

ATTENDANCE POLICY (STUDENTS)

Policy Date: November 2015 Last updated: Feb 2020

Date review due: Feb 2023

Committee responsible: SIMG

Where it came from: Deputy Headteacher



St. Christopher's

MULTI ACADEMY TRUST

Academy Context

This larger than average 11-19 Academy is built into a hill within a rurally isolated area. Around half of the students come from the local town but the remainder travel some distance to the Academy. Much of the local employment is seasonal. Almost all the students are White British. The proportion of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is lower than that seen nationally, the largest proportion of these students having emotional, behavioural and social, moderate learning and specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia. There is a learning support unit (LSU) within the Academy and an Local Additional Provision (HUB) that students with a variety of needs can access.

Aims and Values

We serve and support our community providing a child-centred education that reflects Christian values. Respecting the dignity and potential of each individual person and sensitive to the needs of a diverse society, we strive to enhance and strengthen our values:

- Hope
- Kindness
- Courage
- Integrity
- Trust
- Respect
- Responsibility

These values are central to our school.

We are committed to the highest standards of academic excellence; we are dedicated to providing the best possible education for all our students by developing the knowledge, understanding and skills essential for learning and leading a fulfilled life

The staff of The Ilfracombe Academy are committed, in partnership with the parents, students, governors, and the Local Authority (LA), to building a school which promotes excellence for all within the context of a caring and supportive environment.

Not only is regular attendance essential in order for students to achieve to their full potential it is also a legal requirement and parents/carers are responsible for ensuring that their child attends school regularly. The school works in partnership with parents to support full attendance and employs an officer of the Local Authority to challenge poor attendance and take action with parents/carers when required.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the contracts and protocols regarding post 16 attendance and the administration of the School Bursaries.

Objectives:

- To ensure that every student, regardless of gender, race, religion and level of ability should have access to their entitlement curriculum and the full range of educational opportunities provided by the school.

- To provide a wide range of learning experiences to help prepare students for their future roles both as individuals and equal members of a multi-cultural society.
- To recognise and make special provisions for both gifted students, those experiencing learning difficulties, and for students who have special educational needs.
- To provide a pastoral system which views each student as an individual and equal member of the school community, under the care and guidance of a responsible adult within the school.
- To continually monitor and improve the quality of our teaching and learning.
- To ensure that our school is safe, friendly and courteous.
- To consciously strive to help students develop:
 - a) A sense of positive self-esteem;
 - b) A respect for the opinions and needs of others;
 - c) A sense of responsibility, both for themselves, others and their environment.
- To prepare students for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life; for their entry to the world of work and for their role as citizens within a worldwide community.

We promote excellent attendance:

- To ensure that no student is deprived of the opportunity to receive an education that meets their needs and personal development through their own non-attendance or that of other students.
- To help parents and students alike to understand their responsibilities in ensuring full attendance at school, as required by law.
- By providing the appropriate rewards and support for students and/or parents in helping them to meet their attendance, obligations and responsibilities.
- By involving and working in conjunction with external agencies, as necessary, in order to secure full attendance.
- By encouraging students to attend school regularly in order to learn, to socialise with other students and adults and to prepare themselves fully to take their place in society as well-rounded and responsible citizens, with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to contribute to the life and culture of the community.
- Through assemblies, PCRE and the tutorial programme.
- By monitoring Attendance on a daily and weekly basis. Thus providing regular communication between the school, home and the child.

Expectations

We expect the following from all our **students**:

- That they attend school regularly.
- That they are punctual and are appropriately prepared for the school day.
- That they inform their tutor, or any other member of staff, of any problem or reason that may prevent them from attending school.

We expect the following from **parents/carers**:

- Parents Support the school in ensuring that their child is a regular school attender.
- That they ensure their child attends school and values their own learning and the learning of others.

- That they contact the school before **9.30am** whenever their child is unable to attend and certainly on first day of every new absence. They should leave a message on the answer phone if they are unable to speak to somebody.
- That the school is notified of the reasons for absence.
- That they ensure that their child arrives at school well prepared for the school day with the correct equipment and homework completed.
- That they will contact the appropriate member of staff to discuss in confidence any problem that may prevent their child from attending school.
- That they offer evidence or medical evidence clarifies the reason(s) for their child's absence/non-attendance when requested by the school.

