



# Attendance Policy

**Approved by Governor committee:**  
n/a

**Date to be reviewed:**  
September 2025

**Responsibility of:**  
Senior Vice Principal (Inclusion)

**Final Approval:**  
The Principal – October 2022

## **Contents:**

### Statement of intent

1. Legal Framework
2. Definitions
3. Roles and Responsibilities
4. Attendance Expectations
5. Absence Procedures
6. Attendance Register
7. Authorising Parental Absence Requests
8. SEND and health-related absence
9. Absence in Exceptional Circumstances
10. Truancy
11. Missing Children
12. Attendance Intervention
13. Working with Parents to Improve Attendance
14. PA
15. Legal Intervention
16. Monitoring and Analysing Absence
17. Training of staff
18. Monitoring and review

### **Appendices**

- A. Key Attendance Monitoring Procedures

## Statement of Intent

Chelsea Academy is an inspirational community of learning and achievement with high expectations and high aspirations, underpinned by a culture of 'no excuses'. We seek to ensure that all students receive a full-time education that maximises opportunities for them to flourish and to develop the personal qualities they need for future success.

We aim for an environment that enables and encourages all members of the community to aspire to excellence. For students to gain the greatest academic and social benefit from their education, it is vital that they attend every day. Students cannot achieve their full potential if they do not regularly attend school.

We recognise that attendance cannot be seen in isolation and that the foundation to good attendance is a calm, orderly, safe and supportive environment in which all students want to attend and can learn and flourish. Through our clear and robust CAW4B procedures and our strong ethos of support and pastoral care, we are committed to creating such an environment for all of our students.

We understand that barriers to attendance are complex, and that some students find it harder than others to attend school. Therefore, we will continue to prioritise cultivating a safe and supportive environment at the Academy, as well as strong and trusting relationships with students and parents in order to remove any barriers to attendance. We will consistently promote the benefits of good attendance at school, set high expectations for every student, communicate these expectations clearly and consistently to students and parents, systematically analyse data to identify patterns to target our improvement efforts, and work effectively with local authorities and other local partners to overcome barriers to attendance.

At Chelsea Academy we recognise that attendance cannot solely be the preserve of a single member of staff. We take a whole-Academy approach to securing good attendance, and recognise the impact that our efforts in other areas (such as the curriculum, behaviour, anti-bullying, SEND support, pastoral care and the effective use of resources) can have on improving student attendance. We recognise too that for our most vulnerable students, regular attendance is also an important protective factor and the best opportunity for their needs to be identified and support provided.

At Chelsea Academy we are committed to working together with students, families and local partners to remove any barriers to attendance and to put the right support in place to ensure that each student attends regularly. We understand that attendance is *everyone's business* and we will work together to achieve this aim.

At Chelsea Academy, we are committed to:

- Promoting and modelling high attendance and its benefits
- Ensuring equality and fairness for all
- Intervening early and working with other agencies to ensure the health and safety of our students
- Building strong relationships with families to overcome barriers to attendance
- Working collaboratively with other schools in the area, as well as other agencies
- Ensuring parents follow the framework set in section 7 of the Education Act 1996, which states that the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause them to receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude, and to any SEND they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise
- Ensuring our attendance policy is clear and easily understood by all staff, parents and students

- Regularly monitoring and analysing attendance and absence data to identify students or cohorts that require more support

The Academy's Attendance Officer is Kim Brown, and can be contacted via [kim.brown@chelsea-academy.org](mailto:kim.brown@chelsea-academy.org). Staff, parents and students will be expected to contact the Attendance Officer for queries or concerns about attendance. The Academy's Director of Attendance is Seema Dhawan. The Director of Attendance is the member of the Extended Leadership Team who leads on the promotion of good attendance across this Academy. The Director of Attendance is supported in this role by the Academy's Senior Vice Principal (Inclusion), Bernie Whittle.

