

Attendance Policy

2014

This Policy was adopted by:

The Directors of the Primary Academies Trust

on 9 June 2014

Signed by.....Chair of Directors

Review Date Signed

Review Date Signed

Review Date Signed

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PAT Attendance Policy and Procedures

Rationale

All schools within the Primary Academies Trust are committed to providing a full and effective educational experience for all students. We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. We believe that if students are to benefit from education, good attendance is crucial. Irregular attendance undermines the educational process and can lead to educational and social disadvantage. As a Trust we do all that we can to ensure maximum attendance for all students. Any problems that prevent full attendance will be identified and addressed as speedily as possible in line with procedures agreed by the local governing bodies.

It is the policy of our School and Trust to celebrate achievement. Attendance is a critical factor to a productive and successful school career and establishes a good pattern for later life. We will actively promote, encourage and reward 100 per cent attendance for all our students. We recognise that parents have a vital role to play and that there is a need to establish strong home-school links and communication systems that can be utilised whenever there is concern about attendance.

Objectives

- to encourage full attendance and punctuality
- to record and monitor attendance and absenteeism and apply appropriate strategies
- to acknowledge and reward a successful record of attendance through the School's rewards system
- to ensure a consistent approach in line with all schools within the Primary Academies Trust and local communities (insert the local one)

Statutory Duty of Schools and Parents

The Education Act 1996 requires parents/carers to ensure their children receive effective full-time education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

Schools are responsible for recording student attendance twice a day; once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session.

Parents/carers are legally responsible for ensuring that their children attend school. This extends to ensuring that students arrive at School on time, properly attired, and in a condition to learn. All schools will make every effort to promote good attendance, giving advice and support where needed.

The Educational Welfare Service and School Attendance

The EWS is a part of the Devon Local Authority. Its aim is to ensure that every child has the opportunity to benefit from a full time education by attending school regularly. The EWS can help and advise parents/carers who may be experiencing difficulties that prevent this. It is the responsibility of parents/carers to ensure that their child attends school regularly and the EWS expects parents/carers to do all that is necessary to make sure this happens.

What happens if your child does not attend school regularly (and their absence is not authorised)?

It is a criminal offence for a child not to attend school regularly and, as a parent/ guardian, this is your responsibility. A Penalty Notice may therefore be issued, requiring you to pay a fine of up to £120 per parent/carer, per child if their attendance is below an acceptable level. In certain circumstances you may be prosecuted and be required to attend the Magistrates Court where you could face up to 3 months imprisonment and/or a fine of up to £2500.

You will be given every opportunity to improve your child's attendance and you will receive a written warning before any legal action is taken.

Statutory Attendance

There is a legal requirement to have an AM and a PM registration.

AM: Students will be registered at the beginning of each morning (8.45am, change times for each school) by the teacher. Registration closes at 9.15 am (within 30 minutes of start); any arrivals before this time will be classified as LATE (Code **L**) Arrival after that time is recorded as an UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE (Code **U**).

PM: Registration takes place at the beginning of the afternoon session by the class teacher, and will remain open for 20 minutes.

X: we shall be using this code for all children below statutory school age who are absent for any reason, including part time education.

- All registration will be recorded on the SIMS system by the end of each week by the administrator.
- Class registers must be taken at the beginning of all sessions by the teacher.
- Accurate registration is very important and registration details can be used as evidence where parents/carers are prosecuted for school attendance offences.
- The attendance register will be kept for three years by all schools.

Request for absence during Term Time

All requests must be made using the S2 form, available from the office or download from the school's website, a minimum of 3 weeks before the request absence. The schools within the Trust do not encourage any absence during term time and the Head teachers may no longer authorise absences unless for exceptional circumstances. In this situation the Governors will decide if this can be authorised.

- No absence will be authorised in the first two weeks of any term unless in exceptional circumstances or during May when SATs for Years 2 and 6 take place
- No absence will be authorised for pupils with attendance falling below 90%

If a parent/carers is refused an absence request and the pupil is still taken out of a school by the parent/carers, the School / Education Welfare Officer will be informed.

