



## Attendance Policy (Trust Wide)

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	3	<b>Academy personalisation required (in highlighted fields)</b>



## Version Control

Version	Revision Date	Revised by	Section Revised
V2	September 2021	B Nixon and Academy Principals	<b>Section 5</b> Updated Unauthorised absence procedure <b>Section 6</b> added in addendum for holidays due to Covid 19 <b>Appendix 1</b> added in covid-19 attendance codes <b>Appendix 4 5 and 6</b> letter templates updated to reflect policy and EWO process template letters <b>Appendix 7</b> added in Early Help Assessment and Inclusion Support Plan <b>Appendix 9</b> new appendix detailing the new APWS process
V3	September 2022	L Burton	Policy fully updated in line with DFE Working Together to Improve Attendance and Doncaster council graduated approach to managing attendance
V4	September 2023	B Nixon	No Changes to Policy, just put onto new template



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## 1. Introduction

Exceed Learning Partnership recognises that positive behaviour and good attendance are central to raising standards and pupil attainment.

This policy is based on the DFE's Working Together to Improve Attendance guidance May 2022 and this policy ensures that our academies:

- Promote pupils' welfare and safeguarding
- Ensure every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Ensure that pupils succeed whilst at school
- Ensure that pupils have access to the widest range of opportunities when they leave us

The foundation of securing good attendance is that their school provides a calm, orderly, safe and supportive environment where all pupils want to be and are keen and ready to learn.

For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and arrive, on time, every day that the academy is open unless the reason for absence is unavoidable. Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will affect their learning. Any pupil's absence or late arrival disrupts teaching routines and so may affect the learning of others in the same class. Ensuring a child's regular attendance at school is a parent/carer's legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

Since the release of the Department for Education guidance 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance' in May 2022, the focus changed to ensure pupils who are facing barriers to achieving good attendance or who are not in school, receive the right support, in the right place, at the right time. The government aim for the guidance to be statutory by September 2023.

Support and intervention are the major factors to improve pupil attendance and this policy follows a graduated approach model. The best outcomes are achieved by adopting a whole school approach to manage attendance, with everyone across the organisation aware of their role and responsibility.

Some pupils find it harder than others to attend school and therefore at all stages of improving attendance our academies and partners will work together, with pupils and parents to remove any barriers to attendance by building strong and trusting relationships and working together to put the right support in place.

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full time education suitable to their age, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to ensure their child receives that education either by attendance at school or by education otherwise than at a school.

When parents decide to have their child educated at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school.



The availability of information for parent and pupils are a key factor in engagement and excellent attendance. This policy is supported by a range of information and resources which include the following:

- Leaflets, posters
- School website with links to national websites, local authority and government websites and child law advice
- Social media, Facebook, twitter etc.
- Pupil progress reports and parents' evenings
- Sam & Sammie resources
- School assemblies
- Celebration events – Reward programmes for excellent, good, or improved attendance

## 2 Definitions of Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

Every half-day absence from the academy counts as one session and this has to be classified by the academy (not the parent/carer) as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of absence is always required.

**Authorised Leave of Absence** is an absence from the academy for a valid reason such as:

- Genuine illness
- Medical/dental appointments which fall unavoidably in school time
- Other emergencies and exceptional circumstances as determined at the discretion of the Principal

Parents/carers are requested to provide written confirmation of any medical/dental appointments and, wherever possible, arrange these appointments outside of the school day.

**Unauthorised Leave of Absence** is an absence which the academy does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave of absence' request has been agreed. This type of absence can lead to the Local Authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. This includes:

- Parents/carers keeping children off unnecessarily
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences which are not explained properly
- Any absence where a valid reason has not been provided by the Parent/Carer
- Pupils who arrive at school after 10am
- Pupils who have been permitted to stay up late the previous night
- Shopping
- Looking after other children
- Birthdays
- Day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed



Whilst we understand that sometimes absences are necessary, the vast majority of absences can be arranged outside of the school day as there are 170 non-school days per year.

It is important to remember that while any child may be off school because they are ill; sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance will be addressed between the academy, the parents/carers and the child. If the parent/carer thinks their child is reluctant to attend school, then we will work with that family to understand the root problem.

### 3 Working together to improve attendance

Successfully treating the root causes of absence and removing barriers to attendance, at home, in school or more broadly requires our schools and local partners to work collaboratively with, not against families. All our partners will work together to:

#### **EXPECT**

Aspire to high standards of attendance from all pupils and parents and build a culture where all can, and want to be in school and ready to learn by prioritising attendance improvement across the academy.



#### **MONITOR**

Rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) as soon as possible so all parties can work together to resolve them before they become entrenched.



#### **LISTEN AND UNDERSTAND**

When a pattern is spotted, discuss with pupils and parents to listen and understand barriers to attendance and agree how all partners can work together to resolve them.



#### **FACILITATE SUPPORT**

Remove barriers in school and help pupils and parents to access the support they need to overcome the barriers outside of school. This might include an early help intervention or whole family plan where absence is a symptom of wider issues.





### **FORMALISE SUPPORT**

Where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or not being engaged with, partners should work together to explain the consequences clearly and ensure support is also in place to enable families to respond. Depending on the circumstances, this may include formalising support through a parenting contract or education supervision order.



