Achieving excellence together

PUPIL ATTENDANCE POLICY

Amended July 2020.

Rationale

Regular academy attendance and good punctuality are considered essential to ensure sustained academic progress and social development. Every Child matters at Co-op Academy Failsworth. Regular attendance is an integral part of success and the link between attendance and attainment is firmly established and well documented. Those pupils who attend more tend to achieve better qualifications than those who do not. Those with excellent attendance records are able to have more choices in their futher/higher education and have better employment prospects. Regular attendance is essential if pupils are to reach their full potential.

The academy sees the maximising of attendance and punctuality rates as one of its key tasks. It is the academy's priority that each pupil knows what their current attendance is, how to improve/maintain it and what their attendance target is. The academy will work hard to provide a welcoming, caring environment where every pupil feels safe and valued. This policy links closely with the Academy Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and should be read in conjunction with it.

Policy
This policy gives notification to parents/carers of actions we will take to promote excellent attendance in the Academy.
In order to promote maximum student attendance and good punctuality Co-op Academy Failsworth will:

☐ Promote a positive supportive ethos based upon our values and principals of Succeed together, Be yourself always, Do what matters most and show you care.

☐ Staff act as role models for standards of attendance and punctuality

☐ Employ systems and create strong partnerships to inform parents/carers of expectations regarding student attendance and punctuality

☐ emphasise throughout the whole staff body the importance of good relationships with pupils, parents/carers and the importance of responding appropriately to their needs

☐ Reduce the number of Persistently Absent pupils within the Academy

☐ Work co-operatively with external agencies in both Manchester and Oldham local authorities

☐ Monitor student attendance/punctuality and take relevant action based on data available

☐ Support long-term absentees with the aim of successful integration

☐ Employ systems to identify internal truancy

☐ Supporting vulnerable students who struggle to access mainstream education

☐ Reward excellent or improved attendance in a variety of ways

☐ Appoint a named governor who has oversight of attendance procedures on behalf of the governing body and who chairs the Attendance Panel

Points to note

1. Only the Headteacher (or their delegated representative) can authorise absence.
2. Academy attendance is subject to various Education laws and this school attendance policy is written to reflect these laws.
3. The Academy registers pupils at each lesson in the day.
4. The Academy uses the Sims In-touch text message system to make notify parents/carers that their child has not arrived to school and that no reason for absence has been given. This is an attendance and safeguarding process
5. The Academy will work in close partnership with the School Attendance service for Manchester and Oldham Local Authorities to raise and improve attendance.
6. The Academy offers an outstanding curriculum across key stages 3 and 4 which promotes good attendance.
7. Family tutors are involved in attendance monitoring at the first level. Pastoral Mentors, and Heads of Year monitor on-going attendance; the Attendance Manager, Family Liaison Officer and Attendance Officer take action regarding non-attendance, including referral to the School Attendance Service.
8. Each term, the Year teams will celebrate good attendance.
9. Each year the Academy will examine its attendance figures and set attendance/absence targets. These will reflect national targets.
10. The Policy is to be reviewed as appropriate, and is the overall responsibility of the Headteacher (who may delegate that responsibility).

Conclusion

The academy will take every opportunity to remind students and their families of the need for good attendance. We remain committed to Government drives to improve attendance.

Attendance Policy Guidance notes and Appendices

Academy Procedures

Any child who is absent from the Academy at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity [attendance out of the academy]. Only the Headteacher or a designated senior member of staff acting on their behalf can authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence will be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised.

Daily Routine

The first daily registration will take place at the start of the Academy day at 8.35am during period 1 lesson. Pupils arriving after 8.35am to the Academy but before the end of the registration will be marked as Late (L). Registers are taken for every period for the remainder of the day.

First Day Absence

If a child is absent from school, for whatever reason, it is the responsibility of the parent/carer to inform the school by 8.30am on **every day** of absence by telephoning 0161 688 3900 or by sending a text / email via the academy APP. On a child's return to school they should bring a note to confirm the reason for the absence and if requested medical evidence. This must be passed to the Attendance office on the first day of return from absence.

If a parent/carer does not contact the Academy with a reason for absence a phone call will be made by the relevant Head of Year before 10am. If the Academy is unable to make contact with the parent / carer, a text message will be sent to the contact number school have on SIMS via Sims In-Touch. This call will continue until the parent/carer contacts the Academy to provide a reason for their child's absence.

