



ASTON ACADEMY ATTENDANCE POLICY

PHASE	SECONDARY
POLICY LEAD	LINDSEY BURGIN ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL
DATE OF APPROVAL BY TRUSTEES	22ND JULY 2019
DATE OF RECEIPT BY LOCAL GOVERNING BODY	OCTOBER 2019
FREQUENCY DATE	EVERY TWO YEARS
NEXT REVIEW DATE	JUNE 2021

This is the Attendance Policy for Aston Academy

**Aston Academy
Aughton Road
Swallownest
Sheffield
S26 4SF**

MISSIONSTATEMENT

At Aston we are committed to providing high quality learning and teaching, enabling everyone to reach their full potential, whatever their age, ability, gender or ethnicity.

We believe that every person is unique and we work together in an inclusive environment of mutual respect and consideration, valuing everyone's contribution.

Through our partnership with the local and wider community we aim to support our young people in successfully taking their place in society.

All adults in academy have a responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children

With your commitment we will make a difference

CONTENTS

- **Aims and principles of excellent attendance**
- **What the academy expects of students and parents/carers**
- **What students and parents/carers can expect of the academy**
- **Rewarding attendance**
- **Attendance roles and responsibilities**
- **Promoting academy attendance**
- **List of abbreviations**
- **Leave of absence (request form) information for parents/carers**

Aims and Principals of Excellent Attendance

- The academy is committed to maximising the achievement of all students.
- There is a clear link between excellent attendance and educational achievement.
- Regular and punctual attendance is vital if students are to benefit fully from the academic, personal and social opportunities which are offered to them within the academy.
- Parents/carers play an important role in supporting the academy and encouraging students to reach excellent attendance levels.
- A broad and balanced education is dependent on regular attendance at the academy.
- The academy will take appropriate action to promote and encourage excellent attendance.

What the academy expects of the students:

- To attend regularly.
- To arrive on time, appropriately prepared for the day.
- To report to reception and sign in should they arrive after 8:50am.
- To inform their group tutor or Learning Progress Manager of any reason that will prevent them from attending the academy.

What the academy expects of parents/carers:

- To fulfil their responsibility by ensuring their children attend the academy regularly and on time.
- To ensure that they contact the academy every day that their child is unable to attend (before 9.00am).
- To ensure their child arrives on time and is well-prepared for the school day [equipment, student planner, completed extended learning tasks].
- To contact the academy whenever any problem arises that may lead to their child's absence.
- To inform the academy and seek authorisation for any forthcoming appointments and, where possible, arrange appointments outside of the 'academy day'.
- To ensure the continuity of their children's education by taking holidays during the academy holiday period.

What parents/carers and students can expect of the academy

- A broad and balanced education that is dependent on regular attendance at the academy.
- The encouragement and promotion of excellent attendance.
- Regular, efficient and accurate recording of attendance.
- Contact with parents/carers on a daily basis when a student does not attend.
- Prompt action taken if any problems are identified that prevent a child attending the academy.
- Close liaison between Aston Academy and the Early Help Locality Team to assist and support parents/carers, students and their families where needed.
- Notification to parents/carers of their child's attendance record through regular reports, and where necessary letters home.
- When a student is absent and contact cannot be made by telephone, a standard letter will be sent and a home visit will take place.
- Electronic registration takes place for every lesson using SIMs.
- Where the academy's procedures and contact with home have failed to bring about improvement and poor attendance persists, the academy will request that parent/carers attend meetings within the academy with Learning Progress Managers, an ACET EWO and members of Leadership Team. Where a student's attendance does not improve when placed on an 'Attendance Plan' (AP) a meeting will take place with the Academy's Attendance Panel and the relevant communication and referrals will be made to the Early Help Locality Team.

- **The academy and individual year group attendance data will be collected, analysed and monitored. The academy will respond to any areas of concern identified.**

Attendance Awards

We promote excellent attendance as a high priority and seek to celebrate outstanding / improving attendance.

