



NATIONAL  
CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
ACADEMY

# Attendance Policy

<b>This review:</b> November 2021	<b>Next review:</b> November 2022	<b>Statutory/non:</b> Statutory	<b>Lead:</b> D Llewellyn, Assistant Headteacher
<b>Associated documents:</b>			
NCEA – Behaviour Policy NCEA – Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy			
<b>Links to:</b>			
Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021			

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### 1. Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
- Ensuring every student has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence

We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly, and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

### 2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [school attendance guidance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#).

These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Student Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#) (and [2010](#), [2011](#), [2013](#), [2016](#) amendments)

- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the [school census](#), which explains the persistent absence threshold.

### 3. Roles and responsibilities

#### 3.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

#### 3.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual students
- Authorising the request to the Local Authority for fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

#### 3.3 The attendance officer

The school attendance officer:

- Monitors attendance data across the school and at an individual student level
- Processes manual registers for exams, trips and other activities
- Conducting a lesson by lesson missing register audit
- Coordinates the use of the absence text system
- Reports concerns about attendance to the Assistant Headteacher (Behaviour & Attitudes)
- Works with the Education Welfare Officer to tackle persistent absence
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Advises the Assistant Headteacher (Behaviour & Attitudes) when to issue fixed penalty notices
- Provides weekly attendance data for Heads of Year and the Assistant Headteacher (Behaviour & Attitudes)

#### 3.4 Subject teachers and tutors

Subject teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the academy attendance officer via the PARS software system.

Tutors will:

- Remind students of the need for notes for whole sessions missed
- Monitor attendance data for patterns of concern including where safeguarding issues may exist
- Refer students with ongoing attendance or punctuality issues to the respective Head of Year

#### 3.5 School administration staff

School administration staff are expected to take calls from parents about absence and record it on the academy attendance system.

## 4. Recording attendance

### 4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an attendance register, and place all students onto this register. Students are registered for every lesson of the day using PARS. Staff use this system to call up a register, complete it accurately and save it.

It is an expectation for staff that registers are taken within the first ten minutes of a lesson.

We will take our attendance register at the start of each session throughout the school day. There will be a dedicated AM and a PM mark. All attendance registers will mark whether every student is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

(See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes)

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Students must arrive in school by 08.40 on each school day. Students arriving after 08.40 will be marked as late and sanctions will be applied in line with our behaviour policy (see below)

The register for the AM session will commence at 08.45 and will be kept open until 09.30 The register for the PM session will be taken at 13.30-13.35 (dependent on Key Stage) and will be kept open until 14.22.

Staff must not overwrite the codes inserted into a register and must use only one of three codes:

- / present
- N absent
- L late (with the number of minutes late recorded)

The present code is used when students arrive late for a lesson with a note from another member of staff (e.g. Head of Year) explaining their lateness. A present code is also used when a bus arrives late, causing a student to be late for a lesson.

### 4.2 Unplanned absence

The student's parent/guardian must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence by 09.30 or as soon as practically possible (see also section 7).

The attendance officer should be notified by contacting the academy on 0115 9635667 and the parent/guardian selecting 'student absence' from the options available. Parents/ guardians can also contact the attendance officer at [attendance@nationalacademy.org.uk](mailto:attendance@nationalacademy.org.uk)

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the student's parent/guardian 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.

If the academy is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/guardians will be notified of this in advance.

#### 4.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the student's parent/guardian notifies the academy in advance of the appointment.

Parent/ guardians should contact the attendance officer on 0115 9635667 extension 3008 to ensure that the register is amended correctly. Parents/ guardians can also contact the attendance officer at [attendance@nationalacademy.org.uk](mailto:attendance@nationalacademy.org.uk)

However, we encourage parents/guardians to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the student should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The student's parent/guardian must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the academy can authorise.

#### 4.4 Lateness, punctuality and internal truancy

A student who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

The student will face possible sanctions by the attendance officer and Head of Year. These sanctions will involve the removal of social time and could also involve after school detentions being issued in line with the academy Behaviour Policy.

