

South Marston CE Primary School



Pupil Attendance Policy

Modelled on Diocese of Bristol Academy Trust - Level 2 policy

Drafted by: Headteacher

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Date approved / adopted by AC	14.11.22	14/11/22
Signed By:	M Hendry Headteacher	A Robb – Webb Chair of Academy Council

1) Statement of Principle

In the Diocese of Bristol Academies Trust and South Marston CE Primary, we believe that attendance and punctuality at our Academies is vital to the wellbeing and future prospects of all our pupils. Attendance and punctuality are intrinsically linked to our Trust's strategy for raising achievement. This policy provides the framework within which all staff, parents, pupils, carers and external agencies can contribute to the development and maintenance of a learning environment where high attendance and excellent punctuality is the "norm".

2) Aims

- To improve the overall percentage attendance and reduce unauthorised absence.
- To reduce the number of students who are persistent absentees (PAs).
- To establish a clear system for maintaining full attendance and excellent punctuality and clearly communicate this to all Trust staff, pupils and parents who are all working to agreed routines and standards;
- To develop a culture for learning environment across the Trust where pupils are encouraged to attend regularly and to be punctual because pupils feel valued members of the Academy community and that they are safe and secure;
- To put in place an effective and efficient administration system for monitoring and intervening with issues relating to attendance and punctuality.
- To offer pupils and parents/carers good support, advice and guidance on the importance of good attendance and punctuality.

3) Objectives

3.1 For Pupils:-

- To ensure that pupils maximise their learning potential by taking responsibility for achieving excellent levels of attendance and punctuality.
- To support their fellow pupils and thereby their Academy in winning awards that relate to attendance and punctuality.
- To follow the Academy procedures for dealing with attendance and punctuality e.g., bringing in signed letters from parents after a period of absence or late arrival for the Academy day.

3.2 For Parents and Carers

- To be fully supportive of the Academy with regard to attendance and punctuality as part of signing up to the Home-Academy Agreement.
- To support the Academy and their child(ren) by not requesting absence for holidays during term time and minimising where possible all other authorised absence, for example, dental appointments during the school day.

- To follow the Academy procedures for dealing with attendance through making contact with the Academy on the first day of absence and where this is not possible, ensuring that they send a signed letter to the Academy when their child returns.
- To read and follow the guide (Appendix 1 Academy Guidance on Attendance for Parents and Carers) for parents/carers which details all our expectations and procedures regarding attendance and punctuality.

3.3 For Teachers

- To act as role models by being punctual to every lesson/registration.
- To take the register at the beginning of every lesson/registration period in accordance with the procedures outlined in this policy.
- To deal with any unauthorised absence from lessons, monitor the daily attendance statistics and deal with suspected truancy as detailed in this policy.
- To take responsibility for dealing with issues of attendance and punctuality in relation to their class.
- To encourage their pupils and tutees to take responsibility for their attendance and punctuality through monitoring and reinforcing the need for high levels of attendance and excellent punctuality.
- To assist in reintegrating any of their pupils after a period of prolonged absence.
- To raise the profile of good attendance and monitor the attendance of pupils within their class.

3.4 Office Staff

- To ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of the Academy's computerised registration systems for attendance and punctuality. For example, processing registers, preparing and distributing attendance data.
- To liaise with teachers/senior leaders and establish reasons for absence including telephone calls to parents/carers on the first day of absence, letters and arranging home visits.
- To assist in following up poor attendance and punctuality, for example, organising attendance panel meetings with parents/carers and external agencies, arranging home visits, ensuring that pupil contracts and targets are agreed and monitored.

3.5 For the Leadership Team/Inclusion team

- The Senior Leader with responsibility for attendance, to co-ordinate and monitor the policy and procedures for attendance and punctuality throughout the Academy.
- To raise the profile and importance of attendance and punctuality, for example, through assemblies, newsletters and appropriate reward systems.
- To analyse and act swiftly in response to report data on attendance and punctuality.
- Ensure that the learning environment on offer to pupils, through the curriculum, personalised learning, behaviour policy and reintegration procedures, create the foundations for excellent attendance and punctuality and low levels of fixed term exclusions.
- To ensure that Academy expectations in regards to this policy on attendance and punctuality is communicated clearly to all stakeholders.