- Attendance figures are shared in assemblies for tutor groups and houses.
- Certificates are awarded for 100% attendance and >98% attendance at the end of each term. Random Generator draws take place each term for students with 100% and >98% attendance.
- Excellent attendance is celebrated at the annual Presentation Evenings.
- Recognition is made of improving attendance for individual / groups of students.
- Excellent/improving attendance is shared with parents/carers through electronic, written and verbal communication methods.
- Attendance figures are recorded on the monitoring reports sent to parents/carers and excellence / improvement is praised by group tutors.

Attendance Roles and Responsibilities

Leadership Team

Senior Leaders have responsibility for attendance. They will:

- Develop, monitor and regularly review the Attendance Policy.
- Produce and distribute attendance information for parents/carers.
- Set and monitor targets for improving attendance within the academy.
- Support all staff in their work related to attendance.
- Meet with Assistant Vice Principals and Learning Progress Managers to regularly discuss attendance patterns and students causing concern (Intervention strategies will be planned, implemented and reviewed).
- Collate attendance data for the DfE, Local Authority, Governors and Trustees and in liaison with colleagues, ensure that safeguarding measures are followed and the necessary reporting procedures in place for Children Missing Education (CME).
- Report to the local authority any students where written notification of Home Education has been requested.
- Liaise with the Early Help Locality Team regarding attendance targets and the Academy Strategy.

Learning Progress Managers are responsible for:

- Taking an overview of attendance data for their year group.
- Identifying individual students with known punctuality/attendance concerns and ensuring these students are monitored closely using an Attendance Plan. They should also ensure that the waves of intervention are in place to help students to meet attendance targets to help them to improve their attendance, where necessary.
- Supporting the role of the Group Tutor.
- Identifying those students whose attendance is falling below average and work with parents/carers towards improvement.
- Liaising with the Early Help Locality Team regarding students whose attendance is giving significant cause for concern.
- Liaising with other partner agencies and services towards improving and developing strategies to raise levels of attendance where relevant (Early Help Referral/MARF).
- Rewarding outstanding / improving attendance.
- Liaising with relevant colleagues regarding Attendance Support Plans (ASPs) and their implementation for students with specific medical needs.
- Attendance to period 1 is checked for all students in a year group and all attendance information is collated and sent to the attendance officer prior to 10.30am.

Group tutors

- Complete registers promptly and accurately at the start of registration - electronically
- Have regular discussions with students about the importance of regular attendance and punctuality – daily Tutor Time.
- Liaise with the Learning Progress Managers regarding any queries surrounding absence.

Subject Teachers

- Subject teachers must register students every period and follow up unauthorised absence from that period as truancy.
- Staff should mark registers every lesson on the electronic system within the first ten minutes of the lesson so that post-registration truancy can be checked. If this is not possible a paper copy of the register must be taken and sent to Admin 1

- Students arriving after the register has been taken should have their absence mark amended. A late mark should be recorded, where appropriate.

Attendance Support Team

- Academy staff notify parents/carers of their child's absence via the SchoolComms system, where no message or call has been received. Where this generates no response, contact will be made with an ACET EWO to initiate a visit. Messages are sent to parents/carers no later than 10.30am linked to morning registration and 1.50pm linked to afternoon registration.
- Information received regarding attendance is entered onto the SIMS system.
- Administrative support is provided in logging, tracking and communicating individual and collective attendance levels and patterns.

The Local Governing Body

- Receives information from the Principal and ACET lead on attendance.
- Will be involved in setting academy targets on attendance.
- Will contribute to plans in response to where attendance is a cause for concern.
- Will support the academy in its efforts to raise attendance.
- Will contribute to the academy's strategies to improve attendance, e.g. "Academy Attendance Panel".