Reporting Absences

It is the responsibility of the parents/carers to inform the School of the reason for a student's absence by 0930 on the first day. The School will operate a First Day Calling system and where no satisfactory explanation for absences is received, parents will be contacted by the school.

In any case of absence, parents/carers should contact the school by one of the following methods:

- By phone to the Administrator.
- Personal contact with Administrator at school, where a note will be passed to the teacher.
- If you are unable to contact the administrator, a parental note explaining the absence must be passed to the class teacher on the first day back at school.

In the case of long term illness the school should be notified as soon as possible.

If it is known that the student will be absent for more than 2 weeks, the EWO should be notified.

Where over the course of an academic year, a student has 20 sessions of illness, the School will write to parents to ask them to provide medical evidence for each future period of illness related absence. This evidence could be a Doctor's note, appointment card or copy of a prescription.

Truancy

It is the legal responsibility of parents/carers to ensure their child attends all lessons as required. Parents/carers will be informed by the Administrator if their child has been identified as truanting from the school. Persistent cases may be referred to the EWO who may consider issuing a Penalty Notice.

Punctuality

It is the responsibility of parents/carers to ensure their child attends full time education and arrives at school on time. Punctuality is monitored by the school and parents will be contacted if their child is not arriving on time. Persistent cases will be referred to the EWO who may consider issuing a Penalty Notice.

GUIDELINES

1. Absence can only be authorised by the school for:
 - a) sickness or other unavoidable cause (solely affecting that child)
 - b) days set aside for family religious observance
 - c) where LA school transport has not been provided to a child that is entitled to it
 - d) other reasons, approved by the school.
2. There is no automatic entitlement for absence for holidays during term time (Amendment to the Education [Pupil Registration] [England] Regulation 2006), except for families serving in the Armed Forces.
3. In cases of unauthorised Term-time holidays, Heads of School should follow the Devon County Council protocol and apply directly to the Education Welfare Service to generate a Penalty Notice warning letter (without, necessarily, contacting the school's EWO). This should be done by completing Penalty Notice Certificate of Absence Form and returning it to:
 - i. Penalty Notice Officer, EWS, Milford House, Pynes Hill, Business Park, Exeter EX2 5TH
4. Schools will liaise closely with parents advising them as early as possible if there are cases of suspected unauthorised absence, and persistent lateness, or their child's attendance falls below 90%. Or where medical/illness absences exceed 20 sessions in one year.
5. Late arrival should be actively discouraged. Separate registration codes are required for lateness prior to close of registration and afterwards. It has been agreed that registers should remain "open" for the first 30 minutes of the morning and the first 20 minutes after afternoon registration period. In circumstances such as bad weather or public transport difficulties, schools may keep the register open for a longer period. Late arrival during these periods will be coded as an 'Authorised Late' ('L').
6. Late arrival after the register is closed is an 'Unauthorised Absence' (coded 'U') which could provide grounds for prosecution. This code generates a morning of absence. Where a pupil arrives after close of registration with a legitimate reason, the absence should be authorised using the appropriate code (for example due to an appointment with a doctor).

7. Where no satisfactory explanation for absences is received, parents will be contacted by the school.
8. The Education Welfare Officer will be notified in the following circumstances:
 - unauthorised absence by a student of more than 10 half-day sessions (in aggregate) in any one term
 - attendance of less than 85% by any pupil
 - where action taken at school level has failed to improve attendance/punctuality for a particular student
9. When a pupil's attendance falls below 85% and they also have 10 or more unauthorised absences, unless there are extenuating circumstances, they should be considered for "Fast-track to Prosecution".
10. Parents are to inform the school, in writing, if a child is to be removed from a roll. Details of the new school should be provided, if applicable.
 - a) If a child leaves a school to be home educated, then Form EWS 10 must be completed and returned to: Georgina Bennet, Milford House, Pynes Hill, Business Park, Exeter EX2 5TH and to: Irene Love, Milford House, Pynes Hill, Business Park, Exeter EX2 5TH.
 - b) When a pupil moves from school and no notification has been received from another school, the 'old' school should complete a 'Children Missing from Education' form (S2s) and return it to:
 - c) EMS Data Team, ScoMIS Office, Milford House, Pynes Hill, Business Park, Exeter EX2 5TH
 - d) (Where the 'new' school is known, as a safeguard, the 'old' school should make contact with the receiving school to alert them to the move).
11. Schools will adopt a multi-agency approach in supporting children and their families to improve their attendance.
12. For Health and Safety reasons, schools need to be aware of where pupils are, particularly those leaving or arriving on the premises during a session. An appropriate recording system should be instigated.
13. Parents' meetings, and other occasions can be used to stress to all parents the importance and benefits of regular attendance and punctuality. Advantage should also be made of regular school to home newsletters etc