If the academy is satisfied with the reason provided for the pupil's absence it will be recorded in the register as an authorised absence. If no reason is provided for the absence or the academy is not satisfied with the reason given, it will be recorded in the register as unauthorised absence.

Home Visits The Academy reserves the right to conduct home visits from the first day of absence.
First day of Absence
- Vulnerable pupils and those with persistently poor attendance will be contacted on the 1st day of absence.
- Pupils who are absent and the Academy has not been able to make contact with parent/carer to obtain reason for absence will have a home visit on the first day of absence

Second of Absence
- A Home visit will be made for pupils where no contact was made on the first day of absence – despite phonecalls and a home visit being made.

Third Day of Absence
- Home visits will be completed for all medical absences by this point.

Regular Home visits
We will work closely with pupils and their families where attendance is poor and classed as persistently absent from the Academy in order to support them in improving their attendance.

Safe and well Home visits and checks will be made where required and referrals to relevant agencies such as the Police and children's social care will be made were appropriate. **This is in line with the guidance in the Academy safeguarding policy, Keeping children safe in education 2019 and Children missing education DFE guidance 2016**

Medical evidence

If a child is to be off for 3 days or more we will require a medical evidence, this can be a note from the G.P or a copy of the prescription issued for medication prescribed at the appointment. The evidence must clearly state the name of the child and the date of the appointment. Where attendance levels are a concern, medical evidence will be required for all absences.

Persistent Absence (Defined in DFE legislation (section 444 of the Education Act) as 10% or more absences)

Pupils are classed as being a 'Persistent Absence' pupil if they accumulate a specified number of absences (or greater) within each term, (there are 3 per year) See below:

Term 1 More than 14 half day sessions
Term 2 More than 25 half day sessions
Term 3 More than 38 half day sessions

All persistently absent pupils are closely monitored with frequent parental contact. The aim of this is to work closely with the pupil and their parents to improve their attendance by breaking down the barriers to why their attendance is poor. Referrals to external agencies such as school health, early help, positive steps will be made to provide additional support where required.

Long term unexplained Absence/Children Missing Education

A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. The Academy will follow the Oldham Children's Services LA procedures for reporting concerns regarding children missing from education.   Contact cme@oldham.gov.uk (0161 770 4201) and cme@manchester.gov.uk
Children who are absent, abscond or go missing during the school day are vulnerable and at potential risk of abuse or neglect. Staff will follow the Academy procedures for dealing with children who are absent/go missing, particularly on repeat occasions**,** to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect including sexual abuse or exploitation and to help prevent the risks of further missing episodes.

We will comply with our statutory duty to inform the local authority of any pupil who falls within the reporting of CME notification requirements outlined in *Children Missing Education – Statutory guidance for local authorities (DFE September 2016)*

Supporting students returning to the Academy after long term absence

The Academy will use a wide range of interventions to support pupils returning from long-term illness/absence. These will be bespoke to the needs of the child and may include:
Phased return
Part time timetable
Wellbeing room placement
Ed lounge package
Study Zone

Government Guiidence For Full Opening Of Schools Following The Coronavirus Outbreak

Schools and local authorities to:

- communicate clear and consistent expectations around school attendance to families (and any other professionals who work with the family where appropriate) throughout the summer ahead of the new school year

- identify pupils who are reluctant or anxious about returning or who are at risk of disengagement and develop plans for re-engaging them. This should include disadvantaged and vulnerable children and young people, especially those who were persistently absent prior to the pandemic or who have not engaged with school regularly during the pandemic

- use the additional catch-up funding schools will receive, as well as existing pastoral and support services, attendance staff and resources and schools' pupil premium funding to put measures in place for those families who will need additional support to secure pupils' regular attendance

- work closely with other professionals as appropriate to support the return to school, including continuing to notify the child's social worker, if they have one, of non-attendance

Further technical guidance will be issued for schools to record attendance and absence, including what data schools will be asked to return to the department.

Pupils And Families Who Are Anxious About Return To School

All other pupils must attend school. Schools should bear in mind the potential concerns of pupils, parents and households who may be reluctant or anxious about returning and put the right support in place to address this. This may include pupils who have themselves been shielding previously but have been advised that this is no longer necessary.

If parents of pupils with significant risk factors are concerned, we recommend schools discuss their concerns and provide reassurance of the measures they are putting in place to reduce the risk in school. Schools should be clear with parents that pupils of compulsory school age must be in school unless a statutory reason applies (for example, the pupil has been granted a leave of absence, is unable to attend because of sickness, is absent for a necessary religious observance etc).

