

SMALLTHORNE ACADEMY ATTENDANCE (Students)

Document Owner: Director of Inclusion

Date: September 2023

Status: Non-statutory



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Document Type	Smallthorne Academy Attendance (Student) Policy			
Reference/Version Number	CLT-ATT/S/ST-V1.4			
Summary	This policy meets the requirements of the from the Department for Academy attendance guidance Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on Academy attendance parental responsibility measures .			
Associated Documents	Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy			
Target Audience	All Students, Parents & Carers			
Date of this Version	September 2023			
Document Reviewer	Principal			
Document Owner	Director of Inclusion			
Review Body	Policy Admin Group	Meeting Date	17.11.22 12.10.23	
Union Consultation Date/s:	N/A	Meeting Date	N/A	
Proof Read				
Senior Leadership Team	N/A			
Approved/Ratified by	Board of Trustees	Meeting Date	16.12.19 12.12.22	
Review Frequency	Annual	Next Review Date	September 2024	
Date uploaded on website/s				
CLT n/r	Haywood n/r	Trentham n/r	Mill Hill n/r	Smallthorne V1.3 - 20.1.23 V1.4 - 13.10.23 (SW)
Date uploaded to Sharepoint/s				
CLT V1.0 - 9.9.22 V1.2 0 16.12.22 V1.3 - 20.1.23 V1.4 - 13.10.23	Haywood n/r	Trentham n/r	Mill Hill n/r	Smallthorne V1.0 11.12.20 15:14 V1.2 - 16.12.22 V1.3 - 20.1.23 V1.4 - 13.10.23
Acknowledged by Local Governing Committee/s:				
Acknowledged by Local Governing Committee/s:	Haywood n/r	Trentham n/r	Mill Hill n/r	Smallthorne 23.11.22 15.3.23

VERSION CONTROL

Version No:	Type of change	Date	Revisions from previous version
0.1	New Document	Sept 2019	New Policy
1.0	Format	Sept 2020	Corporate format only
1.1	Date change	Sept 2022	Date of version changed to 2022. Trustee signature box removed.
1.2	Personalisation	Nov 2022	Personalised to Smallthorne, section 4.1.b, 4.4.c, 4.8.a
1.3	Interim review	Jan 2023	Additional academy personalisation in section 4.2.b and 6. References to parents amended to parent/carer and students referred to as pupils (Primary Phase)
1.4	Annual Review	Sept 2023	Date changes and version numbers only

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1. STATUS

- a. Non-statutory.

2. AIMS

- a. Our Academy aims to meet its obligations with regard to attendance by:
 - i. Promoting excellent attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence;
 - ii. Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled;
 - iii. Acting early to address patterns of absence.
- b. We will also support parents/carers to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly, and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.
- c. The Academy recognises the fact that attendance and punctuality are vital components to the success of its pupils. Good attendance raises achievement; it helps to establish good patterns of behaviour and provides a routine in preparation for life beyond the Academy. Punctuality both to the Academy and to lessons shows respect and due regard to the importance of our Academy and our values of Smile, Strive and Shine.

3. LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

- a. This policy meets the requirements of the from the Department for Academy attendance guidance Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on Academy attendance parental responsibility measures. These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the responsibility measures legal powers and duties that govern Academy attendance:
 - ii. The Education Act 1996 ;
 - iii. The Education Act 2002 ;
 - iv. The Education and Inspections Act 2006 ;
 - v. The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 ;
 - vi. The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010 ;
 - vii. The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2011 ;
 - viii. The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 ;
 - ix. The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016 ;
 - x. The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 .
- b. This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the Academy census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.
- c. This policy compiles with our funding agreement and Articles of Association.

4. ACADEMY PROCEDURES

4.1 Attendance Register

- a. By law, all Academies (except those where all pupils are boarders) are required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on this register.
- b. Attendance registers will be taken at the start of each session (am & pm). It will mark whether every pupil is:
 - i. Present;
 - ii. Attending an approved off-site educational activity;
 - iii. Absent;
 - iv. Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.
- c. Any amendment to the attendance register will include:
 - i. The original entry.
 - ii. The amended entry.
 - iii. The reason for the amendment.
 - iv. The date on which the amendment was made.
 - v. The name and position of the person who made the amendment.
- d. See Appendix A for the DfE attendance codes.
- e. Every entry in the attendance register will be preserved for 3 years after date on the entry was made.
- f. Pupils must arrive in Academy by 8.40 on each Academy day.
- g. The register for the morning session will be taken during period 1 and the register for the afternoon session will be taken during period 5.

4.2 Unplanned Absence

- a. Parents/carers must notify the Academy on the first day of an unplanned absence for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health – as soon as practically possible (see also section 6).
- b. Parents/carers must notify the Academy of an absence by calling the school office before 8.30 on the first day of absence.
- c. Absence due to illness will be authorised unless the Academy has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness and/or the pupil's absence rates mean they are classed as '**persistently absent**'.
- d. If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, or the child is persistently absent, the Academy may ask parents/carers to provide 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.
- e. If the Academy is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this.

4.3 Medical or Dental Appointments

- a. Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; advance notice is required for authorising these absences.
- b. However, we encourage parents/carers 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.
- c. Applications for other types of absence in term time must also be made in advance. Information relating to whether the Academy can authorise such absences can be found in section 4.

4.4 Lateness and Punctuality

- a. A pupil who arrives late but before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.
- b. A pupil who arrives after the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code.
- c. Punctuality is closely monitored; anyone late in the morning, must enter school through the main office accompanied by parents/carers. Lates are recorded and reported to the attendance officer.

4.5 Following up Absence

- a. The Academy will follow up any absences to ascertain the reason, ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary, identify whether the absence is approved or not and identify the correct attendance code to use.