Staff guidance and procedures.

Reporting to Parents

Annual Report to parents/carers includes summative information on attendance as well as a comment on punctuality.

Distribution of Data

The Administrator will produce for the Head of School:

- a) printout of all attendances for previous week
- b) reports on persistent lateness to school in the mornings (6 or more) .
- c) all pupils with attendance below 95% attendance
- d) The percentage attendance figures for all pupils half termly.

The Head teacher will report attendance data to the Governors termly and targets annually.

User Codes and reconciliation of registers

- If a student is absent, use Code **N** (unless there is already a code which has been entered).
- If a student is late during registration use Code **L**.
- Only the national attendance codes issued can be used.

Absences from School

Authorisation of absences from school:

- Parent provide written, signed note from parent/carer on students return, unless parents/carer has contacted the school by another acceptable means. (see above)
- Teacher to record on registration system using appropriate code.
- Teachers to hand in absence notes/records at end of every week to the Administrator. These will then be archived for 3 years.

Follow up procedures for unauthorised absence or persistent absence (including illness) from School: See attached flow chart

Follow up procedures for lateness to school in the morning:

Admin contacts the home or sends the standard letter if the student regularly arrives late at school.

Admin will alert Head to any pupil who has 6 or more lates in any half term. The class teacher will contact the parents.

Where there is no improvement or if lateness continues to persist the Head of School will become involved and there may be a referral of the pupil to EWO who may consider instigating legal procedures.

Action		
Review Annually	Review Summer 14	
Changes		
Variations within PAT schools		

Roles and Responsibilities

Improving attendance at school is the responsibility of everyone in the school community, including pupils, parents and staff.

The Directors of the Primary Academies Trust: To review the attendance Policy annually.

Role of Governing Body: Monitors the policy, receives a termly report via Head of School's Report to Governors.

Head of School: Oversight and implementation of policy.

School: Staff encourage good attendance and punctuality through personal example. The school will employ a range of strategies to encourage good attendance and punctuality and, liaising closely with parents, will promptly investigate all absenteeism. Staff will respond to all absenteeism firmly and consistently.

Administrator: Administration of attendance and punctuality data within the framework of this policy, first day contacts.

Teachers: Keep an accurate register and follow up of absences and lateness within the systems and procedures of this policy.

Parents: Parents are responsible for ensuring that their child attends school regularly, punctually, properly dressed and equipped and in a fit condition to learn. If for any reason this is not the case procedures outlined above must be followed.
If possible, parents should avoid making medical/dental appointments for their child during school hours. Parents whose first language is not English, or who have literacy difficulties, will be offered appropriate support from the school in matters of communication.

Pupils: All pupils are expected to attend school regularly and punctually. Pupils who experience attendance difficulties will be offered prompt and sympathetic support, initially from their teacher and, if need should arise, from the head of school. At the end of each year, pupils whose attendance is excellent (insert relevant % per school) will be presented with an attendance certificate.

Education Welfare Officer: Implementation of LA procedures in enforcing attendance and assisting year teams with advising students and parents of the legal consequences of failing to meet these obligations. The EWO is the attendance enforcement arm of the LA. The EWO for our schools will be fully informed of all absences giving cause for concern and will have full access to the electronic registration system

Encouraging Good Attendance (insert percentages agreed at local/school level)

Ongoing

Teacher and Admin

- Weekly Attendance Data provided to Admin.
- First Day Calling.

