

# Attendance Policy



*Believe, Succeed, Together*

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## 1.0 Attendance Policy

### 1.1 Academy Target

The Academy's target for all pupils is to achieve an attendance of **96%+** to afford them the best opportunity to fulfil their potential.

To achieve the Academy's target attendance, pupils should have no more than 7 days absence during the whole academic year.

Attendance %	Description
96+	This is not a cause for concern and is in line with the Academy's expectations.
92 – 95.9	This is a cause for concern and is below what the Academy expects.
Under 92	This is a major cause for concern and is significantly below what the Academy expects. All attendance under 92%, without medical evidence, will be classed as 'unauthorised' and will be reported to the Local Authority. This may lead to a Penalty Notice (fine) or prosecution.

Attendance %	Number of Days Absent	Approximate Number of Weeks absent
100	0	0
96	7	1.5
95	9	2
90	19	4
85	29	6
80	38	8
70	57	12

### 1.2 Parental Role

Parents have a legal responsibility to ensure their child attends **regularly** and **punctually**. Parents should provide the Academy with up-to-date information about points of contact and those with 'parental responsibility'.

Parents should contact the Academy on **each day** of their child's absence, stating the reason. Failure to inform the Academy of the reason(s) for their child's absence will result in it being classified as 'unauthorised'.

Parents may be asked to provide medical evidence where there are repeated absences due to reported illness. This will usually be in the form of an appointment card, prescription, GP note etc. Medical appointments should be made outside of school time. Where this is not possible, the appointment card should be shown (in advance) to reception staff, so copies can be made. This is not only important in terms of the categorisation of absence, but it also influences whether pupils are eligible to attend Academy trips. In short, if a pupil's attendance falls below the Academy's target (and is not supported by medical evidence) they will not be eligible to attend Academy trips (excluding those required by the curriculum).

Parents should inform the Academy of any relevant factors e.g. bereavement which could affect their child's attendance and/or behaviour.

### 1.3 Unauthorised Absences

'Unauthorised absences' are those which the Academy does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been given. Although not an exhaustive list, such examples include:

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily.
- Truancy before or during the school day.
- Absences which have never been properly explained e.g. a message from another parent or child cannot be used to authorise absence.
- Children who arrive late to school.
- Term time holidays.
- Absence which is not supported by medical evidence when requested by the Academy.

All absence **under 92%**, which is not accompanied by a medical certificate, will be classed as 'unauthorised'. Pupils falling into this category of attendance will be immediately investigated by the Local Authority Attendance Officer and, if necessary, taken to court and fined.

### 1.4 Legal Sanctions

Under existing legislation, parents commit an offence if their child fails to attend regularly and the absences are classed as 'unauthorised' (those for which the Academy cannot or has not given permission). Depending on circumstances, such cases may result in prosecution under **Section 444 and 444B of the Education Act 1996** which could lead to a fine of **£2500** or **imprisonment**.

A Penalty Notice is an alternative to prosecution which does not require an appearance in court, whilst still securing an improvement in a pupil's attendance. Payment of a Penalty Notice enables parents to discharge potential liability for conviction for the period of absence included in the Penalty Notice.

### 1.5 Holidays in Term Time

The current law does not give any entitlement to parents to take their child out of school during term time. The **Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013** prohibits a Headteacher granting leave of absence to a pupil, except where an application has been made in advance, and the Headteacher considers that there are 'exceptional circumstances' relating to the application.

An application form is available on the Academy website under 'Attendance' and should be emailed to [mcartlidge@eastwood.southend.sch.uk](mailto:mcartlidge@eastwood.southend.sch.uk).

Please note that if the absence is not authorised, and the holiday is taken, the case will be referred to the Child and Family Early Intervention Team who may issue a Penalty Notice of **£120** (or **£60** if paid within 21 days) to **each** parent for **each** child taken out of school.

### 1.6 Missing Children

The Academy complies with the DfE statutory guidance - [Children Missing Education](#)

The Academy **must** inform the Local Authority of any pupil who is going to be deleted from the admission register where they:

- Have been taken out of school by their parents and the school has received written notification from the parent they are being educated outside the school system e.g. home education.
- Have ceased to attend school and no longer live within reasonable distance of the school at which they are registered.
- Have been certified by the school medical officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and neither he/she nor his/her parent has indicated the intention to continue to attend the school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age.
- Are in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order and the proprietor does not reasonably believe they will be returning to the school at the end of that period.
- Have been permanently excluded.

The Local Authority **must** be notified when the Academy is to delete a pupil from its register under the above circumstances. This should be done as soon as the grounds for deletion are met, and in any event, no later than deleting the pupil's name from the register.

The Academy **must** inform the Local Authority of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent without the Academy's permission for a continuous period of **10** school days or more, at such intervals as are agreed between the Academy and the Local Authority.

The Academy **must** ensure that any pupil with a Child Protection Plan who is absent without explanation for **2** school days or more is referred to Children's Social Care.