3.6 For the Academy Council

- To regularly review and agree the Attendance and Punctuality Management Policy in line with this policy.
- To annually agree attendance targets.
- To take a lead role in supporting the Academy in the implementation of its approach to attendance and punctuality especially in our response to parents in supporting unauthorised absence.

4) Absence

Under Section 7 of the Education Act (1996), parents/carers have a legal duty to make sure that their child(ren) attends the Academy on a regular and full-time basis. Every half day absence has to be classified by the Academy as either authorised or unauthorised. The Academy must record the reason for any half-day absence. Unauthorised absence such as truancy will lead to sanctions being taken against pupils or in exceptional cases, extended periods of unauthorised absence may lead to legal action being taken against parents.

Under normal circumstances, the only reason a pupil should miss any lessons is if they are too ill to attend. This is an example of an authorised absence, i.e. pupils have missed a morning or afternoon session for a valid reason. Unauthorised absences are those, which the Academy does not consider reasonable and for which no permission has been given. This includes keeping students away from lessons unnecessarily, truancy and absences, which the Academy considers to have not been properly explained.

The Education (Pupil Regulations) 2006 and the DfES Circular 10/99 state that a leave of absence can only be granted at the discretion of the Local Board/Principal.

The Academy Council/Headteacher should not grant leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances. The application must be made in advance and the Academy Council/Headteacher must be satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances based on the individual facts and circumstances of the case which warrant the leave. Where a leave of absence is granted, the Academy Council/Headteacher will determine the number of days a pupil can be away from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the Academy Council/Headteacher's discretion.

5) Procedures for Registration

Each Academy should set out its procedures for registration and ensure that all staff, pupils and parents/carers are aware of the procedures. These should include how to report sickness absence or apply for leave of absence, when a pupil will be marked as 'late' and the consequences of this. (See Appendix A)

6) Punctuality/Truancy

It is vitally important that all staff are punctual to ensure that pupils understand that lateness is not acceptable. Class teachers/Senior leaders and the inclusion team must reinforce the importance of punctuality and attendance when communicating with pupils and parents.

Procedures for dealing with lateness and truancy should be set out in the Academy's Attendance Procedures document. (See appendix A)

7) Strategies for Ensuring High Attendance and Excellent Punctuality

Senior Leaders at each Academy should take overall responsibility for encouraging and rewarding publicly high attendance and excellent levels of punctuality. This will commonly be achieved through assemblies and reward schemes. These may include certificates or other rewards for 100% attendance.

At South Marston CE Primary rewards such as certificates or letters home will be awarded at the end of each long term (3 times a year) for ongoing excellent attendance. Attendance may also be recognised on a class basis too.

7.2 First Day contact and Dealing with absence

The academy follows a clear procedure for contacting parents on the first day of unexplained absence and the days following. See Appendix 1

7.3 Monitoring Repeated absence (See appendix 2 for flowchart of procedures)

Attendance and punctuality is regularly monitored (every term) by the Inclusion team/Senior Leadership team and reported to the Academy Council in verbal and written heads reports.

Where students are likely to have a period of long absence, for example from a period of illness, then arrangements should be made to send work home if appropriate to do so.

Where there is a significant pattern of absence, the Senior Leadership team/Inclusion team should:

- Involve the local EWS/trust Inclusion Lead in developing strategies for intervention.
- Attend attendance review meetings to discuss any students causing concern regarding attendance and punctuality.
- For attendance between 90% - 95%, the inclusion team will make contact with the family to make them aware that the attendance is falling and offer any support for the family. They will share next steps with the family if attendance falls below 90%.
- Students with attendance between 85% and 90% should also be tracked and the appropriate intervention taken. A warning letter (Appendix 6) to inform them that their attendance is low will be sent and a meeting with parents is requested to plan next steps to improve absence rate. Patterns should also be analysed to detect any condoned absence or suspected periods of truancy.
- If attendance falls below 85%, the school will contact the Education Welfare Service for the local authority to lead an absence enquiry.
- If the attendance is longer than a period of ten continuous days and is treated as unauthorised absence, the child is considered to be 'Missing in Education' and key agencies will be informed. All steps should be taken to ascertain the student's whereabouts and documentation should be kept on this process.
- The LA must be further informed if the student's absence is continuous for a further 10 days if whereabouts are unknown and all contact has failed.