Teachers

- Keep Accurate AM and PM register.
- Follow up Absence promptly.
- Inform Head Teacher of any attendance concerns.

Head of School

- To co-ordinate and monitor the above.
- Ensure Escalation Process consistently followed with discretion where appropriate.
- Responsible for Pupil & School Attendance Data and meeting Local and National Attendance Targets.
- To co-ordinate / monitor attendance of vulnerable groups (SEN / CIC / EAL / Travellers).

90%

90%

<90%

<85%

Intervention

Under 90%

- No requests to be authorized.
- Send absence request Refusal Letter.
- If absence still occurs consider Penalty Notice.

Under 90%

- Send L1/M1.
- Teacher meets and discusses with parents/carers.

20 Sessions – Illness

- Consider sending Medical Evidence Letter. M2

Lateness

- If Persistent lateness, Head to send Late letter.
- Discuss lateness with parents/carers.
- If no improvement escalate to EWO

Under 90%

- Send L2.
- Head meets and discusses with parents/carers.
- Agrees action plan with parents/carers and child.

Under 90%

- Send L3/3a
- Head Teacher meets and discusses with parents/carers.
- Plan immediate improvement.
- Discuss with EWO.

If No Improvement

- School and EWO consider Fast Track or alternative action.

24 November 2014

«salutation»
«address_block»

Dear «salutation»

Attendance Monitoring L1

Re: «forename» «surname» - «year_reg»

I am writing to make you aware of your child's current level of attendance which is ■■■.
As a school we aim to have all our children attending 100% of the time.

You may not be aware that absences of any kind – illness and holiday – all count towards your child's attendance record. Lateness may also count as absence. In the event your child arrives at school late, but before register closes, they are noted as late, and the number of minutes late may be recorded. In the event your child arrives at school late and the register has closed, they are counted as having half a day of unauthorised absence.

I enclose a copy of «forename»'s attendance record for your information. Unauthorised absences are coded as O, G (unauthorised holiday) and U (late after registers closed).

We always aim to work closely with all our parents and to support them. Therefore, if you have any queries concerning the report, or if there are any particular medical or family circumstances that you feel I should be aware of, please contact me to discuss it.

Yours sincerely

Name
Head of School

☐

Please return to the school office

I confirm that I have received the attendance monitoring letter for «forename» «surname»
(«year_reg») dated 24/11/2014.

Parent/Guardian Name:.....

Signed: Date:

24 November 2014

«salutation»
«address_block»

Dear «salutation»

Attendance Concern L2

Re: «forename» «surname» - «year_reg»

Further to the previous attendance monitoring letter, I write to inform you that «forename»'s attendance has not improved and continues to be unacceptably low. «forename» currently has an attendance percentage of «% attendance». As a result, I would like to meet with you within 5 school days of the date of this letter to discuss a plan to improve «forename»'s attendance at school.

If attendance continues to fall following our meeting, it may unfortunately be necessary for us to hold a meeting with the Education Welfare Officer and/or School Nurse.

I enclose a copy of «forename»'s attendance record for your information. Unauthorised absences are coded as O, G (unauthorised holiday) and U (late after registers closed). We always aim to work closely with all our parents and to support them, therefore, if you have any queries concerning the report, or if there are any particular medical or family circumstances that you feel I should be aware of, please contact me to discuss it.

Yours sincerely

Name
Head of School

✂-----

Please return to the school Attendance Office

I confirm that I have received the Attendance Concern letter for «forename» «surname» («year_reg») dated 24/11/14 and agree to attend a meeting with Head of School on _____.

Parent/Guardian Name:.....

Signed: Date:

24 November 2014

«address_block»

Dear «salutation»

Attendance Concern L3

Re: «forename» «surname» - «year_reg»

Further to the previous attendance monitoring letter(s), I write to inform you that «forename»'s attendance has not improved to an acceptable level. «forename» currently has an attendance percentage of .

As a result, I have arranged a meeting at school with myself and the Education Welfare Officer on _____
The meeting will be held at Woodwater Academy.

