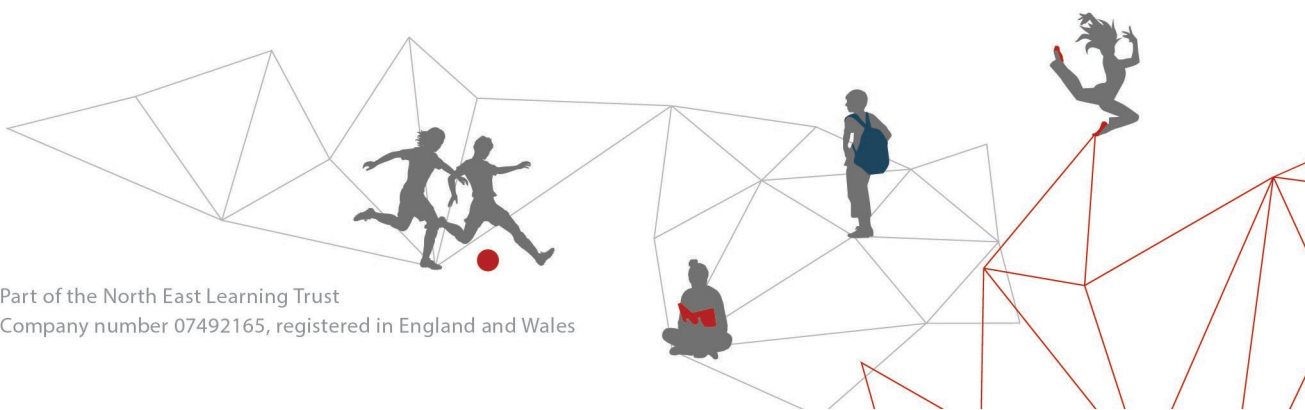




Attendance Policy

Review Date	Reviewer	Approved By	Approved	Implementation
September 2020	D Temperton		September 2020	September 2020
September 2021	M O'Carroll/D Temperton	N Falconer	September 2021	September 2021
September 2022	D Temperton	N Falconer	September 2022	September 2022
September 2023	D Temperton/L Richardson	N Falconer	September 2023	September 2023
September 2025				



Revision History

Issue No	Date	Description
2	September 2020	Updated academic year to 2020/2021.
3	September 2021	Updated academic year.
4	September 2022	<p>Reviewed and updated in accordance with the guidance 'Working together to Improve School Attendance'.</p> <p>Added Mr Thorez as person with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance.</p> <p>Included contact details for Mr Thorez and all Year Managers.</p> <p>Included references to the analysing of attendance data.</p> <p>Amended the aims to include reference to identify and removing barriers to attendance and working with external agencies to provide support to improve attendance.</p> <p>Updated Absence procedures to include specific reference to safeguarding, contact details and persistently and severely absent students.</p> <p>Included reference to the legal action that can be used to enforce school attendance.</p> <p>Updated section on Leave of Absence in Term-Time to include reference to Penalty Notices.</p> <p>Updated section on Rewarding Good Attendance.</p> <p>Updated sections on The School Day and Punctuality.</p> <p>Updated Roles and Responsibilities to include Special Educational Needs Co-Ordinator and definition of a parent.</p>
5	September 2023	Removed Mr Thorez and added Mrs Richardson as person with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance.

Introduction

This policy has been reviewed and rewritten in line with the DFE 'Working together to improve school attendance' Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools, and local authorities (published May 22 applies from September 2022) and 'School attendance parental responsibility measures' (January 2015).

As part of the North East Learning Trust, Easington Academy seeks to ensure that all students receive an education which maximises opportunities and enables them to realise their true potential. The Academy will strive to provide a welcoming, caring environment, whereby each member of the Academy community feels wanted and secure.

We believe that all students benefit from the education we provide and, therefore, from regular attendance. The aim of our attendance policy is to provide a consistent practice that encourages and facilitates the regular attendance of all students.

Mrs Richardson, Deputy Headteacher has overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance and can be contacted via telephone on 0191 5270757 or email at enquiries@easingtonacademy.co.uk. Mrs Richardson will ensure the accurate completion of registers at the start of each morning and afternoon session, and at the beginning of each teaching class. Attendance figures will be reported to parents in annual reports. All staff will work with students and their families to support parents/carers in helping them to meet their legal duty; to ensure that their child/children attend the Academy regularly and on time. The attendance target for this academic year is 97%, which is equal to 6 days absence in a whole school year.