Pupils who are shielding or self-isolating

Much more is now known about coronavirus (COVID-19) and so in future there will be far fewer children and young people advised to shield whenever community transmission rates are high. Therefore, the majority of pupils will be able to return to school. You should note however that:

- a small number of pupils will still be unable to attend in line with public health advice because they are self-isolating and have had symptoms or a positive test result themselves; or because they are a close contact of someone who has coronavirus (COVID-19)

- shielding advice for all adults and children will pause on 1 August, subject to a continued decline in the rates of community transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19). This means that even the small number of pupils who will remain on the shielded patient list can also return to school, as can those who have family members who are shielding. Read the current advice on shielding

- if rates of the disease rise in local areas, children (or family members) from that area, and that area only, will be advised to shield during the period where rates remain high and therefore they may be temporarily absent (see below).

- some pupils no longer required to shield but who generally remain under the care of a specialist health professional may need to discuss their care with their health professional before returning to school (usually at their next planned clinical appointment). You can find more advice from the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health at COVID-19 - 'shielding' guidance for children and young people.

Where a pupil is unable to attend school because they are complying with clinical and/or public health advice, we expect schools to be able to immediately offer them access to remote education. Schools should monitor engagement with this activity (as set out in the section below).

Where children are not able to attend school as parents are following clinical and/or public health advice, absence will not be penalised.

Legal Sanctions

Penalty Notices

Penalty notices will be considered when:
- A pupil is absent from school for the purpose of a holiday in term time when the holiday has not been authorised by the school.
- A pupil has accumulated at least 10 sessions of unauthorised absence (including unauthorised lates) and further unauthorised absence had occurred following a penalty notice warning to improve attendance.

Each such Penalty Notice incurs a fine of £120 to be paid within 28 days, which is reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days of the notice being served. The fine is issued to each parent. Failure to pay a penalty notice may result in prosecution. Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act.

Prosecution

Where intervention fails to bring about an improvement in attendance, the Local Authority will be notified and legal action in the Magistrates Court may be taken. The school will provide the Local Authority with the evidence needed for a prosecution under Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act, and will appear as a witness for the Prosecution if required to do so.

Promoting Attendance

The academy will use opportunities as they arise to remind parents/carers, that it is their responsibility to ensure that their children are in school. The Academy uses the following to promote good attendance:
- The Prospectus,
- Newsletter from the Headteacher,
- Parents Evenings,
- New Intake Evening,
- Progress Charts,
- Academy Website,
- Parental meetings,
- Phone calls/Text Message

Holidays in term time
The academy cannot authorise holidays in term time. Exceptional circumstances may be considered, however a penalty notice could occur regarding this.

Attendance Awards
The academy runs a number of reward schemes to encourage good attendance, some of these include; lunchtime rewards such as use of the Astro at lunchtime, early dinner passes, rewards and prizes.

Monitoring Attendance

This is the remit of the Attendance Manager, Family Liaison Officer, Attendance Officer and the Year team. The Academy has set up a clear procedure regarding the monitoring of attendance, which then allows actions to be taken.

Family tutors are the first step in monitoring and tackling attendance, and will weekly/daily monitor a pupil's attendance certificate.

Where attendance becomes a concern, Head of Year will be involved in the monitoring, referring to the Attendance Manager, Family Liaison Officer and Attendance Officer for further action/additional support. The Attendance Tracker, shows weekly/annual comparison of whole school, year group, boy /girl, pupil premium and SEN attendance data is produced weekly by the Data Manager and presented to the Senior Leadership Group and Attendance Manager.

The registration system

The academy will use SIMS/lesson monitor package to maintain the school attendance records.

Registers by law must be kept for at least 3 years.

Monitoring of the Policy

This Policy is within the remit of the Senior Leadership Group. This Policy will be reviewed annually, and set before Governors for their continued acceptance by the Head Teacher.

Promoting Attendance
Staff roles and responsibilities

***The Governors* will:**

- Monitor attendance termly and review all strategies being used.