In a small minority of cases, referrals may have to be made to the LA, for example, where parents are unwilling and failing to comply with the agreed action plans as a result of a panel meeting. This may lead to the issue of a fixed penalty notice and possible court action being taken if the LA involvement does not lead to the student returning to the Academy.

7.4 Warning Letters and Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs)

The Trust believes that when avenues of supportive intervention such as telephone calls, meetings with parents and any home visits have been used and there has been no improvement in attendance then we will use the legal avenues that are open to us. The Trust encourages Academies to use the following:-

7.4.1 Leave of Absence

As stated in Section 4, the Academy does not support any holidays requested during term time. If a request is made for a leave of absence and this is not approved and the student does not attend during the stated period then a fixed penalty notice could be issued upon the student's return.

7.4.2 Late for the Academy day (after registers have closed – use of the U code)

Students who arrive at the Academy after 9.30am are registered as “late after the registers have closed” and this is recorded as a U, which is an unauthorised absence for the am session. Any parent/carer of a student who records more than 5 U codes in any one half-term a meeting will be arranged to offer support for the family.

7.5 Reintegration Programmes

If a student has had a period of absence for longer than five days then the class teacher will instigate the reintegration programme. This will involve the class teacher/inclusion team supporting their pupil in reintegrating back into Academy life. A back to school meeting can be arranged if it is appropriate to do so.

7.6 Reintegration through the Guidance manager

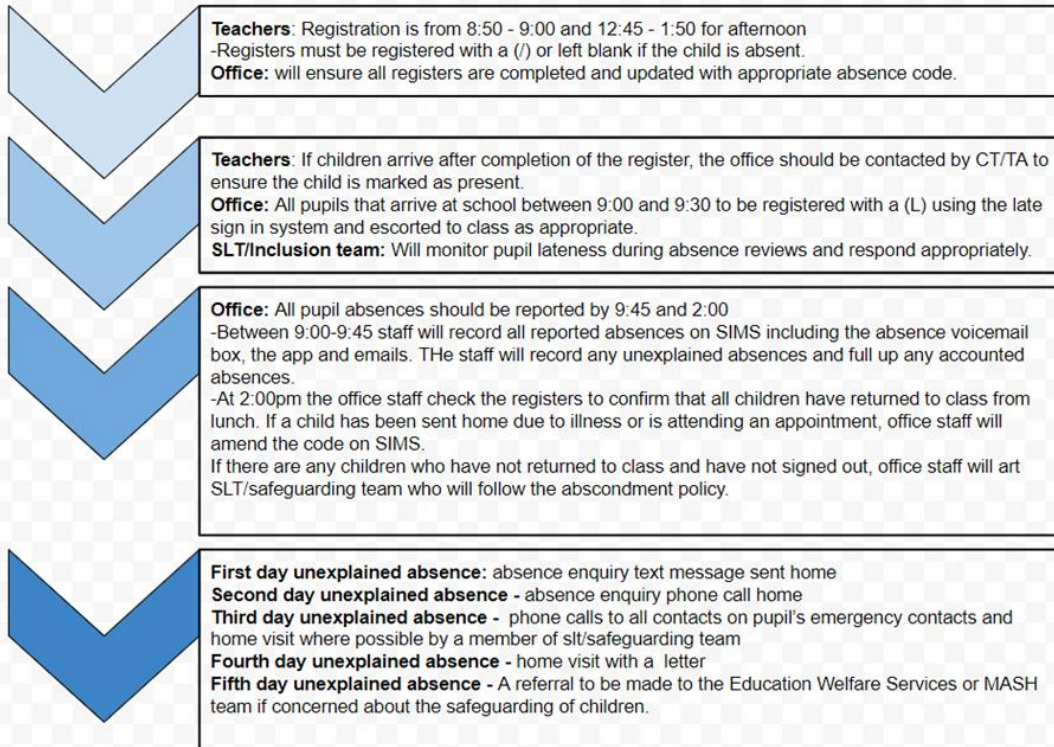
Following a period of prolonged absence, a student will be referred to the EWO or other appropriate person depending on the level of support required. A meeting will take place with the parent/carer and student to discuss a reintegration programme. Consideration will be given to a reduced timetable initially to ensure a smooth reintegration if appropriate to do so.