## 1. Legal Framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- The Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended)
- DfE (2022) 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance'
- DfE (2016) 'Children Missing Education'
- DfE (2022) 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Chelsea Academy Way for Attendance (CAW4A) Procedures for Staff
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Children Missing Education Policy
- Complaints Resolution Procedure
- Behaviour Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Policy
- Supporting Students with Medical Conditions Policy
- Students with Additional Health Needs Attendance Policy
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Policy

## 2. Definitions

The following definitions apply for the purposes of this policy:

### **Absence:**

- Arrival at the Academy after the register has closed
- Not attending the Academy for any reason

### **Authorised Absence:**

- An absence for sickness for which the Academy has granted leave
- Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during the Academy day, for which the Academy has granted leave
- Religious or cultural observances for which the Academy has granted leave
- An absence due to a family emergency

#### **Unauthorised Absence:**

- Parents keeping children off unnecessarily or without reason
- Truancy before or during the Academy day
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Arrival at the Academy after the register has closed
- Absence due to shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Absence due to day trips and holidays in term-time which have not been agreed
- Leaving the Academy for no reason during the day

#### **Persistent Absence (PA)**

Missing ten percent or more of schooling across the year for any reason

#### **Severe Absence (SA)**

Missing fifty percent or more of schooling across the year for any reason

### **3. Roles and Responsibilities**

The Governing Board has overall responsibility for:

- Monitoring the implementation of this policy and all relevant procedures across the Academy
- Promoting the importance of good attendance through the Academy's ethos and policies.
- Arranging attendance training for all relevant staff that is appropriate to their role
- Working with the Leadership Team to set goals for attendance and providing support and challenge around delivery against those goals.
- Ensuring that this policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds including, but not limited to, ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation
- Handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the Academy's Complaints Procedures Policy.
- Having regard to 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' when making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
- Ensuring there is a Children Missing Education Policy in place and that this is regularly reviewed and updated

The Principal is responsible for:

- The day-to-day implementation and management of this policy and all relevant procedures across the Academy
- Appointing a member of the Leadership Team with responsibility for attendance
- Ensuring all parents are aware of the Academy's attendance expectations and procedures
- Ensuring that every student has access to full-time education and will act as early as possible to address patterns of absence

Academy staff are responsible for:

- Following this policy and ensuring students do so too
- Ensuring this policy is implemented fairly and consistently
- Modelling good attendance behaviour
- Using their professional judgement and knowledge of individual students to inform decisions as to whether any welfare concerns should be escalated
- Where designated, taking the attendance register at the relevant times during the Academy day

The Senior Vice Principal (Inclusion), Director of Attendance and Attendance Officer are responsible for:

- The overall strategic approach to attendance in the Academy
- Developing a clear vision for improving attendance
- Monitoring attendance and the impact of interventions
- Analysing attendance data and identifying areas of intervention and improvement
- Communicating with students and parents with regard to attendance.
- Following up on incidents of persistent poor attendance.

The Registrar is responsible for:

- Informing the Local Authority of any student being deleted from the admission and attendance registers

Parents / carers are responsible for:

- Providing accurate and up-to-date contact details
- Providing the Academy with more than one emergency contact number
- Updating the Academy if their contact details change
- The attendance of their children at the Academy
- Promoting good attendance with their children

Students are responsible for:

- Attending their lessons and any agreed activities when at the Academy
- Arriving punctually to lessons when at the Academy

#### **4. Attendance Expectations**

The Academy has high expectations for students' attendance and punctuality, and ensures that these expectations are communicated regularly to parents and students.

Students will be expected to:

- Attend the Academy every day they are required to be there, for the full day
- Attend the Academy and lessons punctually
- Attend every timetabled lesson

The Academy day starts at 8.40 am, and students will be in their Coaching Room ready to start Coaching Time at this time; therefore, students will be expected to be on the Academy site by 8.35 am. Students will receive a 'late to the Academy' mark if they are not on Academy site by 8.35 am. Students will have a morning break at 10.50 am, which will last until 11.10 am, and a lunch break at 1.00 pm, which will last until 1.40 pm. Students will be expected to have returned from each break and be ready to recommence learning at the stated times.

Registers will be taken as follows throughout the school day:

The morning register will be marked at 8.40 am. Students will receive a 'late to Coaching Time' mark if they are not in their Coaching Room by this time. Students attending after this time will receive a mark to show that they were on site, but this will count as a late mark.

The morning register will close at 9.30 am. Students will receive a mark of absence if they do not attend the Academy before this time.

The afternoon register will be marked at 1.40 pm. Students will receive a late mark if they are not in their classroom by this time.

