

Register of Students' Attendance Policy

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Attleborough Academy is committed to providing a full and appropriate education to all students and embraces the concept of equal opportunities for all.
- 1.2 We will endeavour to provide an environment where all students feel valued, safe and welcome.
- 1.3 For a child to reach their full educational achievement, a high level of attendance is essential. We will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to students and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.
- 1.4 Academy attendance is subject to various Education laws and the Attleborough Academy Register of Students and Attendance Policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by the Department for Education and Skills (please see Appendix 1).
- 1.5 Each year, the Academy will examine its attendance figures and set attendance/absence targets (please see Appendix 2).

2. POLICY AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 2.1 This policy will contain within it the procedures that the Academy will use to meet its attendance targets.
- 2.2 The Academy will review its systems for improving attendance at regular intervals to ensure that it is achieving its set goals

3. SCOPE

- 3.1 This is a 'Part 2 Attleborough Academy Policy in Practice'. As such, it provides the protocol to be followed by Attleborough Academy Norfolk acting on the Part 1 Norfolk Academies Multi-Academy Trust Policy:

Register of Students' Attendance

- . Part 2 policies state the procedure followed by the individual institutions relating to this policy.

4. ATTENDANCE TEAM MEETINGS

- 4.1 The SAFE Team monitors all attendance levels. Any student who records an attendance level below 95% will be discussed by the Academy Attendance Team. The team makes decisions in relation to letters sent home (two levels), phone calls home, and visits from SAFE Outreach Workers and referrals to Attendance or Medical Panels. The Academy will meet the County representative Attendance Support and Enforcement Officer (ASEO) to decide on Fixed Penalty Warning letters and Fast Tracks.

5. ACADEMY PROCEDURES

- 5.1 Any child who is absent from the Academy at the morning registration period must have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity (attendance out of the Academy).

Only the Principal or a member of staff acting on their behalf can authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at morning registration then the absence must be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised.

6. LATENESS

- 6.1 Morning registration will take place at the start of Academy day at 08.40. The registers will remain open for twenty minutes. Any student arriving after this time will be marked as having an unauthorised absence unless there is an acceptable explanation (i.e. Academy transport was delayed). In cases where the absence at registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate authorised absence code will be entered.
- 6.2 Students arriving after the start of the Academy day but before the end of the registration period will be treated as present but will be coded as 'L' (late before registers close). If a student is late after registration (09.00) without a good reason, a 'U' code will be used this code reduces the student's attendance so can result in further action. Lateness will be monitored daily by the SAFE Team and repeat offenders dealt with.

7. SIGNING IN AND OUT

- 7.1 If students arrive late to registration period, they must use the 'late gate' which is monitored by a member of the SAFE Team. All student 'lates' are recorded. For the first offence, a warning is given, for the second, corresponding time at lunch and breaks are taken and thirdly, the student may be put on report and the parents or carers are informed.
- 7.2 A number of students attend college on alternative curriculum provision each week. There is a designated member of staff responsible for taking a register of all students who are on the relevant college bus. The SAFE Team adds the information to the normal Academy registration system and follows up absences in accordance with Academy policy. Students are registered on their college courses and any absences are reported by the college by telephone or by email to the academy.
- 7.3 If any student in Years 7 to 11 needs to leave whilst the Academy is still in session, the student must sign out at Student Reception. The student must print and sign their name in the signing out book and after verifying the student's identity as shown on SIMS, a member of the Academy Office will countersign the entry made by the student in order to verify the identity of the student. Students will only be allowed to sign out with their parents' or carers' permission which should be provided in writing or by telephone. No student will be permitted to sign out without this permission.

- 7.4 Parental/carer permission is not sought for Sixth Form students when they sign out as they are not of compulsory school age. Those Sixth Form students who attend Wymondham College are signed on the bus by the driver.

8. FIRST DAY ABSENCE

- 8.1 Parents and carers are expected to contact the Academy on the first day of their child's absence and provide a reason for their non-attendance at the Academy. Preferably, this will be notified to the Academy by using the Student Absence Line but we will also accept parent or carer notes handed in at either the Academy's Visitors' Reception or via the Form Tutor through the register.

