Attendance policy

Isle Education Trust 24-25

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Designated Senior Leader for attendance:	Mr C Barnes
Attendance Officer:	Mrs D Byatt
Named Governor : Attendance	Mr P Sheppard

Contents

1. Aims

This policy aims to show our commitment to meeting our obligations with regards to Academy attendance, including those laid out in the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024), through our whole-academy culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils
- Promoting good attendance and the benefits of good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to make sure pupils have the support in place to attend school

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024) and school attendance parental responsibility measures. The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of the Education Act 1996

- Part 3 of the Education Act 2002

- Part 7 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments)](#)
- [The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024](#)
- [The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 and the 2024 amendment](#)
- It also refers to:
- [School census guidance](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

- Setting high expectations of all Academy leaders, staff, pupils and parents
- Making sure Academy leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties, including:
  - Making sure the Academy records attendance accurately in the register, and shares the required information with the DfE and local authority
  - Making sure the Academy works effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and keeps them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Recognising and promoting the importance of school attendance across the Academy's policies and ethos
- Making sure the Academy's attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent support is provided for pupils who need it most by prioritising staff and resources
- Making sure the Academy has high aspirations for all pupils, but adapts processes and support to pupils' individual needs
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data and helping Academy leaders focus improvement efforts on individual pupils or cohorts who need it most
- Working with Academy leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and providing support and challenge
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole Academy and repeatedly evaluating the effectiveness of the Academy's processes and improvement efforts to make sure they are meeting pupils needs
- Where the Academy is struggling with attendance, working with Academy leaders to develop a comprehensive action plan to improve attendance
- Making sure all staff receive adequate training on attendance as part of the regular continued professional development offer, so that staff understand:
  - The importance of good attendance
  - That absence is almost always a symptom of wider issues
  - The Academy's legal requirements for keeping registers
  - The Academy's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up on and improving attendance, including working with partners and keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Making sure dedicated training is provided to staff with a specific attendance function in their role, including in interpreting and analysing attendance data
- Sharing effective practice on attendance management and improvement across Academies
- Holding the principal to account for the implementation of this policy

3.2 The principal

The principal is responsible for:

- The implementation of this policy at the Academy
- Monitoring Academy-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, in where necessary, and/or authorising the senior attendance lead to be able to do so in accordance with NLC code of conduct
- Working with the parents of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where pupils with SEND face in-school barriers
- Communicating with the local authority when a pupil with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs
- Communicating the Academy's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents through all available channels

3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the Academy
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance
- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff
- Liaising with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed
- Building close and productive relationships with parents to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families.

3.4 The attendance officer

The Academy attendance officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to Academy staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance, and the principal
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the principal/Senior leader (authorised by the principal) when to issue fixed-penalty notices in accordance with NLC code of conduct.

3.5 Class teacher/form tutors

Class teacher/form tutors are responsible for recording attendance for both morning and afternoon sessions on a daily basis, using the correct codes (see Appendix 1), and submitting this information to the Academy office.

3.6 Academy admin staff

Academy admin staff will:

- Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the Academy system

- Add attendance marks for morning and afternoon sessions where necessary
- transfer calls from parents, carers and pupils about absence to the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) to provide them with more detailed support on attendance
- Contact the parents or carers of a pupil if they do not present themselves within 30 minutes of the start of the first session, either morning or afternoon. If the academy has not already received warning of the absence, the academy will attempt to make contact with home and ascertain a reason for the absence. It will then be recorded on the register on Arbor.
- Contacting home to request the reason for absence and updating the Academy records

3.7 Parents

Where this policy refers to a parent, it refers to the adult the Academy and/or local authority decides is most appropriate to work with, including:

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not
- All those who have parental responsibility for a child or young person
- Those who have day-to-day responsibility for the child (i.e. lives with and looks after them)

Parents are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every timetabled session on time
- Call the Academy to report their child's absence before the register opens on the day of the absence (and each subsequent day of absence), and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the Academy with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child where possible.
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the Academy day
- Engage with support offered by the Academy or local authority
- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting the Academy admin office.

3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend every timetabled session, on time

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an electronic attendance register and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark, using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See Appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity, where a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances, where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 6 years after the date on which the entry was made.

The register for the first and second sessions will be taken at the time published on the Academy website and will be kept open until 30 minutes after the session begins.

Pupils arriving at other times of the day may be marked present if this is part of an agreed plan, for example as part of a pupil's EHCP or at the request of a medical practitioner.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent must notify the Academy of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence before the register opens or as soon as practically possible, by contacting the Academy office staff. Please see website for contact details

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised, unless the Academy has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

Where there are concerns surrounding the pupils attendance or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the Academy will ask for medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the Academy is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified of this in advance.