The afternoon register will close at 2.00 pm. Students will receive a mark of absence if they are not present.

Class teachers will also take registers at the start of each lesson to ensure that students are attending all timetabled lessons. These registers will be analysed alongside the morning and afternoon registers in line with the section of this policy.

Students will be encouraged to communicate any concerns related to attendance and absence as soon as possible to their Learning Coach or Head of Year.

## **5. Absence Procedures**

Parents are required to contact the Academy to report their child's absence before 8.30 am on the day of absence. Parents can report their child's absence either by logging into Edulink or by telephoning the Student Absence Line (0207 376 3019 and then choosing option 1). Parents will be expected to provide an explanation for the absence and an estimation of how long the absence will last (for example, one Academy day).

Where a student is absent, and their parent has not contacted the Academy by the close of the morning register to report the absence, the Attendance Officer will contact the parent / carer via text message ('Truancy Call') as soon as is practicable on each day that the student does not attend the Academy.

The Academy will always follow up any absences in order to:

- ascertain the reason for the absence
- ensure the proper Safeguarding action is being taken
- identify whether the absence is authorised or not
- identify the correct code to use to enter the data onto the school census system

Where a student is absent for more than three Academy days in a row, or more than ten Academy days in one term, the student's parent / carer will be expected to provide a signed letter with an explanation for the absence(s).

The Academy will not request medical evidence in most circumstances where a student is absent due to illness; however, the Academy reserves the right to request supporting evidence where there is genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness.

In the case of PA, arrangements will be made for parents / carers to speak to the Attendance Officer. The Academy will inform the LA, on a termly basis, of the details of students who fail to attend regularly, or who have missed ten Academy days or more without authorisation.

Where a student has not returned to the Academy for ten days after an authorised absence, or is absent from the Academy without authorisation for twenty consecutive Academy days, the Academy will remove the student from the admissions register if the Academy and the LA have failed to establish the whereabouts of the student after making reasonable enquiries.

## 6. Attendance Register

The Academy uses SIMS school management information system to keep attendance registers to ensure they are as accurate as possible and can be easily analysed and shared with the appropriate authorities.

Designated staff members will take the attendance register at the start of each Academy day and at the start of the afternoon session. This register will record whether students are:

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

The Academy will use the national attendance codes to ensure attendance and absence are monitored and recorded in a consistent way. The following codes will be used:

- / Present in the morning
- \ Present in the afternoon
- L Late arrival before the register has closed
- C Leave of absence granted by the Academy
- H Authorised holiday
- E Excluded but no alternative provision made
- I Illness
- M Medical or dental appointments
- R Religious observance
- S Study leave
- T Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence
- G Unauthorised holiday
- N Reason not yet provided
- O Unauthorised absence
- U Arrived after registration closed
- D Dual registered at another educational establishment
- B Off-site education activity
- J At an interview with prospective employers, or another educational establishment
- P Participating in a supervised sporting activity
- V Educational visit or trip
- W Work experience
- Y Exceptional circumstances
- Z Student not on admission register

When the Academy has planned in advance to be fully or partially closed, the code '#' will be used for the relevant students who are absent. This code will also be used to record year groups who are not due to attend because the Academy has set different term dates for different years (for example, Induction Days).

All amendments made to the attendance register will include the original entry, the amended entry, the reason for the amendment, the date of amendment and the name and role of the person who made the amendment.

Every entry received into the attendance register will be preserved for three years.



## **7. Authorising Parental Absence Requests**

Parents will be required to request certain types of absence in advance. All requests for absence will be handled by the Principal. The decision to grant or refuse the request will be at the sole discretion of the Principal, taking the best interests of the student and the impact on the student's education into account. The Principal's decision is not subject to appeal; however, the Academy will be sympathetic to requests for absence by parents, and will not deny any request without good reason.

### **Leave of Absence**

The Academy will only grant a student a leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. In order to have requests for a leave of absence considered, the Academy will expect parents to complete the 'Exceptional Leave Request' form and return it to the Academy twenty days before the requested date.

Any requests for leave during term time will be considered on an individual basis and the student's previous attendance record will be taken into account. Where the absence is granted, the Principal will determine the length of time that the student can be away from the Academy. The Academy is not likely to grant leave of absence for the purposes of family holidays.