The School Day

8.50am – 9.10am	Tutor time/assembly (AM registration)
9.10am – 10.10am	Period 1
10.10am – 11.10am	Period 2
Break	Break
11.40am – 12.40pm	Period 3
12.40am – 1.40 pm	Period 4
Break	Break
2.25pm – 3.25pm	Period 5 (PM registration)

It is a parent's legal responsibility to ensure their child's regular and punctual attendance at school.

Parents and students can expect the following from **the school**:

- Efficient and accurate recording of attendance information.
- Contact from the school when a child fails to attend and no good reason is given on the first day of absence.
- Immediate and confidential action on a problem, which prevents a child from attending school.
- Praise and acknowledgement for excellent attendance.
- Daily monitoring of student lateness with
- **If attendance falls below 95% then support will be offered**
- A high quality of education.
- The support of the Education Welfare Officer **or the offer of engagement with the Early Help process and or Family Intervention Team (FIT) or other outside agencies when parents have difficulties ensuring the regular attendance of their child.**
- **If attendance does not improve then an informal Pre-Legal meeting will be called between the EWO and the parents/carers. At this meeting the parents/carers will be informed that if their child's attendance does not improve then the school will have to follow Devon County Council's prosecution directive.**
- **At this point the school will have to adhere to all governmental legislation including where necessary the right to fine parents/carers who's child's attendance continues to be poor (below 95%) despite the support offered by the school to improve it.**
- **The EWO will then issue an absence penalty notice then parents/carers have three options:**

- Option 1: Within 21 calendar days of receipt of the penalty notice, pay £60.
- Option 2: Between 22 and 28 calendar days after receipt of the penalty notice, pay £120.
- Option 3: Do not pay the penalty notice. In such cases, you will be automatically summoned to appear in court for an offence under Section 444(1) Education Act 1996.

Please see the following link for further information:

<https://www.devon.gov.uk/educationandfamilies/school-information/school-attendance/absence-from-school-penalty-notice>

Lateness

Lateness is monitored by Senior and Pastoral Staff on a daily basis.

AM Registration – 8:50 to 9:10am. Registers are closed at 9:30 am

If a student arrives late to registration, after 8.50am, they must 'sign in' at student reception. If a student arrives late to registration a 30-minute detention will be issued for that day with the pastoral team. Where appropriate, reasons for lateness are investigated and responded to in the appropriate manner. Lateness after registration closes is recorded as an unauthorised absence (U) and parents/carers will be notified of this absence via School Comms

Roles and Responsibilities

The Headteacher will oversee the whole policy

- Is responsible for reporting on attendance issues to the Governing Body.

Deputy Headteacher – Student Services is responsible for the operation of the attendance system/the collation of attendance data and

- Will liaise with the Heads of Year and pastoral assistants on a weekly basis.
- Will produce ½ termly data packs for Governors SLT and HOY's
- Will liaise in conjunction with the administrator responsible for attendance, with the Pastoral Co-ordinators and the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) on a weekly basis and when is needed.
- Will chair attendance meetings on a bi-weekly basis with each HoY, EWO, PC and AA.

Attendance Administrator working with the Pastoral Co-ordinators:

- Will inform the Senior Leadership Team of all matters concerning the monitoring of attendance and absence.
- Will liaise with the SENCO on specific students.
- Will collate and discuss and investigate data for each year group using the Attendance tracker.
- Initiate the sending of attendance concern and warning letters.
- Refer students to the EWO as necessary.
- Organise the phased reintegration of long term absentees with support from the Deputy Headteacher. Produce data for tutors
- Monitor students whose attendance is beginning to cause concern.

Home School Liaison Officer

- To help with 1st call and the completion for the tracker
- To offer support for parents and students to improve attendance
- To work with student and families to support through Early Help (>90%)
- To perform pick up daily pick ups to reduce truancy and lateness as and when required
- To attend all bi-weekly attendance meetings

Heads of Year

- Monitor the registration process of tutors in conjunction with the attendance administrator.
- Reinforce good practice at tutor meetings.
- Liaise with their Pastoral Coordinators on a weekly basis to discuss specific students
- Attend meetings with the Education Welfare Officer as necessary
- Heads of Year will oversee and should be fully aware of all matters concerning attendance for their specific year group.
- Promote good attendance through assemblies, an effective tutor programme and the rewards and sanctions process.

The Tutor should complete registers accurately and on time

- Promote the importance of full attendance.
- In conjunction with the Head of Year impose appropriate sanctions on students arriving late to registrations without good reason.
- Class teachers should arrange catch up time for students who are late to Period 5.