If no contact has been made by the parents or carers the SAFE Team will attempt to contact the child's parents or carers by Group Call. The aim is to achieve this by 10.30 at the latest.

- 8.2 The information obtained from the child's parents or carers will be recorded in the comment box of the School Information Management System (SIMS). In the comment box, the SAFE Team will record a brief reason for the absence and will add their initials to verify the information added to the student's attendance record.

9. SUBSEQUENT ABSENCES

- 9.1 Each subsequent day of absence (unless otherwise formally advised of long term absence by the parent or carer) will be treated the same as the first day of absence i.e. the SAFE Team will attempt to contact the child's parents or carers by telephone by 10.30 via Group Call.

- 9.2 If there is no contact from the parent or carer within two days of absence, a standard letter will be posted home by the SAFE Team asking the parents or carers to provide a reason for said absence. The SAFE Team must raise a concern with the Inclusion Centre Manager who will decide how to proceed. This is in conjunction with daily Group Call messages.

9.3 Continuing Absence

A Group Call is sent daily and after two days, a letter is sent home to verify absence.

If no reason has been proved after five days, a telephone call will be made to the student's home.

9.4 Ten Day's Absence

Any student who is absent, without an explanation, for ten consecutive days will be notified to the Local Authority by submitting a referral to the Children's Services Attendance Team. **This is a legal requirement.** The Academy will include details of the action that they have taken.

9.5 Frequent Absence

It is the responsibility of Form Tutors and the SAFE Team to be aware of and bring attention to any emerging attendance concerns to the Inclusion Centre Manager.

In cases where a student begins to develop a pattern of absence, the Academy will try to resolve the problem with the parents or carers. This is the responsibility of the Inclusion Centre Manager who may initially delegate responsibility to the SAFE Team. The Academy will seek advice from the ASEO when needed.

10. MEDICAL CONCERNS

- 10.1 If any student is absent from Academy due to illness, a letter must be provided by their parents or carers.

Prolonged absence due to medical reasons will require medical evidence (i.e. a doctor's note, hospital appointment card, prescription etc).

If diagnosed medical reasons significantly affect a student's attendance, the Academy may initiate a 'Medical Attendance Support Panel'.

Medical Attendance Support Panel

Students with diagnosed medical conditions whose attendance level is 92% may be invited, with their parents or carers to attend a Medical Attendance Support Panel meeting. The Academy Attendance team will meet to discuss any ways in which the student may be supported by the Academy in order to improve their attendance level.

The aim of the meeting is to ensure that the Academy is doing everything it can to support the student.

All Medical Attendance Support Panel meetings will take place with the child's parent or carer in attendance. If the parent or carer declines to attend, the Academy would pass the information to the ASEO where a decision can be made on further action.

11. ATTENDANCE PANEL/FAST TRACK

- 11.1 Any student with a level of below 92% attendance can be subject to an Attendance Panel referral. The panel will examine the reasons for the absence and develop strategies for improving the student's attendance. The student's attendance will be reviewed every four weeks until significant improvement in their attendance level is achieved.
- 11.2 If any student who has been referred to the Attendance Panel continues to record a decline in attendance, they will be subject to the Fast Track process which will be initiated by the Academy. This process will fast track the parents or carers of persistent absentees to court to consider legal proceedings if the attendance does not improve.
- 11.3 Students under 85% overall, or 15% unauthorised absences over a six week period or five days (ten sessions) consecutive without justification, may be referred to the ASEO for possible Fast Track or fixed penalty notice fine.

12. A WELCOME BACK

12.1 It is important that on return from an absence that all students are made to feel welcome. This is the responsibility of the Form Tutor. The student should be brought up to date on any information that has been passed to the other students by the Form Tutor. If required, the Form Tutor will involve the House Leader who will provide support to help the student catch up on missed work.

13. ABSENCE NOTES

13.1 If a written note explaining the child's absence has been received by the Form Tutor, it must be put in the register so the SAFE Team can mark absence correctly. If a note has been written into the Student Planner, the Form Tutor must send the child to Student Reception in order that the entry can be copied and passed to the SAFE Team. Notes from parents and carers will be kept on file and may be used for further investigation if required.