Requests for leave will not be granted in the following circumstances:

- During Year 7 when a student is settling into the Academy, unless certain exceptional circumstances apply (for example, the death of a family member)
- During Year 11
- Immediately before and during assessment periods
- When a student's attendance record shows any unauthorised absence
- Where a student's authorised absence record is already below 97% for any reason
- When requests are regular or when patterns become identifiable

If term-time leave is not granted, taking a student out of the Academy will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and may result in sanctions, such as a penalty notice. The Academy cannot grant leave of absence retrospectively; therefore, any absences that were not approved by the Academy in advance will be marked as unauthorised.

### **Illness and Healthcare Appointments**

Parents will be expected to make medical or dental appointments outside of Academy hours wherever possible. Where this is not possible, parents will be expected to obtain approval for their child's absence to attend such appointments as far in advance as is practicable. Parents will be responsible for ensuring their child misses only the amount of time necessary to attend the appointment.

### **Performances and Activities, including Paid Work**

The Academy will ensure that all students engaging in performances or activities, whether they receive payment or not, which require them to be absent from the Academy, understand that they will be required to obtain a licence from the LA which authorises the absence(s).

Additional arrangements will be made by the Academy for students engaging in performances or activities that require them to be absent from the Academy to ensure they do not fall behind in their education. These arrangements will be approved by the LA who will ensure that the arrangements are suitable for the student.

The student will receive education that, when taken together over the term of the licence, amounts to a minimum of three hours per day that the student would be required to attend a school maintained by the LA issuing the licence. This requirement will be met by ensuring a student receives an education:

- For not less than six hours a week; and
- During each complete period of four weeks (or if there is a period of less than four weeks, then during that period), for periods of time not less than three hours a day; and
- On days where the student would be required to attend school if they were attending a school maintained by the LA; and
- For not more than five hours on any such day.

Where a licence has been granted by the LA and it specifies dates of absence, no further authorisation will be needed from the Academy. Where an application does not specify dates, and it has been approved by the LA, it is at the discretion of the Principal to authorise the leave of absence for each day. The Principal will not authorise any absences which would mean that a student's attendance would fall below 96%. Where a licence has not been obtained, the Principal will not authorise any absence for a performance or activity.

### **Religious Observance**

The Academy will only authorise absence on grounds of religious observance for days that are exclusively set apart for religious observance by the relevant religious body. The Academy will define this as a day where the student's parents would be expected by an established religious body to stay away from their employment to mark the occasion.

The Academy may seek advice from the religious body in question where there is doubt over the request.

### **Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Absence**

Where a student's parent belongs to a community covered by this code and is travelling for occupational purposes, the parent will be expected to request a leave of absence for their child at least twenty days in advance. Absences will not be granted for students from these communities under this code for reasons other than travel for occupational purposes.

## **8. SEND and Health-Related Absences**

The Academy recognises that students with SEND and / or health conditions, including mental health issues, may face greater barriers to attendance than their peers, and will incorporate robust procedures to support students who find attending the Academy difficult.

In line with the SEND Policy and Supporting Students with Medical Conditions Policy, the Academy will ensure that reasonable adjustments are made for disabled students to reduce barriers to attendance, in line with any EHCPs or IHPs that have been implemented. The Academy will secure additional support from external partners to help bolster attendance where appropriate.

Where the Academy has concerns that a student's non-attendance may be related to mental health issues, parents will be contacted to discuss the issue and whether there are any contributory factors to their child's lack of attendance. Where staff have a mental health concern about a student that is also a Safeguarding concern, they will inform the DSL and the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy will be followed. All students will be supported with their mental health in accordance with the Academy's Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Policy.

If a student is unable to attend the Academy for long periods of time due to their health, the Academy will:

- Inform the LA if a student is likely to be away from the Academy for more than 15 Academy days
- Provide the LA with information about the student's needs, capabilities and programme of work
- Help the student reintegrate at the Academy when they return
- Make sure the student is kept informed about Academy events and clubs
- Encourage the student to stay in contact with other students during their absence

The Academy will incorporate an action plan to help any students with SEND and / or health issues cope with the stress and anxiety that attending the Academy may cause them. Such plans will be regularly monitored and reviewed until the student is attending the Academy as normal and there have been signs of significant improvement.

