



HuishEpiscopi

ACADEMY PROCEDURE

Attendance

6 November 2015



Document title				
Attendance				
Status			Lead Academy staff member	
Academy Procedure			Assistant Principal	
Review date			Date approved	
November 2018 3 years unless changes required earlier			6 November 2015	
For public access on request <i>Tick as appropriate</i>			Approved by	
Post		Online		The Principal
Notes				

ATTENDANCE POLICY

This policy should be read in conjunction with

- The Anti-Bullying Policy
- Behaviour for Learning Policy
- Single Equality Scheme
- Inclusion Policy
- SEN policy
- Every Child Matters

It is essential for student's progress that they attend the Academy regularly. The Principal, Directors and staff set high expectations with both students' attendance and punctuality to lessons. Teachers and all staff are expected to model and coach students in these high standards.

Huish Episcopi recognises that poor or irregular attendance interrupts and disrupts learning and progress for all students, and is linked to behavioural issues.

PROCEDURES TO ENSURE GOOD ATTENDANCE:

PL – Progress leader, AO – Attendance Officer, EWO – Education Welfare Officer

Registers: The Attendance Officer enters students who are late on SIMs. Form tutors mark registers on the computer directly into the SIMS attendance module.

Lateness: Students are required to sign in at the Student Reception if they are late. Assemblies regularly stress the importance of signing in and this is monitored through spot checks by Progress Leaders. Persistent lateness is dealt with by Progress Leaders and parents/carers will be advised by letter that any further absences will be unauthorised if the student is not in the Academy by 8.55am. Ten unauthorised lates will result in a Penalty Notice being issued by the EWO.

Route delays on buses happen occasionally. These are marked as \ in the register and are not counted against the student's attendance.

First Day Calling: Wherever possible parents/carers are texted on the first day of absence. or the Attendance Officer calls Priority students. These are students who are known truants or who are being monitored by Progress Leaders.

Absences: Parents are encouraged to phone in on the first day of absence and many parents co-operate with this. The Academy authorises the absence via the AO.

If there is any doubt about a reason, the Academy contacts parents to query the reason. If the Academy is not satisfied with the reasons given, it immediately notifies the EWO and makes the necessary two contacts before completing the referral form.

Medical reasons: If the Academy needs more information about a medical condition, or if the Academy is not satisfied with a reason, consent is sought from the parent/carer to contact the GP directly. If permission is not given, the Academy will expect the parent/carer to provide necessary medical information themselves. If this is not forthcoming, the necessary two contacts are made before the EWO is informed.

Truancy: Progress Leaders conduct spot checks on students to check for truancy. Teachers are required to maintain electronic registers and use SIMS data to check absences, particularly of known truants.

The class teacher punishes truancy in the first instance - if in that subject only. Students will be expected to spend at least the equivalent of the time missed in detention. Academy detention is appropriate for truancy. Truancy for a whole day should be punished by an equivalent number of hours spent in detention, either at break, lunch or after school. The isolation area is not to be used to punish truancy: it rewards students for truanting a lesson by then keeping them out of the lesson they wished to miss in the first place.

Monitoring of Attendance and Intervention:

Every two weeks, the Attendance Officer prints out a list of attendance figures for each tutor and Progress Leader. Lists show attendance across the tutor group/year group.

Lists to tutors request that tutors annotate and return to Progress Leaders showing any relevant information about students with regard to attendance, or general concerns.

Categories for intervention are generated by Progress Leader who then authorise a letter to be sent/contact made with the EWO. If attendance continues to be poor, action is taken by the EWO.

Referrals to the EWO. are completed before the visit and most will be completed by the Attendance Officer. All documentation has been agreed with the EWO. and notification of which letters have been sent will be emailed prior to any visit by the EWO.

The Attendance Office/Progress Leaders will record the action taken and this will be emailed to the EWO. The EWO will therefore have full electronic records when she visits the Academy. This leads to a more efficient use of the EWO's time.