14. PROMOTING ATTENDANCE

14.1 The Academy will use opportunities as they arise to remind parents and carers and that it is their responsibility to ensure that their children attend the Academy.

The Home Academy Agreement is an example of this.

15. HOLIDAYS IN TERM TIME

15.1 Holidays during term time are discouraged. If applied for, parents and carers are reminded of the effect that absence can have on their child's potential achievement. Holiday requests will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances.

15.2 If parents or carers are applying for a leave of absence, they must ensure that a Student Leave of Absence form and supporting letter is submitted to the Principal at least two weeks before the date that the leave of absence relates to. They must not assume permission is granted if they have not received written confirmation.

15.3 The Principal and the Inclusion Centre Manager will consider every application individually; our policy is **not** to grant leave of absence for any reason other than in the **most exceptional circumstances**.

An exceptional circumstance is much more likely to be a one off, unique situation such as a parent, grandparent or other close relative being seriously ill; there may have been a recent significant trauma in the family or the absence might be a unique, one off never to be repeated occasion which can only take place at the time requested.

We will however, also **consider** leave of absence for the following exceptional circumstances:

- Service personnel and other employees who are prevented from taking holidays during term-time;

- When a family needs to spend time together to support each other during or after a crisis;
- Parents and carers who are subject to a strict and un-negotiable holiday rota and evidence is provided to this effect.

Requests for leave of absence for the following reasons **cannot and will not** be authorised:

- If your child is in a public examination year group (Year 11 or Year 13);
- Because a holiday is cheaper during term time;
- Poor weather experienced in school holiday periods;
- Holidays which overlap with the beginning or end of term (even if dates are booked in error or by another member of family).

15.4 If parents or carers are requesting Student Leave of Absence for more than one child, they must complete an application for each child.

15.5 Parent and carers will receive a fixed penalty notice (fine) for holidays that are taken when not authorised.

16. ATTENDANCE AWARDS

16.1 Good attendance will be rewarded with certificates termly. The top form in the Academy is awarded the weekly 'Top Dog' prize. At the end of the Academy year, badges will be given to individual students with 100% attendance for the year. Form groups with the best termly attendance are rewarded with a non-uniform day.

17. THE REGISTRATION SYSTEM

17.1 The Academy uses a computerised system (SIMS) for keeping the Academy's attendance records. The following national codes will be used to record attendance information.

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
I	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Off-site educational activity	Approved Education Activity
C	Leave of absence authorised by the school	Authorised absence
D	Dual registered (at another educational establishment)	Approved Education Activity
E	Excluded (but no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
G	Holiday (not authorised by the school or in excess of the period determined by the Headteacher)	Unauthorised absence
H	Holiday agreed by the school	Authorised absence
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview (prospective employers or another educational establishment)	Approved Education Activity
L	Late arrival (before the register has closed)	Present
M	Medical or dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	Reason for absence not yet provided	Unauthorised absence
O	Absent from school without authorization	Unauthorised absence
P	Participating in a supervised sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Unauthorised absence

V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
X	Not required to be in school	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	Not counted in possible attendance
Z	Student not on admission register	Not counted in possible attendance
#	Planned whole or partial school closure	Not counted in possible attendance

Source: *DfE School Attendance (Departmental advice for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities) October 2015.*

17.2 Registers are electronically backed-up on a daily basis and kept for ten years. Paper registers will only be used in exceptional circumstances (e.g. computer failure) and entries will be entered onto SIMS as soon as possible by the SAFE Team. Entries in paper registers must be in ink. All corrections must be visible (no correcting fluid).

Register Security

Paper registers are kept in a secure place in the Academy Office. It is the Form Tutor's responsibility to collect and return paper copies of registers to the Academy Office.

APPENDIX 1: THE LAW

1. The Law

The Education Act 1996 Part 1, Section 7 states:

Duty of parents to secure education of children of compulsory school age

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 educational 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 [Student Registration] (England) Regulations 2006

2. Categorisation of Absence

Any student who is on roll but not present in the Academy must be recorded within one of these categories:

a) Unauthorised Absence

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

b) Authorised Absence

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

c) Approved Educational Activity

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

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

This would include:

- Work experience placements
- Field trips and educational visits
- Sporting activities
- Link courses or approved education off site
- Most types of dual registration

APPENDIX 2: ATTENDANCE TARGETS

1. Attendance Targets

The Academy will set attendance targets each year. A system for analysing performance towards the targets will be established and a senior Academy Manager will be responsible for overseeing this work.