To support the attendance of students with SEND and / or health issues, the Academy will consider:

- Holding termly meetings to evaluate any implemented reasonable adjustments
- Incorporating an Attendance Support Plan
- Carrying out 'strengths and difficulties' questionnaires
- Using an internal or external specialists
- Providing support in the Academy's Inclusion Support Centre (ISC)
- Enabling a student to have a reduced timetable
- Ensuring a student can have a 'safe space' to spend lunch and breaktimes
- Implementing a system whereby students can request to leave a classroom if they feel they need time out
- Temporary late starts or early finishes
- Phased returns to the Academy where there has been a long period of absence
- Small group work or one-to-one sessions
- Tailored support to meet their individual needs

## **9. Absence in Exceptional Circumstances**

Exceptional circumstances will include when a student is unable to attend because:

- Transport provided by the Academy, LA or parent is not available and the student's home is not within walking distance
- There has been widespread disruption to travel services which has prevented the student from attending
- The student is in custody and will be detained for less than four months

The use of the 'Y' code for exceptional circumstances will be collected in the school census for statistical purposes.

## **10. Truancy**

Truancy will be considered as any absence of part, or all, of one or more days from the Academy, during which the Academy has not been notified of the cause behind such absence.

All staff will be actively engaged in supporting the regular attendance of students, and understand the importance of continuity in each student's learning.

Any student with permission to leave the Academy during the Academy must sign out at reception and sign back in again on their return.

Immediate action will be taken when there are any concerns that a student might be truanting.

- If the Academy suspects that a student is truanting from the Academy, the student's Head of Year will contact their parent to inform them that the student is not at the Academy and to attempt to ascertain their whereabouts
- If a parent has received a 'Truancy Call' text message but they believe their child should be present at the Academy, they should immediately contact the Academy's Attendance Officer or their child's Head of Year
- Students who are subject to a CP or CIN Plan, who have a Social Worker, who are LAC or who are considered to be vulnerable are placed on the attendance 'Red List'. If a student who is on attendance 'Red List' is absent without notification of the reason why / is found to be truanting during the Academy day, their Head of Year will contact their parent immediately to inform them of this. They will also contact the student's Social Worker if they have been unable to make contact with the parent or ascertain from the parent the reason for the absence

The following procedures will be taken in the event of a truancy:

- A letter of warning will be sent to the parents of the student, informing them of the truancy and stating that any future occurrences could result in further action being taken
- If any further truancy occurs, then the Academy will consider issuing a penalty notice
- A penalty notice will be issued where there is overt truancy, inappropriate parentally-condoned absence, excessive holidays in term-time and persistent late arrival at the Academy

## **11. Missing Children**

Students are not permitted to leave the Academy premises during the Academy day unless they have permission from the relevant member of staff to do so. The following procedures will be taken in the event of a student going missing whilst at the Academy:

- If a member of staff suspects a student is truanting from their lesson / has gone missing from the Academy, they will immediately request 'OnCall - Truancy' support by emailing [on.call@chelsea-academy.org](mailto:on.call@chelsea-academy.org)
- The OnCall member of staff will carry out a thorough search of the Academy (classrooms, toilets, other parts of the Academy site) in order to locate the student
- If the OnCall member of staff is unable to locate the student, the student's Head of Year will be notified
- The Head of Year will contact the student's parent in order to inform them that they are unable to locate them in the Academy and to attempt to ascertain their whereabouts
- If the parents have had no contact from the student, and are unable to ascertain their whereabouts, the parent will be advised to contact the police
- If the missing student has an allocated social worker, is a looked-after child, or has any SEND, then the appropriate personnel will also be informed

- When the student has been located, members of staff will care for and talk to the student to ensure they are safe and well
- Parents and any other agencies will be informed immediately when the student has been located
- The Principal will take the appropriate action to ensure that students understand they must not leave the premises, and sanctions will be issued if deemed necessary. Appropriate disciplinary procedures will be followed in accordance with the Academy's Behaviour Policy
- The Principal will ensure that a full investigation is carried out in order to draw a conclusion as to how the incident occurred. Policies and procedures will be reviewed in accordance with the outcome where necessary