The Academy has incentives and rewards to acknowledge those students with outstanding and improved attendance and will support those students and parents/carers who are finding school attendance and punctuality difficult.

To identify patterns of absence the Academy will analyse weekly attendance data and inform parents/carers where attendance falls below the Academy target. If there are further absences the Academy will work with students and parents/carers to identify and remove barriers to attending school.

Aims

- To maintain high standards of attendance of students registered at the Academy.
- To make attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with the Trust and the Academy including students, parents/carers, staff, Governors, and Trustees.
- To develop a framework which defines agreed roles and responsibilities and promotes consistency in carrying out designated tasks.

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- To provide support, advice and guidance to parents/carers and students.
- To develop a systematic approach to gathering and analysing attendance related data.
- To further develop positive and consistent communication between home and the Academy.
- To promote effective partnerships with the Local Authority's (LA) Attendance Team and local partners working together to re-engage students.
- To recognise the needs of the individual student when planning reintegration following periods of absence.
- To target support for persistent absence (those whose attendance falls below 90% 19 days of absence) and severe absence (those whose absence falls below 50% 95 days of absence) to remove any barriers to attendance by working with students, parent/carers and across a range of local partners.
- To ensure that all stakeholders understand the importance and also value outstanding attendance.
- To recognise and reward outstanding attendance.

Links with Other Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following Trust and Academy policies:

- Behaviour Management Policy
- Children Missing in Education
- Exclusion Policy
- Home Visit Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Supporting Pupils/Students with Medical Conditions

Attendance and Attainment

We recognise that the relationship between attendance, attainment, well-being, and wider life chances of our students is inextricably linked.

Regular attendance at the Academy is crucial to maximise pupil progress and enjoyment of learning, and for this reason the Academy is dedicated to ensuring the attendance policy is adhered to.

Types of Absence

Every half-day (1 session) absence from the Academy must be classified as either authorised or unauthorised. It is not the responsibility of parents to classify an absence, only the Head of School is able to authorise an absence from school.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from the Academy for a good reason such as illness or medical appointments which unavoidably fall in school time. Other exceptional circumstances that warrant an authorised leave of absence will be considered on an individual basis considering the specific facts and circumstances.

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Unauthorised absence are mornings or afternoons away from the Academy for reasons which the Academy does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been given. This type of absence can lead to the LA using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. Absence codes are entered in line with statutory guidance.

Absence Procedures

If a child is ill or is absent for any reason, parents/carers should, on the first day of absence and subsequent days, phone the appropriate Year Manager giving a reason for the child's absence. Should a parent/carer not contact the Academy, the appropriate Year Manager will contact parents/carers to confirm that the child is not in the Academy and to obtain the reason for the absence.

Doctor and dentist appointments should be made outside of school time. If this is not possible, your child should miss the minimum amount of school time necessary. If they are well enough to come back to the Academy following the appointment, they should return.

If a child's absence continues, then parents/carers are requested to notify the Academy daily. If a phone call is not received, then the Year Manager will contact parents/carers to verify the absence. It is the responsibility of parent/carers to provide school with up-to-date contact details. If the Academy receives no reason for any absence, or the reason provided is not deemed to be a valid reason for absence, then an unauthorised absence will be recorded. If absence continues without satisfactory explanation, a safeguarding home visit will be made. See Children Missing in Education and Safeguarding Policy

The High Court has confirmed that the Head of School authorises absences. If your child is absent from school a lot because of illness, or if the Academy do not know of any serious health issue that would mean your child could miss school frequently, the Academy may ask you to provide medical evidence to authorise absences.

We are committed to supporting your child effectively, to ensure that they receive the very best education possible and therefore have the best life chances. All challenges made concerning absences, will be handled sensitively and in confidence.

Attendance data is used to identify patterns of poor attendance as soon as possible so all parties can work together to resolve them before they become entrenched. Where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or not being engaged with, the Education Welfare Officer will explain the consequences. Depending on the circumstances this may include formalising support through a parenting contract established at an Attendance Planning Meeting

Academy Procedures

Attendance Below 97%

When a student's attendance falls below 97% the Academy will ensure that:

- All student attendance is monitored on a weekly basis.