### **ENFORCE**

Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, enforce attendance through statutory intervention or prosecution to protect the pupils right to an education.

## **4 Roles and responsibilities**

All members of the academy community have roles and responsibilities in promoting and ensuring good attendance and punctuality.

### **Role of the Pupils:**

Pupils have a responsibility to themselves and others to play a positive role in the life of the academy and to make the most of the education opportunities available to them.

### **At Exceed Learning Partnership we expect all pupils to:**

- Be aware that they must attend school every day
- Be aware that they must arrive at school on time
- Be aware that they must arrive at school prepared for the day
- Speak to a member of staff if they are experiencing difficulties at school or at home, which may be affecting their attendance.

### **Role of Parents:**

Parents have an essential role in ensuring their child's good attendance.

We ask Parents to:

- Establish good attendance habits by acting as a role model and showing children that good attendance and punctuality is important
- Praise and reward good attendance, even small successes such as getting ready quickly, even if resisting going to school
- Talk regularly with their child about school, and how they feel about it. Children are more likely to want to attend school if they feel supported and their anxieties and concerns are listened to
- Contact the school as soon as possible to say why their child is absent and when they are expected to return
- Only allow days at home for genuine illness



- If appropriate arrange for a relative or friend to take a child to school if a sibling is unwell
- Avoid taking holidays in term time
- Ensure that wherever possible, medical and routine appointments are made outside of the school day
- Know routines of the day to avoid issues, e.g. ensuring children have their PE kits on the right days, items for school ready
- Establish a good bedtime routine, so that their child can sleep well, get enough sleep and make mornings less of a struggle

### **Role of the Class Teacher:**

We ask teachers to:

- Encourage good attendance
- Ensure that registers are correctly and promptly marked
- Set a good example to pupils in matters of attendance and punctuality
- Provide a safe and secure environment in which to learn
- Provide engaging and worthwhile learning experiences that encourage pupils to attend regularly
- Ensure that pupils in the class are aware of their current attendance record and their own responsibilities for attendance
- Listen and value pupils' views
- Make initial contact with parents when concerns arise

### **Role of the Academy**

As a school, we will:

- Create an ethos that pupils want to be a part of
- Give high priority to attendance and punctuality
- Have a dedicated Senior Leader with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance
- Proactively use data to identify pupils at risk of poor attendance and enable the school to identify, follow up and record unauthorised absence, patterns of absence and parent condoned absence with effective monitoring and intervention
- Develop a range of effective strategies to follow up intermittent and long-term absenteeism and promote good attendance
- Take an active role in the multi-agency efforts with the Local Authority and other partners
- Act as a Lead Practitioner where all parties agree that the academy is the best placed lead service
- Ensure attendance rewards and celebrations are implemented and reviewed
- Encourage open communication channels between home and school
- Develop procedures leading to the formal referral to the Early Intervention Service
- Adequately provide for pupils with difficulties, within the bounds of the resources available





## **Role of the Academy Trust Board and Local Governing Board**

- Recognise the importance of school attendance and promote it across the academies ethos and policies
- Ensure academy leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly review attendance data, discuss and challenge trends and help leaders focus on improvement efforts and on the pupils and cohorts who need it the most
- Ensure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Share effective practice on attendance management and improvement across schools

Under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995, the Governing Board are responsible for making sure the school keeps an attendance register that records which pupils are present at the start of both the morning and afternoon sessions of the school day. This register will also indicate whether an absence was authorised or unauthorised.

## **5 Attendance Monitoring**

Quality data is a major factor to identify areas of concern and provide a firm evidence base for strategies and interventions. We have developed tracking systems to identify pupils from vulnerable categories such as:

- Children in Care
- Children in need or subject to child protection plans
- SEND and HI/VI
- Young carers, young parents, and pregnant schoolgirls
- Minority ethnic
- Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller
- Service children
- Migrant and asylum-seeking children
- Domestic abuse

The main factor in all these categories will be the daily attendance and patterns across a pupil's individual attendance register (certificate). An increase above the school average for pupils is usually the first indication of a potential problem. Whilst we will not solely rely on percentage absences as a threshold for any intervention, we will consider the number, duration, and frequency of absences. This will be considered alongside the parent's explanation for the child's absence from school.



Graduated approach Stage	School Representatives	Other involvement
All stages first day absence phone calls	Administration Office Team	
All stages Safeguarding visits where required	DSL/Pastoral Manager Leadership Team	
Stage 1C	DSL/Pastoral Manager Inclusion Leader Leadership Team	Parent/Carer External Agency support
Stage 2	DSL/Pastoral Manager Inclusion Leader Leadership Team	Parent/Carer EWO External Agency Support
Stage 3	Senior Leader for attendance Principal	Parent/Carer EWO Senior Officer EWS External Agency Support
Stage 4	Senior Leader for attendance Principal	Parent/Carer EWO Senior Officer EWS External Agency Support

## 6. Punctuality and Lateness

These procedures are also available in our attendance information booklet, which will be displayed for parents/carers on our academes' websites, Facebook and Twitter accounts at the beginning of each academic year.

