

# DRAFT ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY



## INTRODUCTION

The University Academy of Engineering South Bank recognises that all students have the right to access full time education. A good education helps to give children the best possible start in life. Evidence suggests that children out of education are at risk of becoming victims of crime or abuse and more likely to be drawn into anti-social behaviour. Regular attendance is essential to enable students to take part in all the opportunities available and to develop their full potential.

We are committed to working in partnership with our parents/carers who are responsible for ensuring their children access education. Students, staff and parents/carers, governors all have some part to play in securing these aims by implementing this policy.

## AIMS

This policy provides the framework within which all staff, governors, parents, pupils, carers and external agencies can contribute to the development and maintenance of high attendance and excellent punctuality.

To ensure a clear system for maintaining full attendance and excellent punctuality and that this is clearly communicated to all staff, students, governors and parents at UAE SB.

To have an effective and efficient administration system for monitoring and intervening with issues relating to attendance and punctuality

To offer students and parents/carers good support, advice and guidance on the importance of good attendance and punctuality

## OBJECTIVES

For students

- To attend the Academy every day and on time
- To ensure they maximise their learning potential by taking responsibility for achieving excellent levels of attendance and punctuality
- To discuss with their community leader any problems that may prevent full time attendance or from arriving to the Academy on time
- To support their fellow students and thereby their community groups 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/Academy day
- To sign and adhere to the Home Academy Agreement with regard to attendance & punctuality

#### For parents and carers (families)

- To be fully supportive of the Academy with regard to attendance and punctuality
- To ensure their child attends every day, on time and is prepared for the day
- To support the Academy and their child(ren) by not requesting authorised absence for holidays during term time and minimising where possible dental appointments and medical appointments during the Academy day and term time
- To follow the Academy's procedures for dealing with attendance, by making contact with the Academy on the morning of the first day of absence and ensuring that they send a signed letter to the Academy when their child returns
- To contact the Academy immediately if they have concerns or if there are issues preventing full time attendance
- To sign and adhere to the Home Academy Agreement with regard to attendance and punctuality

#### For teachers and Learning Assistants

- To be a good role model and arrive to lessons on time
- To take the register at the beginning of every lesson in accordance with the procedures outlined in this policy
- To take responsibility for dealing with issues of attendance and punctuality in relation to their tutor groups e.g., telephone calls, absence letters, liaising with the community leader and attendance officer
- To encourage their students 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 students after a period of prolonged absence

#### For Leaders of Learning

- To raise the profile of good attendance and monitor the attendance of students allocated to their year/Community
- To be responsible for regular liaison with the Attendance Officer and EWO regarding poor attendance of students and issues related to poor punctuality.
- To liaise with parents as appropriate in response to attendance, punctuality and truancy issues; attending parental meetings as appropriate.
- To ensure that teachers in their subject areas fulfil their duties regarding attendance and punctuality and to take appropriate action when this does not occur.
- To ensure that the Academy reward system in relation to attendance and punctuality is used effectively

#### Attendance Officer

- Carry out first day calling/text messaging to establish reason for absence and submitting attendance letters
- 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 and reports to staff and SLT on a regular basis
- To liaise with the Principal and administrative staff and assist in following up poor attendance and punctuality, for example, organising attendance panel meetings with families, liaising with Education Welfare Officer (EWO), external agencies, making home visits, ensuring that student attendance targets are agreed and monitored

For the Academy leadership team

- Through the Principal, 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 and the reward systems that are put in place
- To analyse and act swiftly in response to report data on attendance and punctuality
- Ensure that the learning environment on offer to students, creates the foundations for excellent attendance and punctuality
- To ensure that the Academy's expectations in regards to this policy on attendance and punctuality is communicated clearly to all stakeholders

For the governors

- To annually review and agree the Attendance and Punctuality 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 response to parents in supporting unauthorised absence

## **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 absence and half-day absence has to be classified by the Academy as either authorised or unauthorised. Unauthorised absence will lead to investigations by the academy staff or our Education Welfare Officer whom can offer support and guidance. For extended periods of unauthorised absence where no explanations from parents are given may lead to a Penalty Notice or legal action being taken against parents.

An example for an authorised absence would be, if the student was too ill to attend. In this example medical evidence would be required, for any absence of a week or more and for anyone with three or more odd day absences over a 6-week period with no justifiable reason provided.

Unauthorised absences are those, which the Academy does not consider reasonable and for which no permission has been given, i.e. student's birthday, accompany a parent to a medical appointment, shopping (including for uniform). It also includes keeping students away unnecessarily, truancy and any absences which the Academy considers to have not been properly explained.

