

“Together in Achievement”



# ATTENDANCE POLICY

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Lead author:	David Maddison, Executive Headteacher
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# Attendance Policy

## Introduction

Each Academy within the Aspire Partnership (Multi-Academy Trust) is committed to providing a full and efficient education to all pupils and embraces the concept of equal opportunities for all.

We will endeavor to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome.

For a child to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance is essential. We will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

Academy attendance is subject to various Education laws and this school attendance policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by the Department for Education.

Each year the school will examine its attendance figures and set attendance/absence targets. These will reflect both national and local attendance targets.

The Academy will review its systems for improving attendance at regular intervals to ensure that it is achieving its set goals.

This policy will contain within it the procedures that the school will use to meet its attendance targets.

Teachers should use their common sense in approaching pupils' attendance, absence and lateness, remembering that, within a rigorous approach, our systems are established to help children and families, not undermine or irritate them.

## Achieving Equality

Our approach to positive attendance is part of our general whole Academy and Aspire MAT approach and organisation which ensures equality of opportunity and that we are meeting or exceeding the challenges of the 2010 Equalities Act.

## Link to Aspire/Academy Values and Ethos

Attendance is encouraged and achieved within the positive and spirited ethos generated through our Core Purpose of Profound Personal Development, delivered through our Guiding Principles, especially that we are a 'Take Care School' and 'Together in Achievement', within a Culture of Opportunity (that makes school an exciting and motivating place to be a part of, rather than apart from) and a day to day Climate of Participation (i.e. 'Take part!').

## Academy Procedures

Any child who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity [attendance out of school]. Only the Headteacher or a member of staff acting on their behalf can authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence must be recorded as unauthorised until authorisation is achieved.

Before an absence is permanently recorded as unauthorised it must be brought to the attention of the Executive Headteacher and/or Head of School.

### a. Lateness

Morning registration will take place at the start of school at 8:40am (St. Peter's), 9am (Archbishop Cranmer). The registers will remain open for 30 minutes. Any pupil arriving after this time will be marked as having an unauthorised absence unless there is an acceptable explanation i.e. school transport was delayed. In cases for example, where the

absence at registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate authorised absence code will be entered.

Registers in the afternoon will also close 30 minutes after registration.

Pupils arriving after the start of school but before the end of the registration period will be treated for statistical purposes, as present, but will be coded as late before registers close.

#### **b. First Day Absence**

Families of children who are absent are encouraged to contact their Academy office first thing in the morning, as early as possible.

If this does not happen the parent(s) of an absent child is contacted (e.g. by phone) to ensure everything is all right.

Information is passed on by the office staff to relevant teachers to enable them to fill in their registers appropriately.

The Office Manager may alter or add to registers if she has information that has been incorrectly entered into a register.

#### **c. Third Day Absence**

Parents are asked to contact school to provide updates as to their child's health or to check in on the ongoing reason.

#### **d. Continuing Absence**

The Executive Headteacher, Head of School or their delegated representative is informed. A letter or direct contact or both may be initiated.

#### **e. Ten Days Absence (Legal Requirement)**

Any pupil who is absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive days will be referred to the Children's Services Attendance Team. Each Academy will include details of the action that they have taken.

#### **f. Frequent Absence**

Aspire and its Academies are aware that frequent absence, e.g. a day a week is a significant indicator of concern and will always be acted upon.

It is the responsibility of the teacher and Business Manager to be aware of, and bring attention to, any emerging attendance concerns, notifying Senior Leadership.

In cases where a pupil begins to develop a pattern of absences, the school will try to resolve the problem with the parent/s. If this is unsuccessful the school will refer to the School Health Adviser/School Nurse if the problem appears to be a medical one. In other cases Academies will seek advice from the Attendance Improvement Officer (AIO).

#### **g. Welcome Back**

Wherever possible and reasonable pupils returning from absence of any length will be helped to catch up with both their work and any general information they may have missed.