Poor punctuality is not acceptable and all pupils must arrive on time. If a pupil misses the start of the day, they can miss work and do not spend time with their class teacher getting vital information and news for the day. The late arrival of pupils also disrupts lessons, which can be embarrassing for the pupil and can also encourage absence. Good time-keeping is a vital life skill which will help our children as they progress through their school life and out into the wider world. We will encourage good punctuality by being good role models to our pupils and by celebrating good class punctuality.

**Academy to amend according to academy specific times.**

How we manage lateness:

Registers close at **09.00am**





**Pupils arriving after 09.00am will receive a late mark**



**If a pupil has not arrived by 09.30am, academy staff will contact parents  
If a parent cannot be contacted, other emergency contacts will be used**



**Pupils arriving after 10am will receive a late mark  
(showing them to be present on site but with unauthorised absence for that half day session)**

**Late marks will be monitored and the following action taken:**

**If a pupil has three late marks in a half term - parents/carers will receive a letter with the dates of the late marks recorded. Pupils may also be asked about their lateness.**



**If a pupil has 3 – 6 late marks in a half term, parents/carers will be invited to a meeting with the Principal/Senior Leader to explain the reasons for the lateness**



**At the meeting an action plan and monitoring period will be agreed**



**Improvement rewards/incentives will be implemented for the pupil and improvement letters/postcards/phone calls issued to parents/carers each week**



**If lateness continues to occur, additional agency support will be required to ensure that the pupils educational needs are met.  
The academy can be approached at any time if there are problems in getting a child to school on time**



## 7. Daily Absence Procedures

These procedures are also available in our attendance information booklet, which will be displayed for parents/carers on our academies' websites, Facebook and Twitter accounts at the beginning of each academic year.

Parents/Carers must notify the academy office as soon as possible on the first day of absence, and no later than **09.30am** confirming the reason for the absence and when the pupil can be expected to return to school



If no notification is received by **09.30am**, the academy's Attendance officer will contact parents/carer by phone to establish the reason for absence and the expected date for return to school



If no reason for the absence has been established by **10.00am**, this absence will be reported to the principal. If the pupil is already receiving multi-agency support, this will also be reported to the Safeguarding Lead and/or allocated Social worker. Academy staff may undertake a home visit



If a pupil's attendance continues to give cause for concern and sickness is continually reported, a request for confirmation that the child is not well enough to attend school can be requested  
Additional support may be sought from the School Nursing Team

Key performance indicators are the level of absence and the percentage of persistent and severely absent pupils. The definitions are:

**Persistent Absentee (PA)** – A pupil is identified as a persistent absentee when they have been absent for 10% of the total sessions possible for that individual pupil.

**Severely Absentee (SA)** – A pupil is identified as a severely absentee when they have been absent for 50% of the total sessions possible for that individual.

## 8. Exceed Learning Partnership Graduated Attendance Approach:

This corresponds to the Local Authority Graduated Approach for managing Persistent Absence (PA) or Severely Persistence Absence (SA) (see appendix 3)



Attendance	Actions
100% - 97%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If pupil is absent and parent/carer has not notified the academy a first day call will be made to determine the reason for absence and the expected date of return to school.</li> <li>• If unable to contact parent, academy will try other emergency contacts</li> <li>• Where there are safeguarding concerns the academy will conduct a home visit</li> <li>• The academy will help parents/carers to access services of their own accord and or a voluntary whole family plan to tackle any emerging barriers to attendance</li> </ul>
Attendance	Actions
95% - 96.9% Stage 1A/1B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If pupil is absent and parent/carer has not notified the academy a first day call will be made to determine the reason for absence and the expected date of return to school.</li> <li>• If unable to contact parent, academy will try other emergency contacts</li> <li>• Where there are safeguarding concerns the academy will conduct a home visit</li> <li>• Stage 1A will commence, a letter (letter 1) will be sent to parents/carers to inform them that attendance has dropped below 97% and will be monitored</li> <li>• The academy will help parents/carers to access services and or a voluntary whole family plan to tackle any emerging barriers to attendance including reintegration support packages, anxiety-based school avoidance resources, parenting contracts, referral to support agencies</li> <li>• Academy maintains the Lead Practitioner role and remains the lead service</li> <li>• If absence does not improve, monitoring will be moved to stage 1B (letter 2)</li> </ul>
Attendance	Actions
90% - 94.9% Stage 1C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If pupil is absent and parent/carer has not notified the academy a first day call will be made to determine the reason for absence and the expected date of return to school.</li> <li>• If unable to contact parent, academy will try other emergency contacts</li> <li>• Where there are safeguarding concerns the academy will conduct a home visit</li> <li>• Stage 1C will commence, a letter (letter 3) will be sent to parents/carers to inform them that attendance has dropped below 95% and an attendance meeting is required</li> <li>• Any absence during this stage will be unauthorised</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The academy will assess any support required from external agencies and support parents in accessing identified support channels</li> <li>• Academy maintains the Lead Practitioner role and remains the lead service</li> <li>• An attendance support plan will be agreed with a 4-week monitoring period (see appendix 8)</li> <li>• Voice of the pupil review undertaken (see appendix 9)</li> <li>• Interim review after 2 weeks</li> <li>• Improvements made, praise and recognition given – monitoring to continue for a further 2 weeks to secure improvement</li> <li>• No improvement – agree to review at 4-week stage</li> <li>• No improvement after 4 weeks, progress to stage 2 with referrals to APWS</li> </ul>
<b>Attendance</b>	<b>Actions</b>
<b>Stage 2 Attendance and Pupil welfare Fast Track Intervention and targeted support</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academy will make a referral to Attendance and Pupil Welfare Service giving details of all academy actions taken to date</li> <li>• Stage 2 Attendance and Pupil Welfare Intervention will commence</li> <li>• Allocation to an Education Welfare Officer and a 30-day warning to improve issued</li> <li>• Initial meeting between Parent/Carer/Pupil and EWO</li> <li>• Early Help Assessment considered (or reviewed)</li> <li>• Inclusion support plan (or Early Help Plan) agreed for a 30-day period</li> <li>• Academy maintains the Lead Practitioner role and remains the lead service</li> <li>• Midpoint review date agreed between EWO/Parents and pupil</li> <li>• Support or Early Help plan updated if required</li> <li>• Final review date between EWO/Academy/Parent/Pupil</li> <li>• Attendance improved, either suspension of plan or a further 30-day monitoring period to sustain improvement will be agreed and pupil will continue to be monitored until regular school attendance is achieved</li> <li>• Attendance not improved- progress to stage 3.</li> <li>• A fixed penalty notice may be issued at this stage</li> </ul>
<b>Attendance</b>	<b>Actions</b>
<b>Stage 3 Attendance and Pupil welfare Intervention – Local authority</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Submit all information to invite to Local Authority panel.</li> <li>• Attendance and Pupil Welfare Service invites parent/Carer to attend Attendance Panel meeting</li> <li>• Meeting is chaired by Senior Officer, Academy Leadership Team member and other agencies involved in supporting the family</li> </ul>