8 Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

The Senior Leaders of the Academy will monitor the effectiveness of this policy through analysis of attendance data and reports. Patterns of lateness or absence should be identified and action plans generated. These could include reviewing any related policies and procedures such as Student Voice/Council in working with students to generate strategies to improve punctuality. Comparisons will be made across the Trust and where appropriate actions to improve attendance and/or punctuality will feature in Academy Improvement Plans.

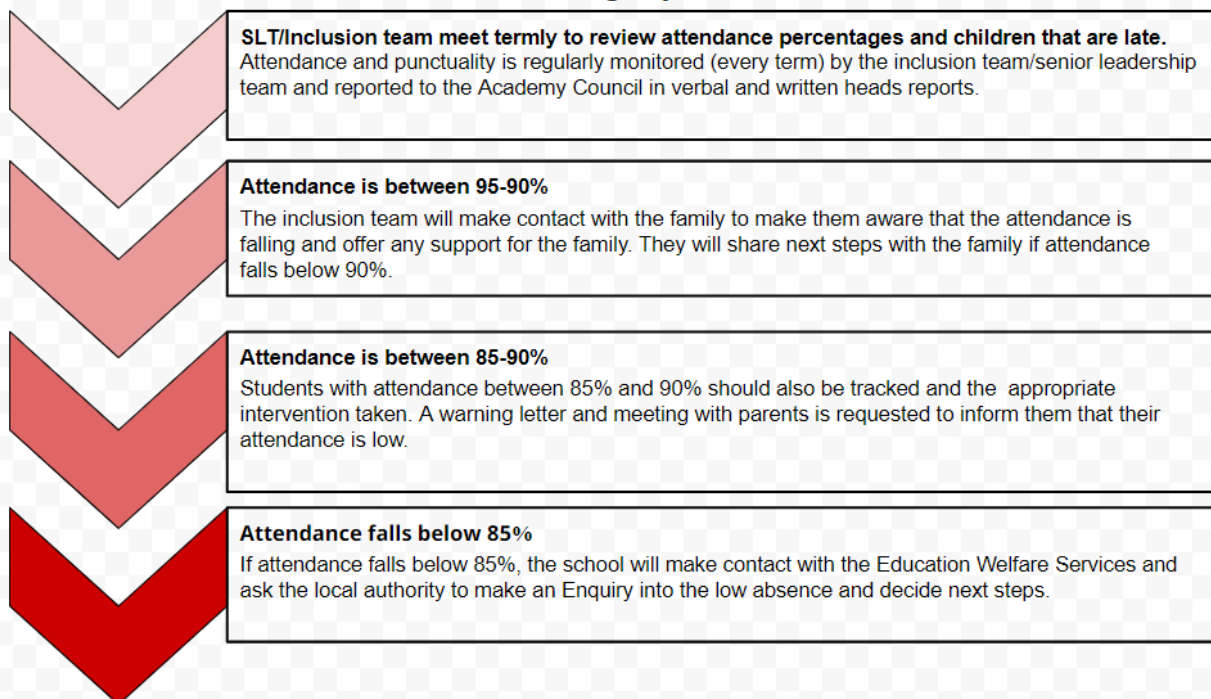
Appendix 1: Guidance on Attendance for Parents and Carers/Attendance and unexplained absences

Attendance and unexplained absences procedure



Appendix 2: Guidance on Attendance for Parents and Carers/Monitoring repeated absences

Monitoring repeated absences



Appendix 3 – Attendance Codes, Descriptions and Meanings
For use with the am and pm roll call.