Academy Target

2013/2014:	94.0%
2014/2015:	94.0%
2015/2016:	95.0%

Persistent Absence Target

2013/2014:	4.5%
2014/2015:	4.5%
2015/2016:	4.5%



APPENDIX 3: STUDENT LEAVE OF ABSENCE FORM (EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCE APPLICATION)

Amendments to School Attendance Regulations

The **Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006** previously allowed Headteachers to grant leave of absence for the purpose of a family holiday during term time in “special circumstances” of up to ten school days leave per year.

Amendments to the 2006 regulations remove references to family holidays and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. The amendments make clear that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Headteachers may determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

Term Time Holiday

You are required under the Education Act (1996) to ensure your child attends the Academy regularly. The Academy **should not** authorise absences if they believe it is to the detriment of a student's education or if the absences are during school exam periods. National statistics show that just ten days absence (i.e. including illness) in any academic year does have a negative effect on attainment. Even if leave of absence is granted, schools are not obliged to provide work for students taking leave of absence.

The Principal and the Inclusion Centre Manager will consider every application individually; our policy is **not** to grant leave of absence for any reason other than in the **most exceptional circumstances**.

An exceptional circumstance is much more likely to be a one off, unique situation such as a parent, grandparent or other close relative is seriously ill; there may have been a recent significant trauma in the family or the absence might be a unique, one off never to be repeated occasion which can only take place at the time requested.

We will however, **consider** leave of absence for the following exceptional circumstances:

- Service personnel and other employees who are prevented from taking holidays during term-time;
- When a family needs to spend time together to support each other during or after a crisis;
- Parents and carers who are subject to a strict and un-negotiable holiday rota and evidence is provided to this effect.

Requests for leave of absence for the following reasons **cannot and will not** be authorised:

- If your child is in a public examination year group (Year 11 or Year 13);
- Because a holiday is cheaper during term time;
- Poor weather experienced in Academy holiday periods;
- Holidays which overlap with the beginning or end of term (even if dates are booked in error or by another member of family).

If you are applying for leave of absence, please ensure that a Student Leave of Absence Form and supporting letter is submitted to the Principal at least two weeks before the date that the leave of absence relates to. Please do not assume permission is granted if you have not received written confirmation.

If, on reflection, you consider that your circumstances are exceptional and you would still like to make an application for leave of absence for your child then please complete the form overleaf. If you are requesting Student Leave of Absence for more than one child, please complete an application for each child.

Application for Student Leave of Absence (EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCE APPLICATION)

Please remember, taking your child out of the Academy during term time is likely to be detrimental to your child's educational progress.

Full Name of Child: _____

Year Group: _____ House: _____ Form Group: _____

Address: _____

Leave Requested From: _____ To: _____

Total number of Academy Days: _____

Please explain the exceptional circumstances which form the basis of your application for leave of absence **in a separate letter** to the Principal and attach it to this form.

I/We have read the information on the reverse of this application and attach my/our letter of application which explains the exceptional circumstances for which this request is made.

Signature of Parent(s)/Carer(s) _____

Date: _____

The Principal and the Inclusion Centre Manager will consider your request for leave of absence as explained overleaf. Please remember that requests for leave of absence for the following reasons **cannot and will not** be authorised:

- If your child is in a public examination year group (Year 11 or Year 13);
- Because a holiday is cheaper during term time;
- Poor weather experienced in Academy holiday periods;
- Holidays which overlap with the beginning or end of term (even if dates are booked in error or by another member of family).

For Office Use Only

STR:	NA	SPH	FIN	PCHR	EC	Attendance Report Attached (if below 85%)
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STC:	Current Attendance: %
	Previous Attendance: %

STS:	Date:
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PD:	NA	SPH	FIN	PCHR	EC	Date:
PS:						Date Letter Sent Home:

Retain the original signed and completed forms in Academy attendance records and ensure a letter is sent to the parent/carer of the student to confirm authorisation or non-authorisation of the leave of absence requested.