



MONKWEARMOUTH ACADEMY

ATTENDANCE POLICY

SEPTEMBER 2017

Rationale

School Attendance is subject to various Education laws and the Monkwearmouth Academy attendance policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by the Department for Education.

At Monkwearmouth Academy, we believe that good attendance and punctuality are important in helping students be the best that they can be. Students should be at school on time dressed in accordance with the school uniform policy, and ready to learn, every day the school is open, unless the reason for absence is unavoidable.

Promoting excellent attendance is the responsibility of the whole school community including students, parents/carers, staff and governors and we will endeavour to establish strong home-academy links and communication systems that can be utilised whenever there is concern about attendance. If there are problems which affect a student's attendance we will investigate, identify and strive in partnership with parents/carers and students to resolve those problems as quickly and efficiently as possible. We will adopt a clearly focused approach aimed at returning the student to full attendance at all times.

Principles

Monkwearmouth Academy will ensure staff:

- Are aware of the registration procedures and receive in-service training on registration legislation and regulation
- Complete registers accurately at the beginning of every lesson
- Inform the Attendance Officer when a student is engaged in an activity outside of their normal timetable, i.e. trips or visits
- Communicate to parents/carers the importance of contacting academy early by no later than 8.30am on the first day of absence
- Maintain a system for first day response following absences, not previously confirmed by parents/carers
- Display attendance rates around the academy and reward good and improved attendance in assemblies
- Promote and support the importance of attendance through the ethos of the Pastoral team
- Regularly monitor patterns of absence and provide early intervention strategies to avoid escalation
- Regularly report, with a full analysis and evaluation, attendance data for consideration by senior leaders and academy governors.

Additional Support

We recognise the particular vulnerability of certain groups of students, including those students; with Special and/or Additional Education Needs, disadvantaged students, vulnerable students including those subject to child protection or child in need or who are in the care of the Local Authority. We will endeavour to safeguard all students through this policy, however, will prioritise vulnerable students with first day response and monitoring procedures and by:

- recording attendance for those students educated off site
- identifying those students who are migratory, missing or removed from education and refer to appropriate authorities
- Ensuring whenever possible, that work is prepared, delivered and marked for students who are absent for long periods.

Statutory Framework

Under Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act a student is required to attend regularly at school, should a student fail to attend regularly legal action may be taken. A parent(s)/carer(s) may receive a Fixed Penalty Notice or could be fined up to £2,500 face three months in prison and receive a parenting order. An Education Supervision Order could be sought.

- The school is legally required to complete a register twice during the school day. This is once at the start of the school day during guidance from 8.30am, and again for the afternoon session at 1.00pm.
- The school is obliged by law to differentiate between authorised and unauthorised absence. A letter or telephone message from a parent does not itself authorise an absence. It is for the school to determine if an absence is to be authorised (The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006).
- It is important to note that even though a parent may not live in the same home as the student that parent is still responsible for ensuring the child attends school every day.

Rights and Responsibilities

Promoting positive behaviour and excellent attendance is the responsibility of the whole school community including students, parents, staff and governors.

The Academy will:

- promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence, ensuring every student has access to full-time education to which they are entitled and differentiate between authorised and unauthorised absence in order to act early to address patterns of absence.
- keep parents/carers fully informed of their child's attendance/punctuality record and follow up unexplained absences by text, phone calls, letters and home visits as necessary
- work closely with parents through the pastoral team to identify and address any attendance issues, identify barriers and put plans of support in place to support good attendance
- contact parents on the first day when a student fails to attend school without providing good reason, via the school's electronic messaging system or by phone call.
- take timely action on any problem notified to us and involve appropriate outside agencies in order to support students and their families. This may include a 'home visit' or a request to the police to undertake a 'safe and well' welfare visit.

Students will:

- aim to achieve 100% attendance each academic year
- attend school daily
- arrive on time (by 8.30am) and be appropriately prepared for the day
- tell a member of staff about any problem or reason that may prevent them from attending school
- go to guidance and lessons on time
- take responsibility for registering at the student hub if they are late or are leaving the school site during school hours.

Parents/carers will:

- support the school and their child in aiming for 100% attendance each academic year
- ensure their child attends school daily and on time ie by 8.30am each morning
- ensure that their child attends school regularly, punctually, dressed in accordance with the school uniform policy, fully equipped with a positive attitude to learn
- notify the school before 8.30am of any absence
- avoid taking their child out of school for non-urgent medical or dental appointments
- only request leave of absence if it is for an exceptional circumstance
- ensure the school has updated contact numbers and email addresses
- actively work with school staff and relevant multi-agency staff, to solve any attendance issues as and when they occur.

Personnel

Tutors

Under the 2006 Education Regulations it is a legal requirement that a register is taken at the start of the day. Not only does the process allow us to monitor attendance but also to act as a student checklist in respect of safeguarding and health and safety issues eg fire drills.

School starts with a guidance period at 8.35am when all students should be in their tutor room in preparation for the register being taken. Tutors will be responsible for registering the attendance of her/his tutor group during the guidance period and forwarding any reasons for absences provided in writing by parents/carers to the attendance officer /pastoral team. Tutors should refer any concerns relating to the attendance, punctuality and well-being of their individual tutees, indicated by attendance patterns, to the pastoral team.

Class Teachers

Class Teachers will take an electronic register at the beginning of every lesson. Any changes in teaching groups or tutor groups must be reported immediately to the pastoral team office and the SIMS manager to ensure that attendance data can be accurate and kept up to date. Any teacher who has arranged for a student to be engaged in an activity other than indicated on their timetable must inform the pastoral team/attendance team in advance.

Pastoral Teams

Pastoral Teams are responsible for co-ordinating: the whole academy approach to the recording, monitoring and reporting of attendance, the identification of absence, including persistent absentees, liaison with external services, the reporting of attendance for those students educated off-site, strategies for minimising absence and the reporting of absence to the SLT, Governing Body, Local Authority and DfE. They will actively promote attendance through the guidance programme and through half-termly rewards and praise assemblies in conjunction with tutor teams.

Vulnerable Team Meetings

The Vulnerable Team will review attendance data on three weekly cycle and analyse its impact. The Vulnerable team will liaise with key personnel to initiate and review appropriate intervention strategies to address any issues arising from their analysis. The Pastoral Director will prepare reports to the Governing Body to enable them to review progress and set attendance targets.

Governing Body

The Governing Body will review attendance reports and progress of identified individuals in order to support further procedures.

Regular, Efficient and Accurate Recording of Attendance

Any student who is on roll but not present in the school must be recorded within one of these categories.

1. Unauthorised absence

This is for those students where no reason has been provided, or whose absence is deemed to be without valid reason.

2. Authorised absence

This is for those students who are away from school for a reason that is deemed to be valid under the Education Act 1996.

3. Approved Educational Activity

Pupils recorded in this category are deemed to be present for attendance returns purposes. This covers types of supervised educational activities undertaken off site but with the approval of the school. This would include for example work experience placements, field trips and educational visits, sporting activities, link courses or approved education off site.

Procedures

First Day Response

Under the 1996 Education Act parents commit an offence if their child does not attend school regularly. If your child cannot come to school because of illness you should advise the school on the first day of absence by 8.30am to provide a reason for the absence and the likely duration of the absence. Parents also need to contact the school by 8.30am where an absence continues beyond the first day, informing the school on each subsequent day. The attendance officer will contact, by text, all parents/carers of absent students who have failed to notify academy by mid-morning on the first day of any absence where a live mobile telephone contact number exists. All vulnerable students will be telephoned by 10:00 a.m. by the Attendance Officer/Associate Head of Year.

It is therefore essential that the school is kept informed of changes to contact details such as telephone numbers and addresses. In cases where we continue to be concerned we may make a 'home visit' or request the police to undertake a 'safe and well' welfare visit. Parents/carers are asked to ensure that their child brings in a letter confirming the reasons for the absence when the child returns to school.

Authorising absence

The academy will only authorise a medical absence if the circumstances are unavoidable. If a parent rings the school to confirm the student is unwell we may request supporting evidence: medical appointment card with one appointment entered, letter from professional, doctors note, medication prescribed by a doctor, copy of prescriptions, print screen of medical notes, as well as letters concerning hospital appointments or any other relevant evidence.

The academy may choose not to authorise absence without this supporting evidence as it is for the academy to determine if an absence is to be authorised (Regulation 7 The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006).

Parents are asked to make routine medical and dental appointments outside school hours wherever possible. Where such appointments in school time are unavoidable, parents should inform the academy in advance and submit a copy of the appointment card. The absence will be marked unauthorised if the parent fails to submit the appointment card.

Persistent Absentees

Persistent absentees are those students who are at risk of, or who have less than, 92% attendance. They will be identified at the earliest opportunity through the three weekly attendance review and parents/carers will be notified in writing in the first instance. Where improvements in attendance are not evident a parental meeting will be requested. An Individual Action Plan will be drafted in conjunction with parents if appropriate. If attendance rates fail to improve a referral will be made to the Local Authority attendance service who will assess the case to determine the appropriateness of use of statutory enforcement procedures ie Fixed Penalty Notices, Magistrates Court or seek and Education Supervision Order on the child. The maximum penalty on conviction is a fine of £2,500 and/or 3 months imprisonment a parenting order can also be imposed.

Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN)

If a student has 20 or more unauthorised absences (10 days) during a 10 week period, the parent/carer may receive a FPN warning letter. Following this, a FPN may be issued to the parent/carer if their child has further unauthorised absences during the 15 school days following the receipt of the formal warning letter. A FPN may be issued if a student has unauthorised absence resulting from an unauthorised holiday in term time. A FPN currently requires payment of £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days, and will result in prosecution for unauthorised absence if unpaid.

Punctuality/Lateness

Students who arrive after guidance must be signed in at the student hub. Please note any student who is late to school will receive a 30 minute detention to be completed on the same day.

Arrival after the close of registration with no valid reason will be marked as unauthorised absence and coded U in the register. Parents/carers of students who have patterns of lateness will be contacted to discuss the importance of good time keeping and how this might be achieved. If lateness persists parents/carers, will be invited to attend a meeting in school to discuss the problem. If the lateness continues a referral will be made to the Local Authority attendance service and a Fixed Penalty Notice could be issued or ultimately the parent/carer could be prosecuted.

Holidays in Term Time

The 2013 amendment to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 makes clear that the Executive Headteacher may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Time off school for family holidays cannot be authorised. The Executive Headteacher has the discretion, in exceptional circumstances to authorise short periods off school.

Applications for leave of absence where dates can be known ahead, must be made at least three weeks in advance of the requested date. Parents/Carers will be invited to a meeting with the Executive Headteacher or a member of the Senior Leadership Team and consideration will be given to each request prior to a decision being taken by

Executive Headteacher on behalf of the Governing Body (Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006). Each case will be judged on its individual circumstances.

Any leave of absence that has been declined or the parents/carers has not sought approval for will be recorded as unauthorised. These cases will be referred to the Local Authority and a Fixed Penalty Notice could be issued to each parent for each student.



NB: Persistent Absenteeism is now students with attendance lower than 92%

This policy was updated in September 2017 and will be reviewed every 2 years or earlier if necessary.

Signed  Executive Headteacher Date 20/9/17

Signed  Chair of Governors Date 20/9/17



**MONKWEARMOUTH ACADEMY
STAGE 2 ATTENDANCE MEETING**

Student Name:	Date:
Parent/Carer Name:	
School Concerns:	
Parents Response:	
Action by Who/Timescale:	
Other agencies involved:	

Result of Stage 2 Meeting: Monitor/Refer to LA Attendance Team (please delete as appropriate)