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- Year Manager and Education Welfare Officer will act as key workers for students where attendance is a cause for concern.
- Year Manager and Education Welfare Officer will meet weekly to discuss students whose attendance falls below 97% and report to Mrs Richardson, Deputy Headteacher.
- Mrs Richardson, Deputy Headteacher and Education Welfare Officer will consider a range of strategies to address the poor attendance of students in this category, including; Letters to parents/carers to make them aware of their child's attendance and that the Academy have concerns; talk to the student to understand and overcome any barriers the student may have, hold an Attendance Support Meeting and an Attendance Planning Meeting with parents/carers, student, the Education Welfare Officer, other key support staff and local partners to establish what support is required and how we can work together to resolve any issues and agree strategies to improve attendance, home visits, and telephone calls are also strategies that will be used.
- Student return to school meeting with Year Manager to support students returning to school following a period of absence.

If parents/carers and/or students need help with attendance, you can contact the appropriate Year Manager or the Academy Education Welfare Officer. You may be asked to attend a meeting in the Academy to talk about the problems and to put a plan in place. Sometimes, the Academy may need to involve other services to help; referrals will be made to outside agencies if the Academy feels such action is warranted.

The Academy will always try to communicate with you regarding your child's attendance if it declines. This communication may involve explaining that attendance is a cause for concern by letter, making telephone calls to you, and inviting you to attend a meeting in the Academy depending on the circumstances. The Academy will work with you to discuss ways that we can offer support in finding a way to improve the situation.

Persistently and severely absent students

Persistent Absence (those whose attendance falls below 90% 19 days absence) and Severe Absence (those whose absence falls below 50% 95 days absence)

The Academy will adopt a whole school approach to help and support students and parent/carers to remove barriers. This will include support from the Education Welfare Officer, and when needed the Academy Nurse and School Counsellor. The Academy will help students and parents to access the support they need to overcome the barriers outside of school. This might include a referral to local support services where absence is a symptom of wider issues. Students will become part of a Support Monitoring Group depending on the needs of the student this will be led by; the student's Year Manager, Education Welfare Officer, Academy Nurse or SENDCO. The Academy may also request that a parent/carers provides the Academy

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with supporting medical evidence to verify prolonged or frequent absences and will refuse to authorise absences unless this proof is provided.

Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, a referral will be made to the LA Attendance Improvement Team to consider enforcement action through statutory intervention or prosecution to protect the student's right to an education.

The Law

The Education Act 1996 places a duty on parents to ensure that their child of compulsory school age receives a suitable education either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

In April 2017, the Supreme Court held that attending school 'regularly' means attending in accordance with the rules prescribed by the school and not 'sufficiently frequent attendance'. This means that a child must attend school on every day that the school requires him or her to do so and failure to do this may lead to the committing of an offence.

Legal action to enforce school attendance includes a Parenting Order, an Education Supervision Order, a School Attendance Order or a fine.

In accordance with Section 444 of The Education Act 1996. If a child is absent without authorisation, then the parent is guilty of an offence. This is a strict liability offence i.e., all that needs to be shown is a lack of regular attendance. Sanctions can include a fine of up to £1000. If the child is absent without authorisation and the parent knew about the child's absence and failed to act, then the parent is guilty of an aggravated offence. Sanctions can include a fine of up to £2500 and a prison sentence of up to three months.

Leave of Absence in Term Time

The law states that parents/carers do not have the right to take their child out of the Academy for holidays during term time other than in exceptional circumstances.

Headteachers are no longer able to grant leave of absence during term time **unless there are exceptional circumstances**. The Academy will consider each request of absence individually; considering the circumstances, such as the nature of the event for which leave is sought and any key events taking place in the Academy at that time e.g., termly tests.

Please note that absence will not be authorised under any circumstances during any period of public examinations or internal assessments.

An application for leave of absence must be submitted at least two weeks in advance via a form which is available from the Academy website or in person from the Academy reception. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the Head of School's discretion (or in the absence of the Head of School, Mrs Richardson, Deputy

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Headteacher is the person authorised in that behalf by the proprietor of the school). Where a leave of absence is granted, the Head of School will determine the number of days a pupil can be away from the Academy. As stated in the most recent DFE guidance on attendance, if an application for leave of absence is not made prior to the time of the required absence then the absence will be recorded as unauthorised regardless of circumstances.