## **12. Attendance Intervention**

In order to ensure the Academy has effective procedures for supporting attendance and managing absence, the Director of Attendance and the Attendance officer, supported by the Senior Vice Principal (Inclusion), will establish a range of specific, evidence-based interventions which address barriers to attendance and support all students to attend the Academy regularly. They will monitor the implementation and quality of these procedures and seek robust evidence of the procedures that work. The Academy's attendance intervention procedures are detailed in the CAW4A Procedures for Staff document, and include:

### **Attendance Officer supported by the Director of Attendance**

- Half-term attendance monitoring groups of identified student
- Regular one-to-one meetings with parents and students
- Stepped attendance processes in relation to letters to parents, following up unauthorised absences and reasonable enquiries
- Responsibility for Absence Line, Truancy Call and the daily 'Have You Seen List' (HYSL)
- Responsibility for ensuring accuracy of daily registers
- Communication with parents in relation to reasons for, and authorisation of, absences
- Attendance at half-termly Attendance Intervention Panel meetings
- Regular meetings with Director of Attendance and Heads of Years

### **Heads of Year**

- Daily emails to parents of non-attenders
- Daily attendance monitoring and follow-up
- HYSL and Red List procedures
- Attendance at half-termly Attendance Intervention Panel meetings
- Regular meetings with Attendance Officer / Director of Attendance
- Weekly one-to-one meetings with Line Manager
- Attendance Intervention Plans
- 'Attendance mantras' with parents and students
- Scripted 'attendance conversations' with students
- Praise and rewards, including personalised postcards and attendance awards

### **Learning Coaches**

- Daily attendance monitoring and follow-up
- Regular communication with parents
- Weekly Coaching Time 'attendance tracker' procedures
- Scripted 'attendance conversations' with coachees

## All Staff

- Attendance Inset sessions
- 'Classroom Dos and Don'ts' procedures for prior attenders
- 'Give them a smile' board
- 'Attendance mantras' with students

The Director of Attendance and the Attendance officer, supported by the Senior Vice Principal (Inclusion), will also use attendance data, in line with the 'Monitoring and Analysing Absence' section of this policy, to develop specific strategies to improve attendance where patterns of absence are emerging. These strategies will be developed on a case-by-case basis, and will consider the particular needs of the students whom the intervention is designed to target.

The Academy will aim to improve attendance in the overall school cohort by acknowledging good attendance in the following ways:

- Personalised postcards home
- Personalised attendance awards
- 'Queue jump' passes
- Pizza parties
- End-of-year 'attendance trip'

The Academy will develop strategies for ensuring that students with health needs or home circumstances that result in additional absences are not unfairly excluded from attendance rewards (for example, by setting individualised targets).

## 13. Working with parents to improve attendance

The Academy will work to cultivate strong, respectful relationships with parents and families and work to build trust and engagement. Open and honest communication will be maintained with students and their families about the expectations of Academy life, attendance and academic performance so that they understand what to expect and what is expected of them. The school will liaise with other agencies working with students and their families to support attendance (for example, Early Help and Children's Social Care).

The Academy will ensure that there are two sets of emergency contact details for each student wherever possible to ensure the Academy has additional options for getting in touch with adults responsible for a student where the student is absent without notification or authorisation.

The Academy will ensure that parents are aware of their legal duty to ensure that their child attends the Academy regularly and to facilitate their child's legal right to a full-time education. Parents will be made aware that this means their child must attend the Academy every day that it is open, except in certain circumstances (for example, sickness or absences that have been authorised by the Principal in advance). The Academy will regularly inform parents about their child's levels of attendance, absence and punctuality, and will ensure that parents are aware of the benefits that regular attendance at the Academy can have for their child educationally, socially and developmentally.

If a pattern of absence becomes problematic, the Attendance Officer and / or Head of Year will work collaboratively with the student and their parents to improve attendance by

addressing the specific barriers that prevent the student from being able to attend the Academy regularly. The Academy will always take into consideration the sensitivity of some of the reasons for student absence and will approach families to offer support rather than immediately reach for punitive approaches.

Where these barriers are related to the student's experience in the Academy (for example, bullying) the Head of Year and any relevant school staff (for example, the DSL, Mental Health Lead, SENDCo) will work together to address these. Where the barriers are outside of the Academy's control (for example, they are related to issues within the student's family). The Head of Year and other members of the Pastoral team will liaise with any relevant external agencies or authorities (for example, Children's Social Care or the LA) and will encourage parents to access support that they may need.