Code	Description	Statistical meaning	Physical meaning
/	Present (AM)	Present	In for whole school
\	Present (PM)	Present	In for whole school
@	Do not use	Unauthorised Absence LATE FOR SESSIONS	
B	Educated off site	Approved educational Activity	Out for the whole session
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence	Out for the whole session
D	Dual registration	Approved Educational Activity	Out for the whole session
E	Excluded	Authorised absence	Out for the whole session
F	Extended family holiday agreed)	Authorised absence	Out for the whole session
G	Family holiday (not agreed)	Unauthorised absence	Out for the whole session
H	Family Holiday agreed	Authorised absence	Out for the whole session
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc appointments)	Authorised absence	Out for the whole session
J	Interview	Approved Educational Activity	Out for the whole session
L	Late	Present	Late for session
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absences	Out for the whole session
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence	Out for the whole session
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence	Out for the whole session
P	Approved Sporting Activity	Approved Educational Activity	Out for the whole session
R	Religious Observance	Authorised absences	Out for the whole session

S	Study Leave	Authorised absences	Out for the whole session
T	Traveller Absence	Authorised absences	Out for the whole session
U	Late after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence	Late for session
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Educational Activity	Out for the whole session

W	Work experience	Approved Educational Activity	Out for the whole session
X	DCSF: School closed to Students	Attendance not required	Out for the whole session
Y	Enforced closure	Attendance not required	Out for the whole session
Z	Do NOT USE	Authorised Absence	Out for the whole session
!	DCSF X: Non-compulsory school age abs	Attendance not required	Out for the whole session
#	School closed to Students and staff	Attendance not required	Out for the whole session
*	DCSF Z: Student not on roll	Attendance not required	Out for the whole session
-	All should attend/ No mark recorded	No mark	No mark for session

Appendix 4 Example Application for Leave of Absence

Please read the following information before you complete the request.

As you are aware it is the policy of the Diocese of Bristol Academies Trust not to allow any holiday or extended leave during term time. However, if you wish to request leave of absence you need to read the following advice and complete the form below.

This form must be completed as early as possible before the requested leave of absence. Each request for absence will be considered individually and we will take into account:

- The student's previous attendance history;
- The time of the year regards any public or internal examinations;
- Attendance and punctuality in the current academic year;
- The nature of the request and whether any other requests have been made.

A fixed penalty notice could be issued should a pupil take leave of absence without permission.

Request of Absence form

Childs name:	
Class:	
Dates requested: (and total number of days missed)	
Reason for Absence: wedding/exam (please provide proof where applicable)	
	Office to complete below
Outcome:	
Current attendance	
Code on register:	
Date Letter sent to parent / carer	

Appendix 5: (Information) How much schooling has been missed?

100% Attendance means that you have been in school every day of the school year.

99% = 2 days missed of the school year (4 sessions missed)

98% = 4 days missed of the school year (8 sessions missed)

97% = 6 days missed of the school year (over 1 school week)

96% = 8 days missed of the school year (16 sessions missed)

95% = 10 days missed of the school year (2 school weeks)

94% = 12 days missed of the school year (24 sessions missed)

93% = 14 days missed of the school year (28 sessions missed)

92% = 16 days missed of the school year (over 3 school weeks)

91% = 18 days missed of the school year (36 sessions missed)

90% = 20 days missed of the school year (4 school weeks)

89% = 22 days missed of the school year (44 sessions missed)

88% = 24 days missed of the school year (48 sessions missed)

87% = 26 days missed of the school year (over 5 school weeks)

86% = 28 days missed of the school year (56 sessions missed)

85% = 30 days missed of the school year (6 school weeks)

70% = 1½ days missed per week (12 weeks missed per year)

60% = 2 days missed per week (2 days missed almost 4 months)

50% = 2½ days missed per week (19 weeks missed)

40% = 3 days missed per week (19 weeks = over ½ a school year missed)

Appendix 6: An Example letter



Dear,

We are concerned at recent high levels of absence from school.

Their current attendance has fallen to [percentage]. This low attendance will likely have an impact on their academic achievement.

The number of days of school missed due to absence is

We acknowledge that each family's circumstances are different and we aim to work with parents to provide the best education for every child.

We want to make sure that we can support their education in the best way possible and we would be keen for you to attend a meeting on to discuss this further and help improve their absence rate.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs M Hendry

Headteacher & Designated Safeguarding Lead