<p><b>Attendance panel</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EWO presents the case</li> <li>• Parents/Carers respond</li> <li>• Open Discussion- questions can be asked of the case worker, parents, pupil and panel</li> <li>• Inclusion Support Plan agreed and signed by all parties</li> <li>• Further support from Health, CAMHS, Educational Psychologist</li> <li>• Use of Parenting Contract and referral to evidence-based parenting programmes</li> <li>• Possible progression to Parenting Order</li> <li>• Parents subject to specified warning period</li> <li>• Consequences of poor outcomes made clear by Chair and panel</li> <li>• Review meeting dates agreed</li> <li>• Final review will take place with EWO and Parent/Carer</li> <li>• Attendance improved, - further 30-day Inclusion Support Plan</li> <li>• Pupil monitored until regular attendance is achieved and outcomes clearly evidenced</li> <li>• Attendance not improved, Progress to stage 4</li> <li>• Consideration for prosecution under S444 Education Act with an interview Police and Criminal Evidence (PACE)</li> <li>• Referral for penalty notice for cases compliant with the Penalty Notice code of conduct 2022</li> <li>• <b>See appendix 4 for Local authority attendance panel dates</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Attendance</b></p>	<p><b>Actions</b></p>
<p><b>Stage 4 Referrals for Statutory Action Caution or Legal enforcement</b></p> <p><b>Referrals are submitted via the My Doncaster portal under the category of Prosecution under S444 Referral</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendance and Pupil Welfare Service invite Parent/Carer to Caution/Legal meeting</li> <li>• Panel consisting of 3 members chaired by a Senior Manager from the Local Authority Attendance and Pupil Welfare Service</li> <li>• Reasons for the meeting and rights explained to Parents</li> <li>• EWO collates evidence including all documents and meeting notes of actions taken by the academy, action plans, minutes of meetings, attendance data, evidence of support given to remove barriers to pupil attendance</li> <li>• EWO produces witness statement</li> <li>• APWS Service Manager approves case for prosecution</li> <li>• Case is submitted to Legal Services</li> <li>• Legal Services ECO (Court Enforcement Officer) review case and ask for further evidence if required</li> <li>• Court summons prepared</li> <li>• Court date set</li> <li>• Summons to attend Magistrates Court issued to parents</li> <li>• Court outcome</li> </ul>



## 9. Fixed Penalty Notices

Fixed penalty notices will be served on parents as an alternative to prosecution where parents have failed to ensure that their child regularly attends school. Fixed penalty notices will be used where the absence has not been authorised by the school and the absence constitutes an offence. Fixed penalty notices can be issued to each parent liable for the attendance offence/s, which should usually be the parent or parents with day to day responsibility for the pupil's attendance.

We will only use a fixed penalty notice, in line with the Education (Penalty Notices England) Regulations 2007, where it is deemed likely to change parental behaviour and support to secure regular attendance has been provided and has not worked or been engaged with or would have been appropriate in the circumstances of the offence (e.g. an unauthorised term time holiday)

Fixed penalty notices can be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification during the first 5 days of a fixed period of suspension or permanent exclusion. The parents must have been notified by the school at the time of the suspension the days that the child must not be present in a public place.