If the academy refuses a request for term-time leave and the child is still taken out of school, this will be recorded as unauthorised absence and a Penalty Notice may be issued by the Local Authority. The Local Authority criteria for issuing a Penalty Notice is 7 days or more of unauthorised absence in a minimum 12 rolling school week period. A separate notice will be issued to each parent for each child. A Penalty Notice is a fine of £60 if paid between 1 – 21 days after issue, increasing to £120 if paid between 22 – 28 days.

In exceptional circumstances, however, the Academy may be prepared to authorise a holiday during term-time. Proof of exceptional circumstances must be provided at the time of submitting the Leave of Absence Request form. If a leave of absence is taken during term-time without the Academy's permission, the student's absence will be recorded as unauthorised. In the event of a student not returning to the academy on the agreed date, any absences after this date will be recorded as unauthorised.

Rewarding Good Attendance

The Academy will reward high and improved attendance through the Academy's house point system. Where one full week in school is equal to one house point and one entry into the Academy's raffles. 1 student from each year group can win 100 house point each half term. Each half term the form group with the best attendance will win a golden ticket for a free breakfast. Those students with outstanding attendance at the end of each term (Christmas, Easter, and the end of the school year) will be entered into a raffle for a £150 Amazon voucher and will receive a seasonal treat and a certificate.

For rewards, attendance is reset at the beginning of each term to give everyone an opportunity to improve, regardless of their previous attendance – **this does not change their school attendance record.**

We will also look for every opportunity to reward those students with the most improved attendance and those who attend well despite adversity.

The School Day

Monday

8:40 am - 9:30am – Morning Registration, World Ready

9:30-10:25 - Period 1

10:25-11:20 - Period 2

11:20-11:35 - Break

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11:35-12:30 - Period 3
12:30-1:20 - Lunch
1:20-2:15 - Period 4 - Afternoon Registration
2:15-3:10 - Period 5

Tuesday-Friday

8:40-9:05 – Morning Registration, Get set, go!
9:05-10:05 - Period 1
10:05-11:05 - Period 2
11:05-11:20 - Break
11:20-12:20 - Period 3
12:20-1:10 - Lunch
1:10-2:10 -Period 4 – Afternoon Registration
2:10-3:10 - Period 5

Punctuality

At the Start of the school day members of staff are positioned at all entrances to the school grounds to meet students arriving to school and will remain there until 8.40am at which time all gates into school will be locked except the main entrance situated on Stockton Road.

All students arriving-after 8.40 will enter through the Academy's main reception and will be asked the reason for their lateness and this will be recorded on the Academy's attendance data base (SIMs).

- Registration takes place at the beginning of morning and afternoon sessions. Morning registration begins at 8.40am. Students arriving after 8.45am will be marked **L** (late before register closed). Morning registers will be closed at 9.15am. All students who arrive after 9.15am will be marked using the **U** code, unless a satisfactory reason is given. If no explanation is provided the morning session will be recorded as an unauthorised absence
- Afternoon registration takes place during period 4, which starts at 13.20pm on a Monday and 13.10pm Tuesday to Friday. Students arriving after the times stated will be marked **L** (late before register closed). The register closes 30 minutes after the start of registration. Students arriving after the register is closed will be marked with a **U** code unless a satisfactory reason is given. If no explanation is provided the afternoon session will be recorded as an unauthorised absence
- Mrs Richardson, Deputy Headteacher will monitor the late book and letters will be sent to the student's parents/carers to inform them of their child's level of lateness. The Academy operates a three-strike system for lateness. Any lateness after three occasions will result in students being issued a detention.

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Failure to Attend Registration/Lateness at the Academy

Where a student is repeatedly late for registration, or fails to attend registration on a regular basis, the tutor should pass the student's name on to the Year Manager. From that point onwards the Year Manager will meet with the student to establish the reason and will work with them to try and resolve issues or overcome barriers. If lateness continues a letter will be sent home from the Academy to parents/carers informing them that their child's punctuality is causing some concern. The Year Manager will employ a range of strategies which include inviting the student and parent/carer to a Punctuality Support Meeting with appropriate staff, other key support staff and local partners to establish what support is required and how we can work together to resolve any issues and agree strategies to ensure the student arrives to school on time and attends registration on time. Incentives to improve punctuality may also be offered to students e.g., through the Academy's rewards system. If there is no improvement and the student is repeatedly late after the register is closed, then a referral may be made to the Attendance Improvement Team to consider if enforcement action is required.