### **Provision of work during absence**

On occasions children who are off long term for serious or unavoidable reasons (e.g. medical), may be provided with extra work at home, to be undertaken with a parent. However, in general this provision will not be available for shorter term absence.

## **Absence notes**

Notes received from parents explaining absence should be kept for the remainder of the academic year. If there are attendance concerns about the pupil, that may require further investigation, then the notes may need to be retained for a longer period.

## **Promoting and Reporting Attendance**

Academies will use opportunities as they arise to remind parents/carers, that it is their responsibility to ensure that their children receive their education.

The Home/School Agreement, set out in children's Work Diaries, is used to emphasise this.

Attendance is communicated to parents in children's termly reports and praised by the Executive Head/Head of School as appropriate.

## **Holidays in term time**

In line with Government policy parents will be informed that holidays during term time are to be discouraged and that such absences (except in 'exceptional circumstances') will no longer be authorised. Parents will be reminded of the effect that absence can have on a pupil's potential achievement.

However, Aspire believes it is counter-productive to introduce a punitive system of fining families who take 'unauthorised' holidays in term time, as the breakdown in relationships that this could cause between Home and Academy could affect parents' positive view towards and valuing of school with potential serious consequences to a child's education.

The definition of 'exceptional circumstances' in this respect will be decided by the Executive Head or Head of School (e.g. Family who live away being ill).

## **Attendance Awards**

The very best attendance is always encouraged. The vibrant and spirited life of the school, which drives a culture of opportunity will motivate children to want to be at school. Praise for excellent attendance is given as are any rewards as appropriate. Currently the school does not feel it needs to operate a specific system of rewards/awards attached to attendance.

## **Attendance Targets**

The school will set attendance targets each year. These targets are monitored by the Head Teacher, who reports to governors, on a termly and yearly basis. Classes and individuals are monitored separately against this.

Our current official target for absence is below 4% year on year for all Academies.

## Appendix 1

**The Registration System**

The school uses manual paper registers which are then transferred via the school office onto a computerized system for keeping the school attendance records.

The following national codes are used to record attendance information.

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
D	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)	Approved Education Activity
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
X	Untimetabled sessions for non-compulsory school-age pupils	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendances

Staff are reminded of the school's systems at the beginning of the academic year and as appropriate.

Registers by law must be kept for at least 3 years.

Entries in paper registers must be in ink.

All corrections must be visible (no correcting fluid is allowed).

The school Office Manager organizes the transfer of attendance data from manually recorded class registers to our computerized SIMS system. This allows for more rigorous tracking and analysis.

### **Register Security**

The registers are safely stored in classrooms or the School Office. At the end of each year registers are archived.

## Appendix 2

### **The Law**

The Education Act 1996 Part 1, Section 7 states:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable

[a] To his age, ability and aptitude and

[b] To any special needs he may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

For educational purposes the term parent is used to include those that have parental responsibility and/or those that have the day to day care of the child.

The legislation that appertains to children who are of compulsory school age and are registered at school is contained within this Act.

Part V1 Section 444 contains the details of when an offence is committed if a child fails to attend school.

### **Register and Admission Roll keeping.**

The legal requirements are found in:

The Education [Pupil Registration] (England) Regulations 2006

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## Appendix 3

### **Categorisation of Absence**

Any pupil who is on roll but not present in the school must be recorded within one of these categories.

1. Unauthorised Absence
2. Authorised Absence
3. Approved Educational Activity

#### **1. Unauthorised absence**

This is for those pupils where no reason has been provided, or whose absence is deemed to be without valid reason.

#### **2. Authorised absence**

This is for those pupils who are away from school for a reason that is deemed to be valid under the Education Act 1996.

#### **3. Approved Educational Activity**

This covers types of supervised educational activity undertaken off site but with the approval of the school.

Note Pupils recorded in this category are deemed to be present for attendance returns purposes.

Any questions over this definition should be referred to the Headteacher.

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