Education Welfare Officer

- Monitors/improves attendance of target groups.
- Home visits/letters/casework/liases with other agencies linked to students whose attendance is a cause for concern.
- Attends Case Conferences, TAF meetings and or other directed professionals' meetings on behalf of academy/LA.
- Weekly attendance/liasion meetings with Learning Progress Managers.
- Liases with the Local Authority EWO regarding case-loads and prepare any relevant documentation.
- Produces statistics/information for specified meetings.
- Assists parents with academy transfers and may give advice regarding parent/carers requests for support to multi-agencies.
- Works closely with senior leaders to review attendance systems and procedures.
- Maintains a high profile for attendance.

Responsibility for promoting academy attendance is shared by everyone in the academy.

The Electronic Attendance Registration System provides us with accurate up- to-date information which allows us to monitor attendance patterns and set targets.

If irregular attendance is not challenged early, it quickly becomes a habit that is hard to break. The importance of regular and punctual attendance should be emphasised to both parents/carers and students and consciously reinforced at regular intervals. It is important to stress that whatever problems a student and their families are experiencing, regular attendance is compulsory. The academy will provide support if required but will not authorise absence on these grounds.

Punctuality

- Staff should actively encourage punctuality and discourage late arrival at the academy / lessons. (Learning Progress Managers will remain at the school gates until 8.55am) Students arriving late disrupt the continuity of learning for others as well as themselves.
- A firm line is taken on late arrival. When students arrive late without adequate explanation a record of the time of arrival is kept and students make up lost learning time.
- Persistent lateness may provide grounds for prosecution and parents will be informed of this. Group Tutors and Learning Progress Managers will notify parents/carers if students develop a pattern of lateness.
- Detentions are given for unauthorised lateness to Tutor Time and lessons. Learning Progress Managers should be informed about students who are persistently late.

Improving Attendance

Responsibility for promoting academy attendance is shared by everyone in the academy. All members of staff, therefore, are expected to give positive messages to students about the value of good attendance.

- Parents/carers are kept informed of student attendance and letters are sent if students fail to maintain good levels of attendance. Where there is little or no improvement parents/carers will be invited to meetings in the academy. A sequential system of intervention takes place culminating with the Academy Attendance Panel where individual cases can then be passed onto appropriate multi-agencies including the Early Help Locality Team (Rotherham) and MAST (Sheffield).

Holidays In Term Time / Leave of Absence

As of 1st September 2013, the Principal will not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are *exceptional circumstances*. Parents/Carers should seek permission from the Principal prior to the leave of absence period in question. This should be done by completing the Leave of Absence form and including any additional information regarding the circumstances leading to the request.

[Click here for a leave of absence request form](#)

Exceptional Circumstances include:

- funerals or weddings of immediate family members
- to visit a terminally ill relative
- forces staff returning from abroad
- parents returning from having to work abroad for a fixed, minimum term period
- compassionate leave
- performance at representative level (County/National) with accompanying letter from the relevant body

The Principal will determine the number of academy days a child can be away from academy if the leave is granted. (For example a maximum of two days or equivalent in each academic year will be awarded for students taking part in pursuits not linked directly to the academy).

Parents/carers who remove their children from the academy without authorisation or do not return their child to the academy on the agreed date following an authorised period of leave of absence, may face a Fixed Penalty Notice Warning which could lead to a fine/prosecution.

Absence From The Academy Premises

Students leaving the premises during the morning or afternoon session may only do so legitimately if they have parental permission expressed as a request to the academy *or* a member of staff has made arrangements with a parent/carer. They should be issued with a Leave of Absence slip/note in their planner and should sign out at Reception. If the reason for leaving is to attend an appointment, it is important that they bring the actual appointment card especially if the student is an irregular attender. For health and safety reasons parents/carers are required to collect students from Reception. They should sign out and sign back in if they return on the same day.

Involvement of Parents/Carers

It is vitally important that parents/carers are actively engaged in promoting good attendance. The academy will keep parents informed on issues surrounding attendance and punctuality through the academy prospectus, website details, newsletters to parents/carers, electronic, written and verbal communication and monitoring reports. The academy will react as swiftly and assertively as possible to any parent/carer concerns. Parents/carers will be encouraged to make contact with the academy to discuss any issues impacting on their children's attendance. A child of compulsory academy age who is registered at an academy must attend regularly. In law parents/carers have the prime responsibility for ensuring that their children attend

school regularly.