Lateness to Lessons

A class register is taken at the beginning of each lesson. Students arriving late will be marked late. Those students who are repeatedly late to lessons will be identified by the Year Manager using the late list printout. The Year Manager will meet with the student to establish the reason and will work with them to try and resolve issues or overcome barriers. If lateness continues the Once this is done, sanctions will be used to address the problem. These sanctions will include parental contact, detentions and, in the worst cases, internal exclusions.

Lateness to Assembly

- On assembly days students are expected to be in the main hall by 8.40am.
- After a student has been late three times for assembly without good reason, the student will follow the process outlined in relation to lateness..
- If lateness continues without good reason the student, they will be given an after school detention.
- After three detentions the student will receive a one day internal exclusion each time they miss an assembly owing to lateness.

Truancy from Lessons and/or the Academy

The first time a student is caught truanting from the Academy and/or lessons, the parent/carer of the student will be contacted by telephone. The Year Manager/Senior Leadership Team (SLT) will speak to the student to establish their whereabouts and reason for the truancy, the Academy Safeguarding procedures will be followed and parents will be contacted. The student will be given a one-day internal exclusion, followed by a two-week period on report. The student's name will be placed on the truancy register and regular spot checks will be carried out to make sure the student is in lessons.

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The second time a student is found truanting, he/she will be given a two day internal exclusion and parents/carers will again be informed. After coming out of the LSU, the student will be placed on report for a period of four weeks. Regular spot checks will take place to make sure the student is in lessons.

The third time a student is found to be truanting, the student's parent/carer will be contacted and invited to attend a meeting with a senior member of staff. The student will be given a four day internal exclusion. After coming out of the LSU, the student will be placed on report for a period of approximately one school term.

In all instances of truancy from school the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will be informed, and safeguarding procedures will be followed.

Leaving the Classroom without Permission

A student leaving a classroom without permission will be reported to the Year Manager who will establish the reason. A 1 hour after school detention can be given at the Year Manager/SLT discretion.

Roles and Responsibilities

Local Academy Council:

As part of our approach to maintaining high attendance, the Local Academy Council will:

- Ensure that the importance of attendance is made clear by promoting the relevant Trust and Academy policies and guidance directed to parents/carers and staff.
- Annually review the Academy's attendance policy and ensure that all provisions are in place to allow staff, parents/carers, and students to implement the policy effectively.
- At their termly meetings they will review and discuss attendance issues that have arisen to be fully aware and supportive of expected attendance targets for the year.
- Ensure that the Academy is implementing effective means of recording attendance and organising that data, including for students who are educated off site.
- Ensure the Academy has an Attendance Champion.

Senior Leadership Team:

- Be active in their approach to promoting good attendance with students and their parents/carer.
- Ensure the Academy's teaching and learning experiences encourage regular attendance and that students are taught the value of high attendance for their own progression and achievement.
- Coordinate with the Local Academy Council to monitor the implementation of the

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policy and its effectiveness, with annual review of full policy.

- Ensure that all staff are up to date with the Academy's Attendance Policy and that staff are fully trained to recognise and deal with attendance issues.
- Ensure government legislation on attendance is complied with and that the leadership team are up to date with any legislation changes and how to implement them.
- Nominate or appoint a senior manager to champion attendance and to take responsibility for overseeing and monitoring attendance provision and that this person has sufficient time and resources to give to the job.
- Report to the Local Academy Council each term on attendance records, data, and provision.
- Ensure that systems to record and report attendance data are in place and working effectively.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Co-ordinator:

- Work closely with primary schools for smooth year 6/7 transition for those students with SEND and offer additional small group or 1-1 visits to school during year 6/7 transition or for students transferring to the Academy.
- Develop good support for students with health conditions.
- Develop specific support for students with SEND.
- Work in partnership with the Academy Nurse and support services.
- Regular data monitoring with the Academy Education Welfare Officer and SLT.