The Academy intervenes early with potential poor attenders and rewards good attendance.

The Academy recognises that many students can achieve good attendance and seeks to promote and celebrate this achievement. This is done in assemblies and certificates and prizes are awarded for good attendance. The Attendance Officer produces monthly attendance bulletins. These show % attendance, most improved attendance and % of latenesses for each tutor group in each year.

Liaison with the EWO (Education Welfare Officer)

The Academy seeks to have good working relations with all external agencies, and the EWO has worked with the Academy in developing these procedures.

The EWO visits the Academy every two weeks to meet with each, the Attendance Officer and the member of SLT responsible for attendance. In these visits students with poor attendance and appropriate intervention strategies are discussed. The Academy is required to have made contact with parents/carers before a referral is made to the EWO.

Before the first visit, the Attendance Officer will generate a list of attendance below 92% to the EWO as well as distributing to the Progress Leaders etc as described above.

The meetings between the AO and the Progress Leader are scheduled and will take place in Progress Leaders office. Progress Leaders arrive with details of any other circumstances that may affect the attendance. Progress Leaders keep notes of any decisions and actions to

be taken and copies of these notes are given to the attendance officer and the member of SLT responsible for attendance.

EWO referral system

Prior to the EWO involvement, schools are required to take the following steps:

- Send letter to parents/carers raising concerns about attendance.
- Invite parents into meeting if attendance remains a concern. Parents will be made aware of EWO referral at this meeting
- Make a referral to the EWO

The Academy must supply the following documentation:

- Up to date attendance print out – from Attendance Officer
- Copies of letters
- Minutes of any meetings with the family

The EWO makes initial contact by letter and details the Legal Penalties that can be imposed by the LEA. Second contact is made if there is no improvement. Parents are required to attend a meeting with the EWO. Further steps can include penalties and in extreme cases, prosecution.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Attendance Officer:

- Ensures that all registers are completed correctly, and draws attention to any inconsistencies in the registers.
- Inputs any outstanding data and maintains the system.
- First day calling.
- Distributes lists of attendance to tutors, Progress Leaders every two weeks with notes if there has been previous action taken
- Maintains all records regarding attendance.
- Liaises with the EWO and other relevant bodies.
- Ensures that all agencies are kept informed of interventions and concerns.

Tutors

- Complete am and pm registration directly into SIMS.
- Complete the absence record and keep Progress Leader and AO informed of relevant information through the return of lists as well as informal discussions.
- Identify patterns of non attendance in the tutor group and for individual students, and intervene to ensure good attendance
- Contact parents if there is a specific concern and maintain the professional relationship between the Academy and home.

Progress Leaders

- Lead and manage the year teams in ensuring good attendance
- Identify patterns of non-attendance in the year group and intervene to ensure good attendance.
- Support the tutors and maintain the professional relationship between the Academy and home.

- Monitor the work of the year team in attendance.
- Direct interventions that ensure and promote good attendance.
- Liaise with the EWO and other agencies about specific concerns.
- Liaise with the EWO and other agencies to devise strategies to ensure and promote good attendance.

SLT line managers

- Monitor and support the Progress Leader in their leadership and management of year teams.
- Support Progress Leaders in establishing interventions and monitoring the effectiveness of these.

SLT responsible for Attendance

- Line management of the Attendance Officer
- Responsible for ensuring that monitoring takes place
- Ensures the Attendance procedures and policy are in place and implemented.
- Works with the LEA consultant and EWO in devising the strategy

Principal

Responsible for authorising term time leave

TERM TIME LEAVE

Advance notice to parents regarding holidays in term times

In response to the Charlie Taylor Review of School Attendance and as part of the Government's drive to stop the general authorising of all term time leave to take advantage of cheap holidays, new legislation comes into force from 1 September 2013. The amendments to the **Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006** Act makes it clear that Principals/Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. This legislation expects that any term time leave must be requested in advance, in writing, direct to the Principal, and this should come from the person who the child normally resides with or the request must be authorised by the person the child normally resides with. The Principal will then determine whether the reason is exceptional.