List of abbreviations

LPM	Learning Progress Manager
ELT	Extended Learning Task
SIMS	Academy Information Management
System DFE	Department for Education
LA	Local Authority
CME	Children Missing Education
EWO	Education Welfare Officer
AP	Attendance Plan
ASP	Attendance Support Plan - medical
TAF	Team Around the Family
MARF	Multi-Agency Referral Form

Leave of Absence Request

(Including holidays in term time)



A child can now only be granted leave of absence during term time for exceptional reasons.

The Principal does not have to give permission if you request a holiday. If the holiday is not approved, your child's absence will be recorded as **unauthorised**.

Exceptional Circumstances include:

- funerals or weddings of immediate family members
- to visit a terminally ill relative
- forces staff returning from abroad
- parents returning from having to work abroad for a fixed, minimum term period
- compassionate leave
- performance at representative level (County/National) with accompanying letter-
from the relevant body

How do I make a request for Leave of Absence?

- Complete the leave of absence request form on the next page.
- Detach the form and hand it in to the school reception (at least 14 days before the first day of your requested absence)
- If you consider the circumstances to be **exceptional** attach a letter addressed to the Principal explaining the circumstances of the request.
- You will be notified in writing informing you of the decision.
- Please note that unless circumstances are judged to be exceptional, the leave of absence will be declined.

“Taking your child out of school during term time will result in missed learning opportunities. National studies have shown that there is a strong link between school attendance and attainment.”

Should I still fill in a form if I know the request will be unauthorised?

YES

We contact parents/ carers on a daily basis if we do not know the reason for absence of a student. It is very important you let us know why your child is absent even if the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

In deciding if the absence is EXCEPTIONAL, the Principal will consider the following:

◇ **Is the absence within the control of the parent/ carer?**

(A letter, on headed paper, from an employer is required if the absence is due to the availability of leave)

◇ **Does the student have a good attendance record?**

◇ **Will the absence have a negative impact on the attainment of the student?**

◇ **Is the activity a worthwhile experience which will enrich the student’s broader education?**

(our guidance is for two days maximum or equivalent in each academic year for such activities)

APPLICATION BY PARENT/CARER FOR CHILD'S LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL DURING TERM TIME

If you consider you have to take your child out of school in term time, please complete this form and return to the school at least 14 days before the date you wish to remove your child from school.

Student Name Tutor Group.....

Home Address

First day of absence Date of return to the academy

Total number of days missed

Reasons for absence (please attach a letter if you require additional space)

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

I understand that if the absence request is unauthorised the Education Welfare Officer will be notified.

I understand that a Fixed Penalty Notice can be issued. From September 2013 these are £60 per parent per child if paid within 21 days. This rises to £120.00 after 21 days.

Name of Parent/Carer making application

Signed Date

(Please ensure you are giving at least 14 days' notice of the proposed absence)

Please return to the academy reception. Remember to include any supporting information

For official use only

“ AUTHORISED: For the following dates:
 ___/___/___ to ___/___/___

“ UNAUTHORISED: Reason:

Decision taken by _____

Students should make every effort to catch up on work missed due to absence, whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised.

This may involve asking teachers for the materials in advance.

Below is an extract from the 'Frequently Asked Questions' section of the Department for Education publication: School attendance, published in 2018

Can a parent take their child on holiday during term time?

Head teachers should only authorise leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. If a head teacher grants a leave request, it will be for the head teacher to determine the length of time that the child can be away from school. Leave is unlikely, however, to be granted for the purposes of a family holiday as a norm.

'School attendance parental responsibility measures', DfE update 2017.

If a child of compulsory school age fails to attend regularly at a school at which they are registered, or at a place where alternative provision is provided for them, the parents may be guilty of an offence and can be prosecuted by the local authority.