Students who have internally truanting will have the absence marked as unauthorised and sanctions will apply. For any student who has internally truanting one lesson, an after school faculty detention will apply. For any student who has internally truanting more than one lesson, isolation will apply. Further details of isolation arrangements can be found in the Behaviour Policy.

#### 4.5 Following up absence

Where any child we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, the school will:

- Follow up on their absence with their parent/guardian to ascertain the reason, by a range of strategies including the first day texting system, phone calls and where appropriate, home visits by either the attendance officer or the educational welfare officer.
- Ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use

#### 4.6 Reporting to parents

Student attendance will be visible through Insight and through the AMP review process.

## 5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

### 5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to students during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as:

- Where families are service personnel
- When a family needs to spend time together to support each other during or after a crisis
- Other compassionate circumstances that can be confidentially shared with the academy

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. The letter to the headteacher must specifically state what the exceptional circumstances are.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the student's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller students 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 school but it is not known whether the student is attending educational provision
- Family bereavement
- Situations where the academy authorises absence, e.g. study leave, work experience, interviews and special occasions such as theatre/sporting/musical performance
- Fixed term exclusions
- Flexi-schooling requests. This will be at the head teacher's discretion and parents must outline their rationale and proposals clearly in writing for a decision to be reached.

## **5.2 Reducing persistent absence**

The academy will use the educational welfare officer to target students either at risk of or those who are classified as a persistently absent student. Parents/ guardians will be expected to engage with all forms of contact which will include verbal contact, written contact, face to face or virtual meetings and closer monitoring.

## **5.3 Legal sanctions**

The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded student is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

## 6. Strategies for promoting attendance

The academy has a range of strategies to promote good attendance amongst the student body. These include:

- The weekly sharing of individual attendance data by tutors to tutees
- The sharing of whole school and year group attendance each week via the Home Group PowerPoint
- The awarding of credits to those who have achieved 100% attendance each week
- Prize draws at the end of the Christmas, Easter and Summer terms
- Acknowledgement in Achievement Assemblies
- Attendance intervention groups

## 7. Attendance monitoring

### 7.1 Daily arrangements

The attendance officer at our school monitors student absence on a daily basis.

A student's parent/guardian is expected to contact the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health (see section 4.2).

**A student's parent/ guardian is expected to call the school each morning their child is absent.**

If a student's absence goes above three consecutive days, the school will contact the parent/guardian of the student to discuss the reasons for this.

If a student's absence continues to rise after contacting their parent/guardian, we will consider involving an education welfare officer.

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a student's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the student will be classified as a persistent absentee.

### 7.2 Data collection

Student-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing board.

The school collects and stores attendance data to be used for internal purposes such as:

- Track the attendance of individual students
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern
- Monitor and evaluate those children identified as being in need of intervention and support

## 8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the Local Authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum each year by the Assistant Head Teacher (Behaviour and Attitudes). At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

### Appendix 1: attendance codes

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Student is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Student is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Student arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Student is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Student is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Student has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Student is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Student is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Student is on a work experience placement
<b>Authorised absence</b>		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Student has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Student has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made



<b>H</b>	Authorised holiday	Student has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
<b>I</b>	Illness	School has been notified that a student will be absent due to illness
<b>M</b>	Medical/dental appointment	Student is at a medical or dental appointment
<b>R</b>	Religious observance	Student is taking part in a day of religious observance
<b>S</b>	Study leave	Year 11 student is on study leave during their public examinations
<b>T</b>	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Student from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
<b>Unauthorised absence</b>		
<b>G</b>	Unauthorised holiday	Student is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
<b>N</b>	Reason not provided	Student 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)
<b>O</b>	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for student's absence
<b>U</b>	Arrival after registration	Student arrived at school after the register closed
<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Scenario</b>
<b>X</b>	Not required to be in school	Student of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
<b>Y</b>	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or student is in custody

<b>Z</b>	Student not on admission register	Register set up but student has not yet joined the school
<b>#</b>	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day