#### **14. Persistent Absence (PA)**

There are various groups of students who may be vulnerable to high absence and PA, such as:

- Children subject to a Child Protection (CP) or Child in Need (CiN) Plan
- Looked After Children
- Young carers
- Students who are eligible for FSM
- Students with EAL
- Students with SEND needs
- Students who have faced bullying and / or discrimination

The Academy will ensure it provides support to students at risk of PA, in conjunction with all relevant external authorities where necessary.

The Academy will use a number of methods to help support students at risk of PA to attend the Academy. These include:

- Offering catch-up support to build confidence and bridge gaps in learning
- Meeting with the student and their parent to discuss patterns of absence, barriers to attendance, and any other problems they may be having
- Establishing plans to remove barriers and provide additional support
- Leading regular check-ins to review progress and assess the impact of support
- Making regular contact with the student's parent to discuss progress
- Assessing whether an EHCP or IHP may be appropriate
- Considering what support for re-engagement might be needed, including with regard to additional vulnerability

The Academy will focus particularly on students who have rates of absence over 50 percent, and will work with the LA and other partners to engage all relevant services needed to identify and address the wider barriers to attendance these students are facing.

Where a student at risk of PA is also at increased risk of harm, the Academy will work in conjunction with all relevant authorities (for example, Children's Social Care) to support the student in line with the Academy's duty of care. The Academy will also bear in mind that the continuation of severe PA following intervention may, in itself, constitute neglect, and will escalate any concerns in this regard in line with the Academy's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

#### **15. Legal Intervention**

The Academy will allow sufficient time for attendance interventions and engagement strategies to improve students' attendance; however, where engagement strategies to improve attendance have not had the desired effect after one term, the Director of Attendance will consider:

- Holding a formal meeting with parents and the Academy's point of contact in the School Attendance Support Team
- Working with the LA to put a Parenting Contract or an Education Supervision Order in place
- Referring to the Academy's DSL to engage Children's Social Care where there are Safeguarding concerns

Where the above measures are not effective, the Principal will issue a fixed penalty notice in line with the LA's Code of Conduct.

Where attendance still does not improve following a fixed penalty notice, the Academy will work with the LA to take forward attendance prosecution as a last resort.

## **16. Monitoring and Analysing Absence**

Heads of Year, the Attendance Officer and the Director of Attendance will monitor and analyse attendance data weekly to ensure that intervention and support is delivered quickly to address habitual absence at the first signs.

The Academy will collect data regarding punctuality, truancy, and authorised and unauthorised absence, for:

- The Academy cohort as a whole
- Individual year groups
- Year groups preparing for exams
- Individual students
- Demographic groups, e.g. students from different ethnic groups or economic backgrounds.
- Other groups of students (for example, students with SEND needs, LAC and students eligible for FSM)
- Students at risk of PA

The Director of Attendance will conduct thorough analysis of the above data on a half-termly, termly and full-year basis to identify patterns and trends. This will include identifying, for each group:

- Patterns in uses of certain codes
- Particular days of poor attendance
- Subjects which have low lesson attendance
- Historic trends of attendance and absence
- Barriers to attendance

The Director of Attendance and Attendance Officer will provide regular reports to staff across the Academy to enable them to track the attendance of students and to implement attendance procedures. The Director of Attendance will also be responsible for monitoring how attendance data changes in response to any interventions implemented to increase attendance in future.



The Governing Board will regularly review attendance data, including examinations of recent and historic trends, and will support the Leadership Team in setting goals and prioritising areas of focus for attendance support based on this data.

The Academy will also benchmark its attendance data against local, regional and national-level data to identify areas of success and areas for improvement, and will share

## **17. Training of Staff**

The Academy will recognise that early intervention can prevent poor attendance. As such, staff will receive training in identifying potentially at-risk students as part of their induction and refresher training.

The Governing Board will ensure that teachers and support staff receive training in line with this policy as part of their induction. Following this initial training, staff will be offered regular and ongoing training as part of their CPD opportunities.