4.6 Reporting to Parents/Carers

- a. A child's attendance record will be communicated to parents/carers, regularly, throughout the academic year. This will be through Academy reports and parents/carers' evenings.

4.7 Managing Reintegration

- a. From time to time it is necessary to reintegrate pupils back into school who have been experiencing problems and the school will decide if this is appropriate or not. Where this is agreed, Attendance staff and/or Pastoral staff will play an integral part in managing any reintegration.

4.8 Managing Illness through the School Day

- a. If a pupil is unwell, staff will assess and report to SLT. If necessary, parents/carers will be informed by the Academy for the pupil to be collected from Reception.
- b. In certain cases, emergency services may be contacted if there is any delay in the parents/carer's arrival at school or in the interests of the welfare of the child; parents/carers will be informed as soon as is reasonably practicable in the given circumstances.

5. AUTHORISED & UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

5.1 Granting Approval for Term-Time Absence

- a. The Principal may not grant any leave of absence to pupils during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'.
- b. The Academy considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the Headteacher/Principal's's discretion.
- c. Valid reasons for authorised absence may include:
 - i. Illness and medical/dental appointments – as explained in sections 3.2 and 3.3;
 - ii. Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents/carers belong. If necessary, the Academy will seek advice from the parents/carers' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart;
 - iii. Traveller pupils 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;
 - iv. an emergency (e.g. bereavement);
 - v. a medical appointment which can only be arranged during school time if an appointment; cannot be made out of school hours;
 - vi. a college interview;
 - vii. authorised study leave.
- d. Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been granted. This includes:
 - i. holidays;
 - ii. parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily, including the avoidance of Academy sanctions;
 - iii. shopping trips, haircuts;
 - iv. truancy before or during the Academy day;
 - v. absences which have never been properly explained;
 - vi. children who arrive at the Academy too late to get a mark;
 - vii. looking after relatives/siblings;
 - viii. lack of transport.

5.2 Legal Sanctions

- a. Academies can fine parents/carers for the unauthorised absence of their child from Academy, where the child is of compulsory age.
- b. If issued with a penalty notice, parents/carers must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the Local Authority.
- c. The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice ultimately rests with the Headteacher/Principal, following the Local Authority's code of conduct for issuing penalty notices. This may take into account:
 - i. A number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
 - ii. One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
 - iii. Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during Academy hours without a justifiable reason
- d. If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the Local Authority can decide whether to prosecute the parents/carer or withdraw the notice.

6. STRATEGIES FOR PROMOTING ATTENDANCE

- a. To encourage children to attend the Academy has a Ready to Learn reward scheme. Children who arrive at the Academy on time will receive a Ready to Learn Point. Children with the highest points are entered into a draw to win a family breakfast at the end of each term. All children who arrive on time are also entitled to a free breakfast of either a bagel or cereal.
- b. If children do not arrive for morning registration and there has not been any communication from parents/carers then a phone call home will be made to ascertain the reason for absence. Children who are late need to access school through the main office and speak to the Late Officer.
- c. We are aware that at times absence is unavoidable or parents/carers need support in getting children into school. The Academy has a WISH team who communicate with any parents who are experiencing difficulty with their children's attendance and a support plan will be put in place. Parents/Carers are welcome to contact the Academy at any time to speak to SLT or the WISH team for advice.

7. ATTENDANCE MONITORING

- a. The Designated Attendance Officer monitors pupil absence on a daily basis.
- b. Parents/Carers are expected to call the Academy in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health (see section 4.2)
- c. Parents/Carers are expected to call the Academy on each day of any absence. If there is a clear period of absence ahead for a child, then the parents/carer must discuss this with the Academy's Designated Attendance Officer.
- d. If a pupil's attendance falls below 95%, the Academy will contact the parents/carers to discuss the reasons for this.
- e. If, after contacting parents/carers a pupil's absence continues to rise, the Academy will consider involving an Education Welfare Officer.
- f. The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee.
- g. Pupil-level absence data is collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's Academy absence national statistics releases. The underlying Academy-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. We compare our attendance data to the national average, and share this with Governors.

8. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

8.1 The Local Governing Committee

- a. The Local Governing Committee is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole Academy on at least a termly basis. It also holds the Headteacher/Principal to account for the implementation of this policy.

8.2 The Principal

- a. The Principal is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the Academy, and for monitoring Academy-level absence data and reporting it to Governors.
- b. The Principal also supports other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils and issues fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

8.3 The Designated Attendance Officer

- a. The Designated Attendance Officer monitors attendance data at the Academy and individual pupil level.
- b. Reports concerns about attendance to the designated member of the Senior Team and the Principal.
- c. Work with Education Welfare Officers to tackle persistent absence.
- d. Arrange calls and meetings with parents/carers to discuss attendance issues.
- e. Advises the designated member of the Senior Team and the Headteacher/Principal when to issue fixed-penalty notices.

8.4 Class Teachers and Form Tutors

8.4.1 Class teachers and form tutors

- a. Are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the Academy office through SIMS.
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8.4.2 Office/Reception Staff

- a. Are expected to take calls from parents/carers about absence and record it on SIMS.

9. MONITORING AND REVIEW

- a. This policy has been approved by the Board of Trustees. It will be reviewed by the Policy and Procedures Working Group on an annual basis to ensure continuing compliance.

10. LINKS WITH OTHER POLICIES

- a. This policy is linked to our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

APPENDIX A

Attendance Codes

a. 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
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the Academy
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the Academy
W	Work Experience	Students is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	Academy has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the Academy
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the Academy
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	Academy is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at Academy after the register closed
X	Not required to be in Academy	Pupil of non-compulsory Academy age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	Academy site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the Academy
#	Planned Academy closure	Whole or partial Academy closure due to half- term/bank holiday/ INSET day