Staff:

- Be active in their approach to promoting good attendance with students and their parents.
- Ensure the Academy's teaching and learning experiences encourage regular attendance and that students are taught the value of high attendance for their own progression and achievement.
- Ensure the senior manager responsible for overseeing attendance and any other relevant personnel are kept fully aware of and up to date with any concerns relating to students that may impact on their attendance.
- Ensure compliance with regulation and guidance on attendance and the accurate completion of registers at the start of each morning and afternoon session, and at the beginning of each teaching class, using the correct code in the register.
- Work professionally with colleagues, parents/carers, students, and relevant agencies to secure improvements in attendance via appropriate support.

Year Managers:

- First point of contact for parents and students. Year Managers can be contacted by telephone on 0191 5270757 and chose option 1, followed by; 1 for year 7, 2 for year 8, 3 for year 9, 4 for year 10 and 5 for year 11. Year Managers can also be contacted by email at enquiries@easingtonacademy.co.uk.
- Assist in the implementation of the Academy's Attendance Policy.

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- Liaise with the Education Welfare Officer and Mrs Richardson, Deputy Headteacher on matters relating to attendance.
- Distribute attendance data to tutor groups.
- Assist in the organising of rewards for good attendance.
- Monitor levels of unauthorised absence in a designated year group and, if necessary, to contact parents/carers regarding unexplained absences.
- Implement the Academy's policy on lateness to lessons.
- Implement the Academy policy on attendance and punctuality at registration.
- Monitor the Late Register and take appropriate steps to support students and send letters to parents/carers informing them of their child's level of lateness every half term.
- Contact parents/carers on the first day of a student's absence if no contact has been made by the parent/carers.

Education Welfare Officer:

- Assist in the implementation of the Academy's Attendance Policy.
- Act as a liaison officer between home, the Academy, local support services and the LA on matters related to attendance.
- Offer advice, assistance and support to parents/carers and students on attendance issues.
- Assess reasons for non-attendance. Listen to and understand the barriers to attendance,
- Support pupils, parents/carers, and work with staff to address any in-school barriers.
- Work with the LA and other local partners to support students, parents/carers with out of school barriers.
- Where absence does not improve or early support is not engaged with initiate and refer cases for legal action as appropriate, to the LA Attendance Improvement Team.
- Provide information and reports which may be used in court when necessary.
- Liaise with Mrs Richardson, Deputy Headteacher on matters relating to attendance and monitoring of all subgroups.
- Meet weekly with the Year Manager to discuss students whose attendance falls below 97%.
- To consider a range of strategies to address the problem of poor attendance, including:
 - Attendance meetings with both the parent/carers and student; to support and address any barriers to attending school and work together to improve the student's attendance.
- Home visits, telephone calls and letters to parents/carers relating to their child's attendance.

Parents/Carers:

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School attendance parental responsibility measures' (January 2015) define a parent as:

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not.
- Any person who has parental responsibility for a child or young person; and,
- Any person who has care of a child or young person i.e., lives with and looks after the child.

As a parent you have decided to have your child registered at the Academy, and therefore have an additional legal duty to ensure your child attends school regularly. This means your child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school.

- Engage with their child's education – support their learning and take an interest in what they have been doing at the Academy.
- Promote the value of good education and the importance of regular school attendance at home.
- Follow the procedures outlined in this policy regarding absences, ill health, medical or dental appointments, leave of absence in term time and punctuality.
- Do everything they can to prevent unnecessary absences.
- Ensure the Academy is informed of any changes to personal details including home address and emergency contact details.
- Keep the Academy informed of any circumstances which may affect their child's attendance and work with staff in resolving any issues that may be having an impact on their child.
- Encourage support and motivate their child to attend the Academy every-day, as it is vital that your child receives the same messages at home as they do at the Academy about the importance of attendance.

Students

- Will ensure that they are ready for school and are prepared for their journey to school at the correct time.
- Will ensure that they have prepared their equipment required for school and have packed their bags in readiness for the day ahead.
- Will ensure that once they arrive at school, they proceed directly to the school entrance and DO NOT take any diversions that their parents/carers have not authorised.
- Will ensure that when the first bell goes, they proceed without delay to registration.
- If students arrive after registration due to the bus arriving late, they must sign in at reception. Students will not be marked late if the bus is late.
- Do everything they can to prevent unnecessary school absences.
- If absent from schools, students will proactively catch up on work that has been missed.

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