- Penalty notices are an early intervention tool, to be used for emerging patterns of non-attendance
- Where the unauthorised absence is generated by an unauthorised holiday/leave of absence in term-time, and is over 10 school sessions (5 school days) the penalty notice is issued without warning from the Local Authority
- In other cases, the Attendance and Pupil Welfare Service will issue a formal warning advising that further unauthorised absence, within a specified period of time, will result in the issuing of a fixed penalty notice
- Penalty notices are issued at £120 per parent, per child, reducing to £60 if paid within 21 days
- The local Authority is responsible for the issue of fixed penalty notices to parents and is responsible for monitoring the collection of any payments
- Where a Penalty Notice is not paid the Parent/s have not discharged their liability for the offence of unauthorised absence, so the case will automatically proceed to the Magistrates Court unless strong grounds can be proved otherwise

## 10. Holidays in Term-time

Amendments to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 make clear that from September 2013, **no holidays will be authorised by the academy in term-time.** Holidays in term-time will be recorded as unauthorised and will incur a fine, unless the below exceptional circumstances apply:

Exceptional Circumstances





1. Where it is company/organisational policy for employees to take leave at a specific time in the year and there is no opportunity for a family holiday in any of the school holidays. This refers to full company close-down periods only and must be evidenced by the production of the policy document of the organisation.
2. Service personnel returning from/scheduled to embark upon a tour of duty abroad.
3. Other exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the Principal.

To request a holiday in term-time, parents/carers must meet with the academy Principal or another designated Senior Leader to obtain a holiday request form and explain the reasons for taking the holiday. This needs to be at least one month prior to the holiday.

Any period of leave taken without the agreement of the academy, or in excess of that agreed, will be classed as unauthorised and will attract an Educational Penalty Notice. A separate penalty notice will be issued to each parent for each child who has unauthorised absence.

## 11. Religious Observance

Schools must record absence as authorised when the absence falls on a day that is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the parent's religious body (not the parents)

As a rule, a day exclusively set apart for religious observance is defined as a day when the pupil's parents are expected, by the religious body to which they belong to stay away from their employment in order to mark the occasion.

If the parent applies for more than one day, the academy may only record one day on code R (Religious observance) the remaining days would be leave of absence and this is granted at the discretion of the academy. As set out under code C

## 12. Communication and Reporting

- The EWO should be invited to conduct an assembly with pupils at the start of each academic year
- Pupils should be allowed to undertake assemblies about the importance of attendance
- Attendance should be publicly celebrated each week with the highest-attending class on Facebook and Twitter
- Overall academy attendance should be reported in our newsletters
- Teachers should report to parents/carers annually on their child's attendance within the annual school report
- Good and improving attendance should be celebrated by awarding certificates, trophies and other rewards incentives and events (to be determined within each individual academy)



### Report Information for Governors

- Attendance levels each term for all groups, including the number of days as well as percentages and ensuring the report is cumulative as the year progresses, not just on a single-term basis)
- A comparison to the previous year's attendance
- Any low-attenders (lowest 10%) from the previous term with evidence that they are improving over time
- Overall persistent absence levels, compared to national figures
- Persistent absence pupils, with each stage outlined for governors and the actions implemented (pupil names must not be included in governor reports)
- A link between attendance levels to the impact on attainment.

The academy has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents/carers and to promote good attendance. Equally, parents/carers have a duty to make sure that their children attend. All academy staff members are committed to working with parents/carers and pupils as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible.

## 13. Pupils with medical conditions or special educational needs

Some pupils face greater barriers to attendance than their peers. These can include pupils who suffer with long-term medical conditions or special educational needs and disabilities. Their right to education is the same as any other pupil and therefore the attendance ambition for these pupils should be the same as they are for any other pupil.

In working with their parents to improve attendance, schools should be mindful of the barriers these pupils face and put additional support in place where necessary. This support could include:

- Making reasonable adjustments where a pupil has a disability
- Putting in place or updating individual healthcare plans
- Use of a **temporary** part time timetable (attendance code C)
- Ensuring joined up pastoral care is in place where needed
- Establishing strategies to remove in school barrier including where required for example, adjusted routines adjustments for uniform, support at lunchtime,
- Considering support from external partners including health services
- Making referrals to ensure the delivery of support
- Working with families to help support routines
- Working with partners to manage medical appointments outside of the school day
- Providing transport to school

Children with long term illness or other health needs may need additional support to continue education, such as alternative provision arranged by the Local authority. Local Authorities are responsible for arranging suitable education for children of compulsory school age who, because of health reasons would otherwise not receive suitable education. The education must be full-time or as close to full time as the child's health allows. Guidance sets out that



Local Authorities should provide this education as soon as it is clear the child will be away from school for 15 days or more.

## 14. Children Missing Education

All schools, including academies and free schools, must monitor pupils' attendance through their daily register. We agree with the Local Authority to inform them of pupils who are regularly absent from school or have missed 10 school days or more without permission. We must also notify the authority if a pupil is to be deleted from the admission register in certain circumstances. Pupils who remain on school roll may not necessarily be missing education but we should monitor attendance and address it when it is poor. It is also important that pupils' irregular attendance is referred to the authority. Schools also have safeguarding duties under section 175 of the Education Act 2002 in respect of their pupils, and as part of this should investigate any unexplained absences. Academies and independent schools have a similar safeguarding duty for their pupils.