4.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent notifies the Academy in advance of the appointment.

Parents and carers must request leave of absence by contacting the academy office.

However, we encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of Academy hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of Academy for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the Academy can authorise.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Registers will be open for 30 minutes after the start of each session (as detailed on the academy website)
- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code
- Children with an attendance plan or other reasonable adjustments will be marked with the appropriate code.

The Academy will contact parents to arrange a meeting to discuss reasons for lateness and how this can be rectified.

4.5 Following up unexplained absence

Where a pupil whom we expect to attend the academy does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the academy will:

- Contact the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the academy cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the academy may contact the home school or attempt a home safeguarding visit.

- identify whether the absence is approved or not

- identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than five working days after the session

- contact the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation, to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the academy will consider involving the local authority.

- Where appropriate, offer support to the pupil and/or their parents to improve attendance

- Where appropriate notify relevant professionals to inform them of the absences

- Identify whether the pupil needs support from wider partners, as quickly as possible, and make the necessary referrals

- Where support is not appropriate, not successful, or not engaged with refer to the local authority policy.

4.6 Reporting to parents

The academy will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels. If a pupils attendance becomes a concern within the academy parents will be contacted and a meeting will be requested. The academy may look to implement the Attend Framework .

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The principal will allow pupils to be absent from the Academy site for certain educational activities, or to attend other Academies or settings.

The principal will only grant a **leave of absence** to a pupil during term time if the request meets the specific circumstances set out in the 2024 school attendance regulations.

A leave of absence is granted at the principal's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

Leave of absence will not be granted for a pupil to take part in protest activity during school hours.

As a leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday.

The Academy considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least two weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible from the academy office. The principal may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence. If a pupil is over compulsory school age (e.g. sixth form), leave can be requested or agreed by the pupil or a parent they normally live with.

Other valid reasons for **authorised absence** include (but are not limited to):

- Illness (including mental-health illness) and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)

- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parent(s) belong(s). If necessary, the Academy will seek advice from the parent's religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart

- Parent(s) travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the Academy, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision

- If the pupil is currently suspended or excluded from Academy (and no alternative provision has been made)

- Other reasons the Academy may allow a pupil to be absent from the Academy site, which are not classified as absences, include (but are not limited to):

- Attending an offsite approved educational activity, sporting activity or visit or trip arranged by the Academy

- Attending another Academy at which the pupil is also registered (dual registration)

- Attending provision arranged by the local authority

- Attending work experience

- If there is any other unavoidable cause for the pupil not to attend school, such as disruption to travel caused by an emergency, a lack of access arrangements, or because the Academy premises are closed

5.2 Sanctions

The Academy will make use of the full range of potential sanctions – including, but not limited to, those listed below – to tackle poor attendance. Decisions will be made on an individual, case-by-case basis.

Penalty notices

The Academy will follow the relevant local authority policy regarding sanctions. The North Lincs Code of conduct policy is available for reference on the Academy website.

The principal (or someone authorised by them), local authority or the police can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from Academy, where the child is of compulsory school age, by issuing a penalty notice.

If the Academy issues a penalty notice, it will check with the local authority before doing so, and send it a copy of any penalty notice issued.

Before issuing a penalty notice, the Academy will consider the individual case, including:

- Whether the national threshold for considering a penalty notice has been met (10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks)

- Whether a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve attendance for that pupil

- Whether further support, a notice to improve or another legal intervention would be a more appropriate solution

- Whether any obligations that the Academy has under the Equality Act 2010 make issuing a penalty notice inappropriate

Each parent who is liable for the pupil's offence(s) can be issued with a penalty notice, but this will usually only be the parent/parents who allowed the absence.

The payment must be made directly to the local authority, regardless of who issues the notice. If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

If issued with a **first** penalty notice, the parent must pay £80 within 21 days, or £160 within 28 days.

If a **second** penalty notice is issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil, the parent must pay £160 if paid within 28 days.

A **third** penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of the issue of the first penalty notice. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time within those 3 years, alternative action will be taken instead.

A penalty notice may also 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 suspension or exclusion (where the Academy has notified the parents that the pupil must not be present in a public place on that day). These penalty notices are not included in the National Framework, not subject to the same considerations about support being provided, and do not count towards the limit as part of the escalation process.

In these cases, the parent must pay £60 within 21 days, or £120.

Further information can be found on local authority websites.

Notices to improve

If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate, but parents do not engage with offers of support, the Academy may offer a notice to improve to give parents a final chance to engage with support.