I enclose a copy of «forename»'s attendance record for your information. Unauthorised absences are coded as O, G (unauthorised holiday) and U (late after registers closed). We always aim to work closely with all our parents and to support them, therefore, if you have any queries concerning the report, or if there are any particular medical or family circumstances that you feel I should be aware of, please contact me to discuss it.

Yours sincerely

Name
Head of School

✂-----

Please return to the school Attendance Office

I confirm that I have received the Attendance Concern letter for «forename» «surname» («year_reg») dated 24/11/14 and agree to attend a meeting on _____.

Parent/Guardian Name:.....

Signed: Date:

24 November 2014

«address_block»

Dear «salutation»

Attendance Concern L3a

Re: «forename» «surname» - «year_reg»

Further to the previous attendance monitoring letter(s), I write to inform you that «forename»'s attendance has not improved to an acceptable level. «forename» currently has an attendance percentage of «% attendance» .

As a result, I have arranged a meeting at school with myself, the Education Welfare Officer and the School Nurse on

The meeting will be held at Woodwater Academy.

I enclose a copy of «forename»'s attendance record for your information. Unauthorised absences are coded as O, G (unauthorised holiday) and U (late after registers). We always aim to work closely with all our parents and to support them, therefore, if you have any queries concerning the report, or if there are any particular medical or family circumstances that you feel I should be aware of, please contact me to discuss it.

Yours sincerely

Name
Head of School



Please return to the school Attendance Office

I confirm that I have received the Attendance Concern letter for «forename» «surname» («year_reg») dated 24/11/14 and agree to attend a meeting on _____

Parent/Guardian Name:.....

Signed: Date:

24 November 2014

«salutation»
«address_block»

Dear «salutation»

Attendance Concern (Medical) M1
«forename» «surname» «year» «reg»

I am writing to make you aware of your child's current level of attendance which is ---%. As a school we aim to have all our pupils attending 100% of the time. «forename»'s attendance record shows --- sessions of unauthorised absence and --- sessions of authorised medical absence.

You may not be aware that absences of any kind – illness and holiday – all count towards your child's attendance record. Lateness may also count as absence. In the event your child arrives at school late, but before register closes, they are noted as late, and the number of minutes late may be recorded. In the event your child arrives at school late and the register has closed, they are counted as having half a day of unauthorised absence.

If you have any queries concerning the report, or if there are any particular medical or family circumstances that you feel I should be aware of, please contact me to discuss it. I enclose a copy of «forename»'s attendance record for your information. Unauthorised absences are coded as O, G (unauthorised holiday) and U (late after registers closed).

Yours sincerely

Name
Head of School

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Medical Attendance Letter

Please return to the School Office

I confirm that I have received the attendance concern (medical) letter dated 24/11/2014 for :

Name: «forename» «surname» «year» «reg»

Parent / Carer name :

Signed Dated

24 November 2014

«address_block»

Dear «salutation»

Attendance Concern (Medical 2)M2
«forename» «surname» «year» «reg»

Further to the previous attendance monitoring letter dated 29 November 2013, this letter is to inform you that your child's attendance level is still giving the school cause for concern. As a school we aim to have all our students attending 100% of the time.

Currently «forename»'s attendance is recorded as ---% Her attendance record shows --- session of unauthorised absence and --- sessions of authorised medical absence. This attendance percentage is liable to affect her overall education.

Therefore, as of today, no further absence will be authorised due to illness or medical appointments unless suitable evidence is provided. Evidence will be required each time that your child is absent from school for medical reasons and it is your responsibility to provide this to the school. An appointment letter, a stamped/signed appointment card from the medical provider or medication dated as dispensed on the day of the absence are all forms of evidence that we consider to be suitable.

If we do not receive evidence of an absence then the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and the Education Welfare Officer and/or the School Nurse will be contacted.

Please contact me to arrange a meeting to discuss a plan to improve your child's attendance.

Yours sincerely

Name
Head of School

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Attendance Letter (Medical 2)

Please return to the School Office

I confirm that I have received the attendance concern letter (Medical 2) for :

Name: «forename» «surname» «year» «reg»

Parent / Carer Name :

.....

Signed Dated

.....