***Assistant Headteacher* will:**

- Write and update the school policy for attendance
- Be available to support and guide the Attendance Manager, Family Liaison Officer, Attendance Officer and Pastoral Leaders in relation to attendance matters
- Organise Personal Attendance Contracts alongside Attendance Manager and Attendance Officer
- Co-ordinate multi-agency meetings each half-term to discuss early intervention strategies for the most vulnerable pupils, such as health panels, Governors and Attendance Panels
- Write, lead and update action plans to improve attendance
- Ensure that stakeholders are aware of their role in ensuring good attendance
- Present information to the Governors as and when required, but at least termly
- Monitor overall attendance and punctuality, reporting weekly to SLG
- Monitor Persistent Absence (PA) data
- Monitor the link between attainment and attendance, and discuss actions through weekly Inclusion meetings

***Heads of Year / Pastoral Mentors and the Attendance Team* will:**

- Have an overview of attendance for the Year Groups
- Compile data and attend half-termly multi agency meetings in relation to the most vulnerable pupils
- Consult with family tutors to raise levels of attendance
- Co-ordinate support strategies for pupils returning to the academy after periods of absence
- Put action plans in place to improve attendance and measure the impact of them
- Implement intervention strategies for missed work
- Organise rewards in assemblies
- Organise and lead Attendance Panels every term for attendance below 93% or pupils with Persistent Absence/fall into persistent absence attendance category
- Analyse data on pupils with persistent absence each half-term
- Challenge absence codes when necessary
- Set year group and individual family targets for attendance
- Compare attendance figures to previous years
- Ensure Parents meetings, partnership Evenings have an attendance focus

***Family Tutors* will:**

- Promote good attendance each day during form time
- Collect absence notes during form time and forward to the attendance team, discuss issues affecting attendance, and adjust the weekly attendance certificate accordingly
- Monitor pupils' attendance and discuss reasons for absence with pupils.
- Alert Pastoral Leader or the Attendance team about occasions of unauthorised absence and any concerns re: attendance/registers

All Teaching Staff will:

- Promote good attendance by providing meaningful and challenging learning experiences
- Keep accurate attendance records for each teaching group
- Follow up non-attendance to lessons with pupils and with parents/carers as appropriate following consultation with Pastoral Leader or Attendance Team
- Provide appropriate work to support re-integration following a period of absence
- Supervise pupils at lesson changeovers to encourage prompt arrival at lessons

Attendance Administrative Staff will:

- Organise the daily administration of Sims-In Touch and related communication with parents/carers
- Oversee the administration of the Late records and permission slips for leaving school during the school day
- Organise the daily sending of text messages to parent/carers re absence, lates etc
- Produce and post unauthorised absence letters weekly
- Produce and post percentage attendance letters termly
- Print out weekly attendance certificates for Pastoral Leaders, Family Tutors as requested
- Print attendance certificates to match Progress Charts as required
- Amend pupil attendance and data in SIMS from information given by parents/carers, Pastoral Leaders and Senior Leadership Group

Routines for monitoring and analysing attendance

1. WEEKLY ATTENDANCE ROUTINES

DAY	PROCEDURE	BY WHOM	DEADLINE
Monday	Previous weeks attendance and cumulative attendance given to FT's every Monday to update Attendance Progress Trackers.	Year Teams Pastoral Leaders	Designated day
Tuesday	Communication with LA to review progress of caseload of attendance concerns	Attendance Manager & Attendance Officer	Ongoing
Wednesday	Meeting AHT / Attendance Manager / Family Liaison Officer / Attendance Officer	AHT Attendance Manager Family Liaison Officer / Attendance Officer	Ongoing
Various	Pastoral Leaders to promote attendance/ punctuality in assemblies, using data provided	Pastoral Leaders / AHT	Ongoing
Friday	Weekly attendance % Cumulative attendance % Last Year's Cumulative attendance %	Attendance Manager to Headteacher / AHT - Inclusion	Friday 3.00pm
Friday	Meeting AHT/Attendance Manager/Family Liaison Office/ Pastoral Leaders Attendance agenda item (1)	Attendance Manager Family Liaison Officer / Attendance Officer Pastoral Leaders	Friday 11.00am
Friday (SLG) Monthly	Progress update on attendance	AHT Inclusion Attendance Officer – Run report	Thursday 4.00pm
Friday	Weekly / cumulative attendance percentage reports to be produced for Pastoral Leaders to distribute to FT's	Attendance Manager	Friday 3.00pm
Friday	Part Time & External Provision Report to be sent to the Local Authority.	Attendance Manager	Friday 3.00pm
Weekly	Monitoring of Target Groups by YearTeams	Attendance Manager / Family Liaison Officer / Attendance Officer / Pastoral Leaders Senior Leadership Group	Ongoing
Daily	Home visits Mentoring	Family Liaison Officer Attendance Manager/ Attendance Officer	Ongoing
Half termly	Attendance Blitz weeks. Personal attendance plans	Pastoral Leaders Senior Links Attendance Team	Ongoing
Weekly	Celebrate Year successes in terms of attendance/punctuality in assembly/Weekly Power Points / Friday Period 4 Early Lunch Reward.	Pastoral Leaders	Ongoing