The Teacher should complete registers accurately and on time

- Ensure that Period 1 and Period 5 registers are completed within the first 20 minutes of the lesson

The Governors

- Governor(s) may be given a specific role/interest in monitoring attendance and/or policies.
- Governors may have a role to play through representation on school attendance panels and at parent's evenings etc.
- Request regular attendance progress reports for Governors' Meetings.
- Will receive ½ termly reports relating to attendance

The Education Welfare Officer will liaise with the Deputy Headteacher, Attendance Administrator and Pastoral Co-ordinators on a regular basis and:

- Monitor whole school and individual student's attendance levels
- Accept referrals that meet current Education Welfare Service criteria, initiate contact with parents and undertake assessments and home visits.
- Provide feedback to the school and advise on appropriate action.
- Undertake work with children and/or parents and/or teaching/pastoral staff.
- Provide strategic/policy advice and support in relation to matters of attendance and other legal matters relating to children and young people.
- Hold legal meetings with parents/carers when necessary due to poor attendance
- Undertake legal action in cases of repeated unauthorised absence

The Administrative Staff will monitor the completion of all registers and refer incomplete registers to the appropriate Head of Year .

- Ensure that all staff have a copy of the absence codes for use in the registers.
- Maintain all records of attendance as required by law and for the LA as required.
- Provide specific attendance data, as and when required.
- Oversee truancy call.

Other Agencies

In addition to The Education Welfare Service, the following agencies may be asked to work with the school to overcome attendance problems:

- **Early Help**
- Family Intervention Team (FIT)
- Youth Intervention Team (YIT)
- Educational Behaviour and Support Services
- Educational Psychologists
- Special Educational Needs Services.
- Children's Social Care
- Careers and Guidance Service (Careers South West.)
- Youth Service.
- School Nurse (Medical Services).
- Counselling Services.
- Police Community Support Officer.
- Action for young carers.
- Transport Services Group.
- Youth Offending Services.
- YSMART
- FIG

Term-time absence

Students should attend regularly and full time in order to maintain a good level of progress and achievement. Breaks in a student's attendance can be damaging and they may find it hard to catch up with missed work. Furthermore, the Government has advised that schools are no longer able to authorise requests for absence in order to take a family holiday unless such exceptional circumstances require it.

We therefore advise parents/carers that requests for absence during term time will only be authorised if there are exceptional circumstances that apply at the time.

However, the school recognises that it works in a context that is dominated by seasonal contracts and tourism. The school will therefore look at holidays sympathetically during term time if there are exceptional circumstances.

Additional factors will be taken into account when considering exceptional circumstances:

- Where a holiday has explicit educational purpose, the school will also look on these trips sympathetically as long as the child's attendance is 98% or above when the holiday request is received.

- The student's attendance record (No absence will be authorised for students whose attendance is below 95%)
- The time of year - we will not authorise absence in the first half of the Autumn term (Sept/Oct)
- The student's year group (We will not authorise term time absence for students in years 10 and 11)

Parents/carers should complete an S2 Term Time Absence request form IN ADVANCE and return it to school for consideration.

Long-Term Absence

For students that unfortunately have long persistent absence for a variety of reasons will be offered the following:

- A welcoming and warm return
- Reintegration package which could include a phased return with a possible Annex R
- Mentoring with a member of staff
- Continued Early Help support if required
- Counselling support if required
- Academic catch up

POLICY HISTORY

Policy / Version Date	Summary of change	Contact	Implementation Date	Review Date
February 2010	Amended to show 10.30 as phone in time rather than 10 am. Restrictions on authorisation of holiday amended to include all students studying for an exam, not just yr 11			
September 2011	Terminology amended re Heads of Year	L Norris	September 2011	September 2014
November 2013	Updated as an academy and following changes in legislation	G Hill	November 2013	November 2015
November 2015	Updated to reflect change in roles	G Hill	November 2015	January 2017
January 2017	Updated to reflect use of attendance tracker and increased role of HOY / PA	G Hill	January 2017	January 2020
May 2017	Updated to reflect new accountability procedures	S Rogers	May 2019	May 2022
May 17	Updated to reflect new accountability procedures Also 9.30am as the phone in time rather than 10.00am	S Rogers	Feb 2020	Feb 2022
Apr 2020	Updated Updated to reflect new accountability procedures	S Rogers	Apr 2020	Apr 2023