## **EXCEPTIONAL LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

*The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006* states that Head teacher may not authorise any leave of absence (i.e. holiday taken in term time). They are only allowed to consider a leave of absence if the circumstances are classed as exceptional, i.e. compassionate grounds and permission has been requested to the Principal. It is not the right of the parent to take children away during term time. The Student Services Manager works with Principal in overseeing any such requests from parents. If the Academy does not agree to the request, then the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. If the leave of absence involves any travel arrangement, these must not be booked until permission is granted by the Principal. The leave of absence application form is available from Reception who passes the request and any other relevant information to the Attendance Officer. The Principal and Student Services Manager will consider the request taking into account:

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

A letter of approval (or a letter stating the request is not approved) will then be sent to the parent/guardian clearly stipulating that approval is only given in these exceptional circumstances and that no further requests will be considered. Parents/Guardians are also informed that if any leave is taken beyond the dates agreed, a Penalty Notice\*\* could be issued to each parent and if applicable for each child. **Any leave of absence taken without Academy permission will be recorded as unauthorised holiday and a Penalty Notice\*\* could be issued to each parent and if applicable for each child.**

*\*\* Penalty Notice is a fine imposed where a parent fails to ensure that their child is in education or has an unacceptable period of unauthorised absences. The Penalty Notice is £60 that must be paid within 21 days or £120 within 28 days.*

All data relating to attendance will be kept for a minimum period of three years from the last date of entry.

## **PROCEDURES FOR REGISTRATION**

Academy attendance registers are legal documents. They are required by law to be called twice a day at the commencement of each AM and PM session. Staff regularly not taking an am/pm register could face a disciplinary, as these are a statutory requirement for all Academies to perform.

### Form Registration

Morning registration is taken at 8.30 am. The register will formally close at 9am. Registers are taken electronically and where there is a breakdown of this system, paper registers can be collected from reception or student services. During lesson registration, subject teachers will record only *present (P)*, *absent (N)* or *late (L)*.

Students that are late before 9am will be marked as L and will be recorded on SIMS, administered by Community Leaders. Any lateness will be challenged. Where there is a legitimate reason, for example, unavoidable known transport problems, then no further action is required; but when there is no good reason, for example, oversleeping, this will be recorded as a late.

Any lateness/absence after 9.30am is recorded as a U, after the am register is closed and thus will be treated as an unauthorised absence for the am session. Pupils who are continually late after the close of register will either be referred to the EWO and/or parents could be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice (Fine of £60 rising to £120 if not paid within 28 days)

## **REPORTING ABSENCE**

Parents are expected to telephone the Academy on the first day of absence before 8.00am. If we have not received a note/message of the child's absence, the Student Welfare Officer will either telephone or text the parent/carer to establish the reason for the child not being in the Academy and the length of time the student will be absent. A daily phone call must be made, or a note forwarded from the parent/carer to provide an update and the expected date of return. The Academy will make contact on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day, should the child still be absent and no contact has been received from the parent/carer.

If a pupil is absent for more than 5 consecutive days, medical evidence must be sent in to the Academy this can be a doctor's certificate, GP/medical appointment card, copy of prescription, hospital letter or a note from the GP is required. This should be given to the Student Welfare Officer in order for the illness to be authorised

A letter must be sent in with the child on the day the child returns to Academy. A reason of "ill" or "unwell" is not acceptable. If a note is not received, this absence will be marked as unauthorised, until confirmation of absence is received. Following 5 days of absence with no communication from the parent and all contact attempted, the Academy will inform their EWO, who may carry out a home visit.

## **MEDICAL/HOSPITAL APPOINTMENTS**

Parents and carers must try and ensure where possible that any medical appointments are made after school or during the school holiday period. Should a pupil have a medical appointment during an am or pm session, the expectation is they will be return to the Academy following the appointment and not be taken out for the whole day. They will be marked as unauthorised for the session if they do not return to the Academy and no explanation is given. An appointment card will need to be shown to the Student Welfare Officer in order for the absence to be authorised in the first instance.

Once a month, an official register will be printed. The official register will highlight the number of authorised and unauthorised absences as well as the number of late marks for each child.

The Academy has a legal duty to publish the above information on the child's Academy report.

Registers are taken prior to Assemblies and then students escorted down to the Assembly Hall

## **SUBJECT REGISTRATION**

It is essential that a register is taken at the start of every lesson for health & safety and safeguarding. This will ensure that the Academy is able to monitor and reduce truancy from lessons. Student Welfare Officer will monitor lesson registration, to determine any suspected truancy and will pass this information on to the Community Leader. If it is found that a student has been truanting then this will be formally recorded as an unauthorised absence.

Lateness to lessons must be challenged and recorded. Staff must take appropriate action against students who are late without a valid reason, for example, issue a reprimand and issued with detention.

Teachers must ensure that they enter an "L" into the computerised register should the student be late so that the attendance records are accurate.

### **PUNCTUALITY/TRUANCY**

It is vitally important teachers and tutors are punctual to lessons, otherwise this gives the impression to students that late arrival is acceptable. Teachers and leadership team must reinforce the importance of punctuality when communicating with students and parents.

Truancy will lead to a letter home to parents. If this does not support the student in refraining from truancy then a meeting with parents initiated by the EWO will be organised.

