ATTENDANCE

To promote and reinforce high attendance the Academy awards the following:

- 100% attendance certificate for every half term, celebrated as the '100 Club'. (5 positive GO4School points awarded)
- Special certificate for 100% attendance for a full year

INTERVENTION FOR FALLING ATTENDANCE

- Letter 1 (EWO1) – official notification of fall in attendance issued in partnership with Cambridgeshire County Council guidelines.
- Letter 2 (EWO2) – official notification of continued fall in attendance issued in partnership with Cambridgeshire County Council guidelines. In this letter parents/carers will receive notification that future absences will be unauthorised unless supported medical evidence. Medical evidence can include appointment letters or cards, copy of prescription or medication box. . In this letter parents/carers will be required to attend a meeting to discuss concerns with regard to attendance.
- Letter 3 (EWO3) – official notification of extended fall in attendance issued in partnership with Cambridgeshire County Council guidelines. Parents/Carers will also be informed of the risk of receiving a Penalty Notice if the attendance does not improve.

DEFINITIONS

Authorised Absence

- An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from the Academy for a legitimate, acceptable reason and the Academy, has received an appropriate notification from the parent/carer. For example, should a child be unwell and the parent/carer writes a note of explanation and/or telephones the Academy to explain the reason for absence.
- Only the Head of Academy or a properly designated member of staff may authorise any absence. Parents do not have the authority to do so. Consequently, not all absence supported by parents will be classified as authorised.

Unauthorised Absence

- An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from the Academy without the permission of both the Academy and the parent/carer or if the child is away from the Academy without good reason even with the support of a parent/carer (e.g. shopping or a birthday). Holidays taken within the Academy term (except in exceptional circumstances agreed by the Head of Academy) will be deemed as unauthorised absence. The expectation of the Local Authority is that term time holidays should not be planned or booked as they are likely to lead to the issuing of a penalty notice. Parents/carers who take their children on unauthorised, term time holidays or whose child is persistently absent over a given period, may be issued with a penalty notice or subject to court proceedings for failing to ensure their child's regular Academy attendance under section 444 of the Education Act 1996.
- **Any parent who takes a child out of Academy for term time leave for 6 consecutive sessions (3 days) or more over a 4 week period, not authorised by the Academy (under exceptional circumstances rule), may receive a Penalty Notice.** Therefore Penalty Notices will be issued for single event absences of at least 3 consecutive Academy days or more where these absences are unauthorised because they are neither exceptional nor unavoidable. The absences must be recorded with a 'G' code in the attendance register. Such cases will have to be supported by evidence of parents being warned about a potential Penalty Notice. In our Academy, the Head of Academy's decision not to authorise a holiday at the bottom of the special leave of absence form, will serve as the penalty warning.

Parents of persistent absentees may also be given a penalty notice.

The fine for a Penalty Notice is £120 per parent, per child, if paid within 28 days. This reduces to £60 if paid within 21 days. If a Penalty Notice remains unpaid, parents may be the subject of court proceedings for failing to ensure the regular Academy attendance of their child(ren), which could result in a fine of up to £2,500 and/or a term of imprisonment of up to 3 months (per parent).

- Exceptional circumstances will be considered on an individual basis but the following will not meet the criteria: - Cheaper holidays in England or abroad, visiting family, friends who have different half term holiday dates, family weddings for more than 2 days or visits to see family abroad, relatives coming to visit.