Academies must also arrange full-time education for excluded pupils from the sixth school day of a fixed period suspensions. This information can be found in the school exclusions guidance.

If families move away from the area, or wish to transfer their child to another school, the Principal must be informed in writing. Children cannot be removed from roll until we have been notified by another school/academy that a place has been offered and accepted. Children who stop attending and who cannot be traced cannot be removed from roll. They are reported to the Local Authority Attendance Service. Where a child is missing from education, Local Authority guidance will be followed.

### **Children in Care**

With early intervention, the academy can often prevent a pupil's non-attendance becoming entrenched. We aim to resolve any concerns regarding attendance and punctuality rates as soon as a problem arises. We seek the co-operation of the pupil's parents/carers, children's home, key worker/social worker, residential unit, etc., in resolving the pupil's attendance problems before involving an Education Welfare Officer (EWO). Good practice is that we would notify the social worker and EWO if a looked-after child has reached 10 consecutive sessions' absence.

If a referral to the EWO is made, the EWO will initially try to contact the pupil's parents/carers, either by telephone or letter, to arrange a home visit. The EWO will normally visit the child's home/place of residence to assess the situation and the visit will usually take place within five working days of the initial contact. On most occasions, the home visit will result in an action plan being prepared by the EWO. This plan will include proposed actions, timescales and intended outcomes, and will include details of what is expected from the pupil, the parents/carers, the academy and any other agencies involved. It will contain an agreed plan of action and dates by which improvement in attendance is expected. The EWO will try to secure everybody's commitment to adhere to the action plan. In order to measure the effectiveness of the EWO intervention, the pupil's attendance and levels of authorised and unauthorised absence will be closely monitored by the EWO. If, after EWO intervention, the



pupil's level of unauthorised absence reduces to a satisfactory level compared to the level prior to the intervention, and this level of attendance is maintained, the EWO will liaise with the academy and continue to monitor the pupil's attendance for as long as necessary.

### **Elective Home Education**

The decision by a parent to educate their child at home should not be taken lightly and the Local Authority will respond to any notification immediately. Schools must not encourage parents to remove a child from school as a way of improving attendance and avoiding legal action, or to support mental health concerns. The academy must notify the Local Authority Education Welfare Officer of any potential notifications via the schools My Doncaster account under the category of EHE notification.

Policy Reviewed and Agreed: September 2023

Signed CEO:

Signed: Chair of Directors:

Policy to be reviewed in September 2024

### **Links to Policies and Links to Local Authority and DFE Guidance:**

- Medical needs policy
- Safeguarding policy
- Managing Medicines in School
- SEND
- Behaviour Policy
- Attendance Leaflet for Parents/ Carers
- Doncaster Council Guide to Managing Pupil Attendance and Attainment
- Doncaster Council Penalty notice Code of conduct
- DFE Working Together to Improve Schools

### **Appendix 1 Attendance Code Index**

**/ Present AM**

**\ Present PM**



# Planned whole or partial school closure (staggered starts/induction days/ part of school used for polling station)

B Offsite Educational Activity (not dual registered)

C Other authorised circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)

D Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending another establishment)

E Excluded (no alternative provision made)

F Extended Family Holiday (agreed)

G Family Holiday (not agreed)

H Family holiday (agreed)

I Illness

J Interview

L Late (before registers closed)

M Medical/Dental appointments

N No reason yet provided for absence

O Unauthorised absence

P Participating in an approved sporting activity

R Religious observance

S Study leave

T Traveller absence

U Unauthorised late (after registers closed)

V Educational visit or trip

W Work experience

X Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to be in school

Y Academy closure (inclement weather/building accessibility/safety issues)

Z Prospective pupil not on admission register

## Appendix 2 Pupil Attendance Classification

### Outstanding

97% - 100%

You attend more than 184 days out of 190 school days each



-----Target 97%-----

**Requires Improvement**

**95% - 96.9%**

**You attend between 180.5 and 184 days out of 190 school days each year**

**Inadequate**

**90% - 94.9%**

**You attend between 171 and 180 days out of 190 school days each year**

**Cause for Serious Concern/ Persistent Absenteeism**

**Below 90%**

**You attend less than 171 days out of 190 school days each year**

**Appendix 3 The Local Authority Graduated Approach**

**Half term 1** Pupils identified as PA or SA from the previous academic year should be targeted from the start of the academic year. It is advisable to meet with pupils and parents at during the last term to assess level of need and agree a suitable support plan.



Support plan to be reviewed at the end of the half term unless there is no significant improvement to justify an earlier review.

Any pupil who is absent for family holiday can be referred to the local authority for a penalty notice to be issued (must be a minimum of 10 sessions unauthorised absence).

Pupils who accrue 10 session's absence or more at any time during this period should be targeted and initial communication with parents established.

Pupils who make significant progress are praised and stepped down for monitoring.