2. ATTENDANCE HALF TERMLY ROUTINES

Rewards/Sanctions/Targets

TIME	PROCEDURE	BY WHOM	DEADLINE
Half-termly	Assemblies as part of achievement celebration–Attendance Certificates	Pastoral Leaders	Start of next half term
Half-termly	10+ days absence Report to be sent to Anne Clark at the Education Attendance Service	Attendance Manager	End of each half term
End of each half term	An update on attendance/ punctuality concerns/actions	Attendance Manager / Attendance Officer & Attendance Admin	By the end of the first week
Fortnightly	Overview meeting Attendance/Punctuality	AHT - Inclusion Attendance Manager	Ongoing
Meeting of Governors Attendance panel	A formal meeting with parents and students with attendance/ punctuality concerns	Governor / AHT, Attendance Manager or Attendance Officer, Pastoral Leaders	End of each half term
Termly	Analysis of Attendance Certificates	Pastoral Leaders / Attendance Manager	1st week of new term.
Termly Overview	Target Groups of Attendance 100% < 95% - Pastoral Leaders < 92% - Attendance Officer < 90% PP - Attendance Manager < 90%PP - Family Liaison Officer	AHT – Inclusion, Attendance Manager, Family Liaison Officer, Pastoral Leaders, Attendance Officer	Last week of each term.

3. ATTENDANCE ANNUAL ROUTINES

TIME	PROCEDURE	BY WHOM	DEADLINE
May	Review of attendance / punctuality and set targets for next academic year	Senior Leadership Group	March
May	Update all school literature as necessary	AHT - Inclusion	July
June	DCFS absence return	AHT - Inclusion / Data Manager	May
Summer Term	Achievement Assemblies Years 7/8/9/10 to reward 100% attendance / punctuality	Senior Leadership Group / Pastoral Leaders	July
Various	Display of attendance / weekly punctuality figures, school targets etc.	Attendance Manger / Attendance Officer Pastoral Leaders	Ongoing
Summer Term	Year 11 Achievement Day Rewards for 100% attendance / punctuality	Senior Leadership Group / Pastoral Leaders	Ongoing
October	Annual review with Attendance Adviser	AHT - Inclusion/ EAS	October
Autumn Term	Presentation Evening Rewards for 100% attendance over five years	Senior Leadership Group	October

Missing From School Response Checklist
A checklist for reporting children and young people missing/absconded during the school day

PUPIL IDENTIFIED AS MISSING - REPORT IMMEDIATELY
to a member of the senior leadership team when child or young person is known to have absconded from lesson/school.

↓

Determine the nature/reason for absconding/going missing from lesson (consider recent events or precipitating factors)

↓

Search of school premises including grounds and immediate locality. Make contact with the child, establish (where possible) their location, undertake (if appropriate) home visit or suspected/known destination.
Notify parents and/or carers.

FOUND ← → **NOT FOUND**

FOUND:

Child located, but refuses to return to school.
Risk assessment to be made with regards to circumstances considering the following likelihoods:
- To visit known abuser
- Of being at risk of CSE
- To use drink or drugs
- Of self-harm or expressing suicidal ideation

Child located, returned to school.

NOT FOUND:

Risk assessment to be made with regards to circumstances considering the following likelihoods:
- To visit known abuser
- Of being at risk of CSE
- To use drink or drugs
- Of self-harm or expressing suicidal ideation

CONCERNS

No concerns/low risk
Child is truanting/whereabouts of child have been established i.e child has gone home, refusing to return to school.
DO NOT REPORT TO POLICE AS MISSING

NO CONCERNS

Notify Safer School Officer

Ring 101 where no officer is available.

Update ALL relevant professionals and parents/carers

Safer School Officer should check Police systems for existing vulnerabilities.

Pass all relevant information including a detailed description of the absconder and where possible an up-to-date photo.

On student's return to school – designated safeguarding lead to talk to pupil to establish reason behind absconding. Discussion should:
1. Ascertain child's views and perceptions.
2. Explore reason for absconding (push/pull factors)
3. Allow DLS to undertake an assessment of any presenting safeguarding risks.
4. Ensure that appropriate interventions/referrals /support are actioned to address, identified risk and minimise any further reoccurrence of absconding.