### **REWARDS & INCENTIVES**

The Academy operates a programme of rewards starting with an Attendance Rewards breakfast at the start of every half term. Improving attendance is highlighted in assemblies and students are handed 100% certificates every Module. Everyone must take overall responsibility for encouraging and rewarding publicly the need for high attendance and excellent levels of punctuality. This will commonly be achieved through assemblies and encouraging a competitive spirit with other groups. Informal praise and formal awards should both be used and supported by all the Academy Staff.

### **FIRST DAY CONTACT AND DEALING WITH ABSNECE**

Text messaging/ Telephone call home will be carried out on the first day of absence if the parent has not contacted the Academy with reasons for absence. The Student Welfare Officer will attempt to contact any parent/carer on the first day of absence and establish the reason for absence. When a letter from the parent is not forthcoming, explaining the absence, the Student Welfare Officer will process a letter {Letter 1} to the parent/carer requesting a reason to cover the dates(s) concerned. When this has been received they will update the registers and code them appropriately.

Attendance and punctuality will be monitored through the following computerised processes:

- Daily lists of absences
- Follow up procedures on the first day of absence
- Subject registrations
- Weekly Statistics
- Rewards and sanctions statistics for attendance and punctuality

Where students are likely to have a period of long absence, for example from a period of illness, then teachers should liaise with parents and make arrangements for work to be sent home.

Student Services Manager & Student Welfare Officer have the major responsibility for identifying persistent poor attendance and punctuality. The Attendance & Welfare Officer will also analyse attendance data and look for patterns of absence and poor punctuality.

Where there is a significant pattern of absence, the Academy will:

- Start intervention at 95% {Letter 1 weekly if appropriate} and 1A letter being sent home to parents/carers informing of the cause for concern and the negative impact on student learning
- After 3 separate periods of absence the Academy will contact the parent/carer to discuss reasons why and may invite them to the Academy for a meeting
- If no contact is made a letter will be sent to the parents advising them that any future absences will require them to produce medical evidence and failure to do so will result in the absences being unauthorised
- If attendance continues to be a concern a referral will be made to the Education Welfare Officer who will offer support and guidance, but may also refer to the Local Authority to issue a Penalty Notice or consideration of legal proceedings
- For attendance between 95%-98%, we expect Student Welfare Officer /Community Leaders to play an active role in advocating the importance of full attendance to both students and parents.

#### **LATE FOR THE ACADEMY DAY (AFTER THE REGISTER HAS CLOSED – USE OF 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 code, which is an unauthorised absence for the am session. Any parent/carer of a student who records more than 3 U codes in any one half term will be issued with a warning letter and the consequences of a Fixed Penalty Notice should further U codes appear on the register.

#### **REINTERGRATION PROGRAMME**

If a student has had a period of absence for longer than 5 days/weeks then the Student Services Manager will instigate a reintegration programme. This will involve the school supporting the student in reintegrating back into Academy life.

#### **DELETIONS FROM THE REGISTER/REMOVAL FROM THE ACADEMY ROLE**

Parents must ensure they inform the Academy of any change of address, contact details or family circumstances. Should a parent advise they are moving and will be removing their child (ren) from the Academy role, the Academy must attempt to obtain the parent’s new address and if possible the name of new Academy the child will be attending. If this information has not been supplied the Academy must inform their EWO if the child leaves without obtaining any forwarding information.

In accordance with the *Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006*, children will only be deleted from the register when one of the following circumstances applies:

- Permanent exclusion has occurred and procedures have been completed
- Transfer between Academy’s

- Children withdrawn to be educated outside the Academy system (Educated otherwise)
- Failure to return from an extended holiday after both the Academy and the local authority have tried to locate the child
- 20 days continuous unauthorised absence and both the local authority and Academy have tried to locate the child
- Left the Academy but not known where he or she has gone after both the Academy and the local authority have tried to locate the child

The Academy will report a child is Missing from Education to the LA, following 10 consecutive days of absence, when all checks have been exhausted. This will include: telephone calls to all known numbers on the Academy system, discussion with class teacher and known friends of pupil, home visit by Academy and or EWO. The Academy will email: [childrenmissingfromeducation@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:childrenmissingfromeducation@croydon.gov.uk) with the relevant information and await confirmation to remove.

### **MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW**

The Academy will monitor the effectiveness of this policy through the Assistant Principal who will oversee the generation of attendance data and report to the ALT/SLT where there are any key issues.

### **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 Academy
\	Present (PM)	Present	In for whole Academy
@	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
G	Family holiday (not agreed)	Unauthorised 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: Academy 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 Academy age abs	Attendance not required	Out for the whole session
#	Academy 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

*This policy is written to work with the Southwark LA. All work is carried out by your WPA Education Welfare Officer and when all avenues of support and guidance exhausted, a referral will be completed by your WPA EWO to the LA for consideration of legal proceedings, or Penalty Notice for unauthorised leave or periods of unauthorised absence.*

*WPA will be the main point of contact for any legal proceedings/Penalty Notices the LA issue, ensuring on the Principals behalf that they are carried out in accordance to the time frames. WPA will as required attend court and provide Section 9 witness statements as requested by the LA for all work carried out on behalf of the Academy.*