**Half term 2** Pupils targeted during HT1, and the review shows some or slow improvement should continue through the APDR model and update the support plan. Pupils with no significant improvement should be discussed with the EWO or local authority officer for consideration for referral to the Local Authority Attendance Panel.

Pupils identified as PA or SA from HT1 results should be targeted for assessment and support. Support plans are reviewed at the end of HT2 unless no significant improvement is evident.

End of the term signifies a targeted support meeting should be held with a local authority officer.

Pupils who make significant progress are praised and stepped down for monitoring.

**Half-term 3** Pupils identified as SA from the previous academic year and remain a significant concern during the Autumn term should be referred to the LA Attendance Panel and considered for a targeted or specialist level intervention.

Pupils targeted during HT2, and the review shows some or slow improvement should continue through the APDR model and update the support plan. Pupils with no significant improvement should be discussed with the EWO or local authority officer for consideration for referral to the Local Authority Attendance Panel.

Pupils who are identified as PA or SA from HT2 results should be targeted for assessment and support. Support plans are reviewed at the end of HT3 unless no significant improvement is evident.

Pupils who make significant progress are praised and stepped down for monitoring.



**Half term 4** Pupils identified as SA during the Autumn term and remain a significant concern during the Spring term should be referred to the LA Attendance Panel and considered for a targeted or specialist level intervention.

Pupils targeted during HT3, and the review shows some or slow improvement should continue through the APDR model and update the support plan. Pupils with no significant improvement should be discussed with the EWO or local authority officer for consideration for referral to the Local Authority Attendance Panel.

Pupils who are identified as PA or SA from HT3 results should be targeted for assessment and support. Support plans are reviewed at the end of HT4 unless no significant improvement is evident.

Pupils who make significant progress are praised and stepped down for monitoring.

**Half term 5** Pupils identified as SA during the Spring term and remain a significant concern during the Summer term should be referred to the LA Attendance Panel and considered for a targeted or specialist level intervention.

Pupils targeted during HT4, and the review shows some or slow improvement should continue through the APDR model and update the support plan. Pupils with no significant improvement should be discussed with the EWO or local authority officer for consideration for referral to the Local Authority Attendance Panel.

Pupils who are identified as PA or SA from HT4 results should be targeted for assessment and support. Support plans are reviewed at the end of HT5 unless no significant improvement is evident.

Pupils who make significant progress are praised and stepped down for monitoring.

**Half term 6** Pupils identified as SA during the Spring term and remain a significant concern during the Summer term should be referred to the LA Attendance Panel and considered for a targeted or specialist level intervention.

Pupils targeted during HT5, and the review shows some or slow improvement should continue through the APDR model and update the support plan. Pupils with no significant improvement should be discussed with the EWO or local authority officer for consideration for referral to the Local Authority Attendance Panel.





Pupils who are identified as PA or SA from HT5 results should be targeted for assessment and support. Support plans are reviewed at the end of HT6 unless no significant improvement is evident.

Pupils who make significant progress are praised and stepped down for monitoring.

Pupils identified as SA and PA during the Summer term and will continue to be enrolled at school should be targeted for assessment and support from the start of the next academic year.

Any transition pupils identified by the primary schools as SA and PA should also be targeted for assessment and support from the start of the next academic year.

## Appendix 4 Local Authority Attendance Panel Meetings

Local Authority Attendance panel meetings take place once a month. The Local Authority will perform its statutory duty and progress to enforcement through the Magistrates Court for



cases where all other avenues are exhausted and it is in the best interests for the child's education outcomes.



## Appendix 5 Late Letter

Date

Name of Parent/Carer

Address of Parent/Carer

Dear

### **Pupil's Name**

According to our records, **(name)** has been late arriving at school a total of **(number)** times since the beginning of **(half term)** in **(month)**.

The **(number)** occurrences of lateness equate to **(number)** minutes of lost learning time. This not only causes some disruption to the class but affects **(name)**'s learning considerably as **he/she** is missing out on vital skills and sessions that run during registration time. Please be aware that for any future occasions of lateness, **(name)** may be asked to catch up on the minutes **he/she** has missed that morning, possibly at break.

We will continue to monitor **(name)**'s punctuality and hope to see an improvement over the coming month.

May I please remind you that school starts at **(time individual to academy)**.

If you have any concerns relating to **(name)** that you would like to discuss, please contact the academy office staff who will arrange an appointment for you to come in and see me.

Yours sincerely

Academy Principal



## Appendix 6 Stage 1A - Letter 1

Date

Name of Parent/Carer  
Address of Parent/Carer

Dear

### **Pupil's Name**

At **(insert Academy Name)** we are committed to providing high quality education and improving outcomes for all our Pupils. In order for a child to reach their full potential, we expect a high level of attendance at school, so they are able to maximise their learning and achievement.

I enclose a copy of **(name)** attendance record which shows an attendance of **( ) %**

As you will see, our records show **(name)**'s attendance in school has fallen below the school target of 97% and we are expressing our initial concerns. It is appreciated that young people sometimes become unwell, but as parents it is important to be aware of the level of your child's school attendance, as it may have a detrimental effect on their educational attainment

I will continue to monitor **(name's)** attendance and, with your co-operation, I would anticipate an improvement. I may take the opportunity to speak with your child in school should I feel this is an appropriate action in raising attendance.