Notices to improve will be issued in line with processes set out in the local code of conduct for the local authority area in which the pupil attends school.

They will include:

- Details of the pupil's attendance record and of the offences
- The benefits of regular attendance and the duty of parents under section 7 of the Education Act 1996
- Details of the support provided so far
- Opportunities for further support, or to access previously provided support that was not engaged with
- A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued if attendance doesn't improve within the improvement period, along with details of what sufficient improvement looks like, which will be decided on a case-by-case basis
- A clear timeframe of between 3 and 6 weeks for the improvement period
- The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

Staff at the Academy are committed to promoting and achieving good levels of attendance in accordance with the Local Authority policy. Underpinning this commitment is a belief that only if pupils attend the academy regularly can they take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. In addition, the Academy promotes an environment where pupils feel safe and valued. All pupils are greeted in a respectful manner.

We also use the attendance framework for pupils who have been identified with patterns of falling / poor attendance.

The Academy will celebrate positive attendance with incentives and celebrations.

7. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school

Where health needs are preventing children from returning to school or a readmission is needed the Academy will follow the Children with Health Needs Who Cannot Attend School Policy which is available on the Academy website.

Support for individuals returning to school will be done on a case-by-case basis and may include:

- Part timetables, which will be time limited and reviewed.
- Support working online from home
- Access to pastoral support

8. Attendance monitoring

8.1 Monitoring attendance

The Academy will monitor attendance and absence data (including punctuality) half-termly, termly and yearly across the Academy and at an individual pupil, year group and cohort level.

Specific pupil information will be shared with the DfE on request.

The Academy has granted the DfE access to its management information system so the data can be accessed regularly and securely.

Data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying Academy-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics.

The Academy will benchmark its attendance data at whole Academy, year group and cohort level against local, regional, and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement and share this with the governing board.

8.2 Analysing attendance

The Academy will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils, groups or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and
- Identify pupils whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence
- Conduct thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and full-year data to identify patterns and trends
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

8.3 Using data to improve attendance

The Academy will:

- Develop targeted actions to address patterns of absence (of all severities) of individual pupils, groups or cohorts that it has identified via data analysis

- Provide targeted support to the pupils it has identified whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence, and their families (see section 8.4 below)

- Provide regular attendance reports to academy staff to facilitate discussions with pupils and families, and to the governing board and Academy leaders (including special educational needs co-ordinators, designated safeguarding leads and pupil premium leads)
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies
- Share information and work collaboratively with other Academies in the area, local authorities and other partners where a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe, including keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate

8.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school. Reducing persistent and severe absence is central to the Academy's strategy for improving attendance.

The Academy will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Consider potential safeguarding issues and, where suspected or present, address them in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the Academy (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable or at risk of persistent or severe absence, or who are persistently or severely absent, to:
    - Discuss attendance and engagement at Academy
    - Listen, and understand barriers to attendance
    - Explain the help that is available
    - Explain the potential consequences of, and sanctions for, persistent and severe absence
    - Review any existing actions or interventions
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance, in conjunction with the local authority, where relevant
- Consider alternative support that could be put in place to remove any barriers to attendance and re-engage these pupils. In doing so, the Academy will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence
- Implement sanctions, where necessary (see section 5.2, above)
- Implementation of the attend framework
- Offer Early Help support and other attendance support to promote improved attendance.

9. Removing Pupils from the Academy Roll

9.1 Removing Pupils from the Academy roll and Child Missing in Education

The Academy will remove children from the Academy roll following guidance within the School Attendance and (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 section 9: The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 (legislation.gov.uk)

In Each case the relevant local authority will be informed and where appropriate Child Missing in Education processes followed for the local authority as laid out in their guidance.

9.2 Elective Home Education

As per section 9(f) School Attendance and (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 pupils will be removed from roll for reason of elective home education when a parent of the pupil has told the proprietor in writing that the pupil will no longer attend the Academy after a certain day and will receive education otherwise than at Academy and—

(i)that day has passed; and

(ii)there is no school attendance order naming the Academy in force in relation to the pupil;

10. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority and/or DfE is updated, at every review, the policy will be approved by the governing board.

11. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy
- NLC code of conduct

Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's [guidance on Academy attendance](#).

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
****	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
Attending a place other than the school		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
Absent – leave of absence		
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment

S	Study leave	Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
C2	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
C	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances

Absent – other authorised reasons

T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a 'mobile child' who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
E	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made

Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause

Q	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
Y1	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
Y3	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open

Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
Y5	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are: • In police detention • Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or • Detained under a sentence of detention
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
Y7	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
Absent – unauthorised absence		
G	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
Administrative codes		
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered
#	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays