

Madeley Academy



Attendance & Punctuality Policy

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Introduction

Madeley Academy seeks to ensure that all its students receive a full-time education which maximises opportunities for each student to realise his/her potential.

Regular school attendance is essential to effective learning, and for students to reach their full potential. Research has shown that there is a possibility that young people who miss school regularly for no good reason, are more likely to become involved in anti-social behaviour or crime and are at risk of becoming a NEET (No Education Employment or Training).

The Academy is committed to working in partnership with parents/carers, students and the local community to achieve the highest levels of attendance and punctuality for all our students.

Objectives

- To highlight the importance of full attendance and punctuality and have a whole academy approach in promoting this
- To continue to improve the overall attendance of any students that may be slipping and establish reasons for absence
- Students that are absent on a regular basis will be discussed within the attendance team in order to agree appropriate action/support so that attendance can be improved
- Continue to use reward systems to recognise excellent attendance and punctuality. Also recognise improved attendance and punctuality by way of sending postcards of encouragement and praise to students
- Holiday requests during term time will be recorded as unauthorised and Leave of absence requests for special circumstances will be at the Headteacher's discretion

The Recording of a Student's Attendance is a Legal Requirement

The accuracy of registers is a legal requirement and plays a key role in the rest of the procedures in identification and follow up of any absences on a daily basis. It is also important that registers are completed promptly at the start of every lesson to alleviate any internal issues. We believe in a whole school approach and hence would like our attendance policy to be **consistently** implemented by **all staff to improve behaviour, punctuality and attainment level, reduce truancy and raise student's self esteem**.

The expectation is that all staff implement these guidelines every lesson, every day. Inconsistency in approach will lead to an ineffective policy with a subsequent deterioration in attendance, punctuality, behaviour and learning.

It is the responsibility of staff to ensure that they have printed paper copies of their teaching/tutor group registers in the case of any problems with the electronic system but where this has not been possible the Attendance team can assist.

Registration

The Bromcom system will automatically record all children with / for present. Attendance staff in the Attendance Office will need to use the codes below to complete the registers.

Teaching staff will **only** be required to use the / code for present, **L** code for lateness and the **N** code for absence.

Code	Description
B	Educated off site
C	Other Authorised Circumstance
D	Dual registration
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)
G	Family holiday (not agreed)
H	Family holiday (agreed)
I	Illness
J	Interview
M	Medical appointment
N	No reason
O	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity
R	Religious observance
S	Study leave
T	Traveller absence
U	Late (after registers closed)
V	Educational visit
W	Work Experience
L	Late
Y	Forced and Partial Closure
X	Self-Isolation due to Covid

Any additional information on students, ie raising a concern or a query regarding a student's attendance, should be sent to the Attendance Officer via email. Please note that the priority for the Attendance Officer in Period 1a and 1b is to carry out first day absence calls and in some cases to make home visits to obtain reasons for absences. Accuracy of registers is key to avoid unnecessary home visits and calls being made. For example, a student marked absent by mistake could cause a parent to be worried for their safety if he/she has been sent to the Academy and is actually present. It is also very important to highlight that there may be other agencies involved in working with students and school attendance may be used as a measure of their safety and determine that their welfare needs are being met.

In period 1a the Attendance Officer will be phoning all parents/carers of students who are absent for the first time on that day. Any relevant information will be passed back to tutors or subject teachers via email if necessary.

Leave for Medical Appointments

Every effort should be made by parents / carers to make medical appointments outside of term time for minimum disruption of education and to help improve attendance. Where this is not possible; appointments should be arranged for the beginning of the day or towards the end of the school day so that students can still arrive for the rest of the morning and get their **AM** attendance mark and where appointments are made towards the end of the day students will gain their **PM** registration enabling their attendance not to be affected.

Leave in Term time

Holiday requests will be routinely rejected as the Academy believes in fostering high levels of attendance to support student achievement. Parents who are requesting permission to take their child on holiday during term time must complete an "Application for Student Leave of Absence" form, obtainable from the Attendance Office, at least four weeks prior to the start of the holiday. This will also apply to Sixth Form students from September 2013. The overall decision however will be made at the Headteacher's discretion.

Completed forms should be returned to student services for the Headteacher/Senior Deputy Head teacher to make a decision on whether the leave of absence is to be authorised. Parents will be informed of the decision in writing.

In special circumstances such as sporting activities and/or religious reasons, leave of absence may be granted if the student has generally very good attendance and the leave period is outside of any Exams/Revision period. In practice the parent may still go ahead with the holiday with or without approval of the Academy. Should the Academy decide not to grant leave of absence and parents still take their child out of school, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised which may be subject to a Holiday Penalty Notice fine of £60 per child per parent. This fine will increase to £120 if not paid within 21 days. Failure to pay the £120 within the period of 22 to 28 days may lead to court proceedings.

Subject Registration

All students will be automatically marked / for present. Subject teachers are required to mark students who are absent with an **N** and **L** if they are late, ie if they arrive 5 minutes after the start of the lesson without a valid reason. There is a degree of flexibility here and will require professional judgment and common sense. There are only 3 options: / for present, **N** no reason yet given, **L** for late. From 8.30am to 8.45am students should be coded as an **L** for late. After 8.45am onwards students should be sent to the Attendance Office for a yellow slip. This is to track students on their time of arrival after the 15 minute window and determine the appropriate use of codes. The Attendance team are then able to follow up on calls home and/or any visits where necessary.

Changes to Tutor Group

Any movement between tutor groups must be approved by Andy Fraser. Any change should normally be made for the beginning of the week to facilitate easier statistical monitoring of attendance data and any follow up action that may be required.

Changes to Subject Groups

Any movement between subject groups must be approved by the Head of Department and their line manager on SLT. Any change should normally be made for the beginning of the week to facilitate easier statistical monitoring of attendance data. The Attendance Officer should always be informed prior to any change and both subjects teachers must ensure that their paper registers are amended.

All changes should be communicated to Alex Johnson or Andy Fraser so that the electronic registers can be amended.

Accurate and up-to-date data is required for a number of purposes. It enables SLT to monitor performance in a variety of ways and to identify students who may be vulnerable. The data will form a key point of any future Academy inspection or Joint Area Review and is required by the DfE on an annual basis.

The data will also be used to inform staff and students of performance in this area and this will be important in identifying students and staff for incentives as part of the Rewards system (see Rewards and Sanctions).

The Attendance team will monitor the attendance on a daily basis and will send the Academy's first letter of concern to a student when either the frequency or the pattern of attendance gives cause for

concern ie those students whose attendance is below 90% or when students are consistently absent on the same day/days. At this stage the Attendance Office will discuss the student's absence record at a review meeting. Together they will determine the next course of action (see Rewards and Sanctions) during their weekly review meetings.

Work Supervision Agreements

This is a strategy that the Academy has adopted in recognition of absence necessary due to special circumstances where the student would normally have an excellent attendance.

Work Supervision Agreements may be considered after consultation with parent/carer and Deputy Headteacher or Attendance Office. Consideration will be given when a student will be absent for a period of time, due to an injury or other certified medical conditions for example where medical evidence is supplied.

In this case the student is able to complete work at home under the direct supervision of a parent/carer. The agreement is signed by all parties, and a review date agreed.

The agreement may also apply in other circumstances where the Academy feel there are genuine circumstances which do not allow the student to attend; but they are able to complete work at home and evidence this.

Protocol for Students on a Modified Timetable

The Academy, from time to time, adopts a variety of interventions in order to provide support for students. Applying a modified timetable is one strategy employed.

The objective of a modified timetable is often to improve poor attendance by providing a reduced number of hours in order to aid the reintroduction of a student back into the Academy to avoid risk of disengagement.

Key Points

- The parent must sign the Modified Timetable and be clear that they take responsibility for the student when he/she is not at the Academy
- The timetable should be for a limited period – suggested length is 6 weeks maximum and in line with the modified timetable protocol
- The arrangement is reviewed every 2 weeks by the Pastoral Team Manager and the member of staff initiating the modified timetable
- The objectives of this action should be clear
- Modified Timetable form must be used for the parent to guarantee the student will be supervised off site
- Modified timetable agreements to be sent to AST once signed and reviewed

For children of compulsory school age, parents are required under section 7 of the Education Act 1996 to ensure that, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise, their children receive full time education.

Local Authorities have a duty under section 1(1) of the Act to secure that there are 'sufficient' schools in their area providing primary and secondary education and section 14(2) makes it clear that the schools available for an area 'shall not be regarded as sufficient for the purposes of subsection (1) unless they are sufficient in number, character and equipment provide for all students the opportunity to appropriate education'. In this context 'character' can be imputed to include the provision of full-time education.

Students should be provided with sufficient and appropriately differentiated work and can also access the Online Curriculum to do for those hours they are not in the Academy. Arrangements should be

made to ensure that work is regularly marked, assessed by subject leaders, and constructive feedback is given to the student.

Child Not Receiving Education

Any student who is absent from school for ten consecutive days, ceased to attend, or if we believe may have become a Child Missing from Education, must have a Child Not Receiving Education Referral. This form is referred immediately to Telford & Wrekin Council. The content of this referral is in line with DfE requirements.

Punctuality

This is an area which will require a concerted and consistent effort by all staff to ensure that punctuality improves both for registration and in lessons. Lateness without good reason is unacceptable as it disrupts learning for both the offending student and for their classmates. Persistent lateness will result in the Attendance Officer informing parents/carers of a 30 minute detention the following week. Where a student is late for half an hour or more they will be marked with a **U** code which means they lose their morning mark which is equivalent to an absence.

The consistent operation of the electronic registration system will quickly highlight any students who have difficulty in this area. It is expected that any incidence of lateness in lessons will be dealt with in the first instance by the class teacher. This would normally be a verbal reprimand. If lateness to a lesson is a persistent problem or if lateness is exceeding five minutes then more punitive action is required. This should involve the student making up missed time in a subject detention or extra homework to redress the time lost.

If punctuality remains a problem then parents should be informed and a meeting should be arranged between the tutor and the parent to seek an agreed joint strategy to address the problem. If lateness to lessons is a problem then it is likely that an internal meeting will be required to involve all relevant staff and a member of the Attendance Team. This meeting will determine the appropriate course of action to resolve the problem.

Students should always collect a Late Slip from 8.45am onwards from the Attendance Office to ensure that they will be coded as being present. Any student who is late should always be sent to the Attendance Office to obtain a yellow slip for lateness.

Details of any lates are sent to parents/carers weekly to allow parents/carers to support their child to get to school on time.

Truancy

External truancy will be dealt with in the same way as poor punctuality. The difference will be that parents will be informed and invited into the Academy/or seen at home, to discuss the circumstances surrounding the truancy. Students who are found to be truanting will be put into the Inclusion Centre the following day as a consequence. This will be arranged through the Senior Leadership Team/Attendance Officer. Frequent truancy will be dealt with by the attendance team who will then consider Legal Action on the use of a penalty warning notice from the AST team.

Fire Alarm Procedure

The Academy must, by law, have a tried and tested Fire Alarm Procedure. At the sound of the fire alarm, staff should ensure that:

- (a) the electronic register has been sent
- (b) they bring a paper copy of their group register if possible

They should quickly complete a headcount. Teachers will escort their teaching group to the assembly area and repeat the headcount.

The demands to ensure that children are safe and accounting for them again underlies the importance of keeping accurate, up-to-date registers.

Rewards and Sanctions

The emphasis in this policy is on a wide range of rewards to encourage excellent and improved attendance with further rewards from parents/carers and the tutors for students with excellent attendance.

Rewards

Any student who achieves 100% attendance for the year will receive the Headteacher's Certificate of Excellence for attendance. Incentives detailed in our Rewards Policy are used to reward positive attendance.

Students may also be rewarded with various vouchers for improved attendance by the Attendance Officer.

Sanctions

The first sanction for unauthorised non-attendance is for the tutor to follow up by speaking to the student concerned and make contact with parents/ carers and emphasise the Academy's expectations. Tutors are expected to give attendance a high profile to students in their tutor group and be consistent in their approach. They also need to ascertain any underlying pastoral or welfare issues and refer to Student Services. All absences can be a warning sign of a range of safeguarding concerns, including sexual abuse, sexual exploitation or child criminal exploitation. **It is important for all staff to know that any child protection issues are to be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead for the Academy on duty. Duncan Marshall – Senior Deputy Head teacher, Neil Davies, Richard Johnson and Lyndsay Timmins are currently the Safeguarding Officers and details of who is on duty and when can be found from Reception staff. Alternatively you can contact Family Connect directly on (01952) 385385.**

The next stage, if unauthorised non-attendance persists, will be for the Attendance Officer, Abi Biffin, to make contact with the family. If the student's continues to give cause for concern then the process described in Registration will be implemented.

The Attendance team will hold weekly review meetings at which appropriate actions will be agreed to address poor attendance and punctuality. This involves a structured programme of intervention beginning with a SAL 1 letter highlighting the concerns to parent/carers of the level of attendance that the student is on. They are invited to make contact with the Attendance Officer to discuss this further during an Attendance Concern Meeting.

Weekly Review meetings will play a key role in establishing attendance concerns in each Year group. This is also the way in which it becomes clear that there has been an improvement or whether there are patterns of absence developing in a student's attendance print out. Post cards are sent out by Attendance Officer for any students identified that have improved their attendance and punctuality since the last Review Meeting in recognition of the effort made.

If no improvement has been made from the previous review, then a second letter of concern (SAL 2) will be issued by the Attendance team. At this point the Academy is to ask for Medical justification for any further absences. If this cannot be provided then the absence is to be recorded as Unauthorised. Further action and legal intervention cannot take place unless the student's records are coded accurately.

Regular attendance concern meetings are to be held by the Attendance Officer inviting parents of students who have attendance concerns. This is to further support parents/students to improve attendance and identify any school or home related concerns and agree an action plan. This may be to access support from other internal or external agencies such as 0-19 Wellbeing Service or Early Intervention depending on the needs of the young person/family.

The Academy promotes good health and wellbeing therefore students can access the Community school nurse via the Drop In Centre on a weekly basis along with other professionals such as Young Carers and youth workers. This is to further promote good physical and mental health and wellbeing so that students can have full attendance and reach their full potential. It is also very important to assess the amount of time which may be needed if a student falls ill. The Academy follows the National Guidelines on medical absences and the amount of time off school will be challenged to promote better attendance. Medical and dental appointments should, where possible, be arranged at the beginning of the day or towards the end to enable a student to be present for AM and PM registration – this will clearly promote good attendance and reduce overall absences.

The Attendance Officer will arrange visits to the homes of students who have still not improved their attendance after receiving a second letter of concern. Support is offered and the aim is to identify whether there are any genuine reasons for absence or any school related concerns after which if there is still no significant improvement then the Attendance Officer will refer to the Attendance Support Team (AST) is necessary. This will involve Warning Notices to be issued and possible Court Action to be considered. The penalty if found guilty can be up to £2,500 or a maximum of a 3 month imprisonment for a subsequent offence.

The Academy will make every effort to support parents/carers and students if there are any genuine difficulties. Support staff play a key role in identifying any possible problems and students are made fully aware that they will be listened to should there be a problem which is causing them to become disengaged in any way. Referrals to other support agencies can also be considered at this point.

An alternative sanction also available to the Attendance team for persistent non-attendance is the Penalty Warning Notice. These can be issued in cases of 20 unauthorised absences.

A Penalty Notice can be issued where there have been further unauthorised absences after the warning notice has been served during a 3 week period.

This is a £60 fine to be paid within 21 days, if it is not paid it will increase to £120. If this payment is not received within 28 days this can result in a Court prosecution.

In cases where a student is persistently late/absent and it is established that there are other welfare related issues either in the Academy or at home, the Academy will consider whether a Common Assessment should be completed and who the lead professional will be.

In order for any prosecution to be successful it is vital that registers are accurate and up-to-date. The role of staff in this task is crucial and staff should remember that completing registers is a legal requirement.