If you wish to discuss this matter further, or are experiencing any difficulties, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

**Attendance Leader**



## Appendix 7 Stage 1B - Letter 2

Date

Name of Parent/Carer  
Address of Parent/Carer

Dear

### **Pupil's Name**

As you are aware from my previous letter, we have been monitoring **(name)**'s attendance very closely. **His/Her** attendance record states that **he/she** only attended **(number)** sessions out of a possible **(number)**, which gives an overall attendance figure of **(percentage)%**. This as you can appreciate is a cause for concern as Government guidelines state that average attendance in school is 97%.

I must inform you that I can no longer authorise any absences and attendance will be closely monitored from this point. I would appreciate it if you could ensure that **(name)**'s attendance improves so that no further intervention is needed. I do however need to make you aware that if **his/her** absence continues to decline, I will have to consider making a referral to the Local Authority Education Welfare Officer for further intervention.

If a referral is made, the Officer will endeavour to support you but they have a statutory responsibility to ensure regular attendance is maintained and so may need to follow the enforcement procedures that have been set by the Local Authority.

If you have any questions regarding this letter, or would like to discuss any private circumstances that are causing short term difficulties regarding attendance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

**Attendance Leader/Principal**



## Appendix 8 Stage 1C - Letter 3 Invitation to Attendance Meeting

Name of Parent/Carer  
Address of Parent/Carer

Date of letter

Dear

**Pupil's Name:**

**Pupil DOB:**

You may recall my letter dated (.....) expressing concern with (Name) current level of attendance. Since that letter there has not been the anticipated improvement and I would therefore like to invite you to a meeting in school on ....., at ..... this will give us the opportunity to look at the issues causing irregular school attendance and if appropriate, put in a suitable support plan to help you with this.

I enclose a copy of (name) attendance record for your information, which will form part of our discussion during the meeting.

I must also advise you that it is the decision of the Academy Principal as to whether an absence is authorised or not, taking into account the reason provided. Due to (Name's) continued irregular school attendance, we now require medical confirmation to support any future absences, which will enable us to make an informed decision whether to authorise the absence.

I look forward to meeting you to discuss how we can work together to improve attendance.

If you are not able to attend the above appointment, please contact me as soon as possible so that an alternative date can be arranged.

Yours sincerely

**Attendance Leader /Principal**



**Appendix 9 Attendance Support Plan Meeting Template**

<b>Attendance Support Plan Meeting</b>
--

<b>Pupil:</b>	<b>DOB:</b>
<b>Academy:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
<b>Present:</b>	

<b>Summary of discussion and agreements/targets:</b>
<b>Early Help Assessment undertaken Y/N</b>
<b>Comments:</b>



**Inclusion support Plan in place Y/N**

**Comments:**

<b>Agreed Attendance targets</b>			
	<b>Week commencing</b>	<b>Target %</b>	<b>Actual %</b>
<b>Week 1</b>			
<b>Week 2</b>			
<b>Progress reviewed with pupil at week 2</b>			
<b>Week 3</b>			
<b>Week 4</b>			
<b>Week 5</b>			
<b>Week 6</b>			

<b>Agreed by:</b>	<b>Review date:</b>
<b>Parent:</b>	<b>Pupil:</b>
<b>Academy:</b>	





**Action taken and Evidence**

A large, empty rectangular box with a black border, intended for recording action taken and evidence.



## Appendix 10 Voice of the Child Pupil Review Meeting Template

Name of Child:	Current Attendance:
----------------	---------------------

**Introduction – include who you are and why you are there.  
If age appropriate ask if they understand why you are speaking to them.**

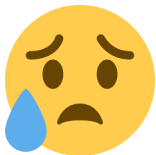
**Attendance – Have attendance certificate if age appropriate**



1 2 3 4 5



**School Life – Covering relationships with staff and peers, best lessons/least enjoyed, coursework, options, who they can speak to in school, aspirations, emotional/behavioural, peer relationships, bullying, disapplication, SEN etc.**

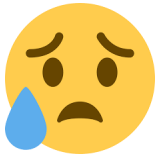


1 2 3 4 5





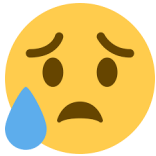
**Home/Family Life** – Covering relationships, identity, family dynamics, where they live, wider community, any wider family input in lives, hobbies etc.



1 2 3 4 5



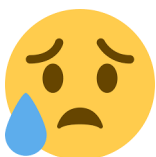
**Health** – Covering general health, substance use, emotional wellbeing.



1 2 3 4 5



**Child/Young Person wishes and feelings.**



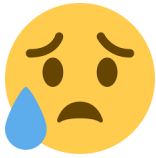
1 2 3 4 5





**What happens next / Action Plan** Covering targets for child or young person, sticker charts, positive reward cards etc.

(when age appropriate discuss implications i.e. attendance being monitored, possible court action)



1 2 3 4 5



Date of Meeting:

\_\_\_\_\_

Staff Member Signature:

\_\_\_\_\_

Child/Young Person Signature:

\_\_\_\_\_

(where age-appropriate)