Training will cover at least the following:

- The importance of good attendance
- That absence is almost invariably a result of wider circumstances
- The legal requirements on schools (for example, the keeping of registers)
- The Academy's strategies and procedures for monitoring and improving attendance
- The Academy's procedures for multi-agency working to provide intensive support for students who need it

The Governing Board will provide dedicated and enhanced attendance training to the Director of Attendance, the Attendance Officer and other staff with specific attendance functions in their role. This will include training regarding interpreting and analysing attendance data and supporting students to overcome barriers to attendance.

Staff will receive training to ensure they understand that increased absence from the Academy could indicate a Safeguarding concern, and know how such concerns should be managed.

## **18. Monitoring and Review**

Attendance and punctuality will be monitored throughout the year. The school's attendance target is 96 percent.

This policy will be reviewed every three years by the Principal. The next scheduled review date for this policy is September 2025.

Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all relevant stakeholders.

## Appendix A: Key Attendance Monitoring Procedures

The Attendance Tracker is shared with Learning Coaches every Monday detailing attendance data and tracking information

Learning Coaches use the Attendance Tracker as a basis for attendance conversations with their Coachees. This happens during at least one Coaching Time session each week. Any attendance / punctuality trends noticed by the Learning Coach are passed to their Head of Year

The HYSL is shared with Heads of Year and other members of the Pastoral Team each day by break time. Heads of Year follow-up these absences and follow 'Red List' procedures for any 'Red List' students who are on the HYSL

A 'Truancy Call' text message is sent to parents on the first day of absence for any student whose absence has not been reported

A stepped approach will be followed in relation to absences due to illness or when Academy procedures for reporting absence are not being followed. These steps are:

Occurrence	Action	Method	Staff Responsible
First instance	Welfare check	Email / phonecall	Learning Coach
Second instance	Inform that after 3rd instance, absence will be unauthorised	Email / phonecall	Head of Year
Third instance	Formal letter informing that after this a medical note will be required	Email Letter	Attendance Officer
Beyond	Request medical note for each period of absence	Email letter	Attendance Officer

If a student fails to attend the Academy and there has been no explanation of this absence, these procedures are followed:

Duration of Unexplained Absence	Action	Staff Responsible
Third consecutive day of unexplained absence	Phone call to parent	Head of Year
No contact with parent / no information despite reasonable enquiries	Home visit	Head of Year and Attendance Officer
No contact / information from home visit	Reasonable Enquiries referral to LA	Head of Year and Attendance Officer

When there are concerns about a student's attendance, initially a stepped approach will be followed . The steps are:

Attendance	Step	Action	Method	Staff Responsible
<97%	Step 1	Letter of concern sent	Email	Attendance Officer
	Step 2	Student meeting with Attendance Officer		Attendance Officer
	Step 3	Parent meeting with Head of Year	Email	Head of Year
	Early Help Referral			Head of Year
<93%	Step 4	FPN warning letter	Letter & email	Attendance Officer

<90%	Step 5	FPN	Letter & email	Attendance Officer
------	--------	-----	----------------	--------------------

In addition, specific students whose attendance falls to between 91% and 94% will form part of a 'Half-Term Attendance Monitoring Group' overseen by the Attendance Officer. During the specified half term, The Attendance Officer will closely monitor the attendance of each student in the group and meet weekly with the student to discuss their attendance. The Attendance Officer will also contact the parent of each student at the end of the week to discuss their child's attendance and agree actions for the following week.

Students whose attendance drops below 90% will be monitored closely by their Head of Year. The Head of Year will meet initially with the parent and student to discuss their child's attendance and set targets for improvement. These targets, along with specified support and rewards, will be set out in an Attendance Intervention Plan which will be monitored by the Head of Year and reviewed regularly.

The Academy will allow sufficient time for attendance interventions and engagement strategies to improve students' attendance; however, where these do not have the desired effect after one term, the Director of Attendance will consider:

- Holding a formal meeting with parents and the Academy's point of contact in the School Attendance Support Team
- Working with the LA to put a Parenting Contract or an Education Supervision Order in place
- Referring to the Academy's DSL to engage Children's Social Care where there are Safeguarding concerns

Where the above measures are not effective, the Principal will issue a fixed penalty notice in line with the LA's Code of Conduct. Where attendance still does not improve following a fixed penalty notice, the Academy will work with the LA to take forward attendance prosecution as a last resort.