Exceptional circumstances are as they were before; returning armed forces persons, fire fighters, police etc who are directed when they can or cannot take leave; family issues such as terminally ill family member etc.

The amendments can be viewed at:

<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/pupilsupport/behaviour/attendance/a00223868/>

The Academy will exercise judgment and look at each case on its own merits. There is no onus on the Academy to provide work during a holiday taken during term time.

Criteria to be taken into account:

- Number of days
- Is the request in reasonable time (three weeks prior)
- What will the student be missing during the period of absence?
- Is it in the child's best interests?

Other important points parents are asked to consider

- Is it absolutely necessary to take this term time leave?
- There are only 190 school days each year, including 13 full weeks when leave can be taken outside Academy time.
- Research shows that there is a clear link between lower levels of school attendance (for whatever reason) and lower levels of achievement and under-achievement.
- Does the period of absence mean that your child is going to miss important work, such as preparation for exams or important personal skills?
- Does your child have a good attendance record? (e.g. above 97%)

Approved by Principal:
Review (3 years):

6 November 2015
November 2018 (unless changes required sooner)

APPENDIX A

Samples of letters and request forms currently in use

MEDICAL EVIDENCE AND FIRST CONTACT LETTER

«date_of_printing»

«address_block»

Dear «salutation»,

As part of our commitment to improving the attainment of our students we monitor attendance on a regular basis and identify any student whose attendance causes concern. We then issue a first letter to register this concern with parents. We are therefore writing to you due to «chosen_forename»'s current level of attendance:

Overall Academy Attendance	«percentage_attendance»%
Of which Authorised Absence is	«percentage_authorised_absences»%
Of which Unauthorised Absence is	«percentage_unauthorised_absences»%

The information below shows how attendance can affect your child's future progression.

Above 97%: Less than 6 days absence a year Excellent attendance! These students will almost certainly get the best grades they can, leading to better prospects for the future. Students will also get into a habit of attending the Academy which will help in the future.
95%: 10 days absence a year These students are likely to achieve good grades and form a habit of attending the Academy regularly. Students who take a 2 week holiday every year can only achieve 95% attendance.
90%: 19 days absence a year Students in this group are missing a month of school per year; it will be difficult for them to achieve their best.
85%: 29 days absence a year Students in this group are missing six weeks of school per year; it will be very difficult for them to keep up with work and they are unlikely to do their best.
80%: 38 days absence a year The Government classes students in this group as "Persistent Absentees", and it will be almost impossible to keep up with work. Parents of students in this group could also face the possibility of legal action being taken by the Local Authority.

When looking into the reasons why «chosen_forename» has been absent from the Academy, we noticed that the majority of the absence was linked to illness and/or medical reasons.

Due to the level of illness and/or medical absence, I must ask that if any further absence occurs, evidence must be received by the Academy that shows why «chosen_forename» has been absent and that «he_she» is being supported by a Doctor. Some examples of evidence that could be used are: Prescriptions, Appointment Cards, Doctor's Notes, etc.

If this evidence is not supplied when your child returns after an illness or medical absence, your child's absence will be recorded as an **"unauthorised"** absence.

If you have any queries or would like to talk to anyone about attendance please do not hesitate to contact your child's Head of Year or the Attendance Officer on 01458 254434.

As an Academy we will be following the Local Authority's current process in improving attendance and a penalty notice could/will be applied for your child has at least 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 12 week period.

Yours sincerely

M
Progress Leader

FIRST CONTACT LETTER OF CONCERN

«date_of_printing»

«address_block»

Dear «salutation»,

As part of our commitment to improving the attainment of our students we monitor attendance on a regular basis and identify any student whose attendance causes concern. We then issue a first letter to register this concern with parents. We are therefore writing to you due to «chosen_forename»'s current level of attendance:

Overall Academy Attendance	«percentage_attendance»%
Of which Authorised Absence is	«percentage_authorised_absences»%
Of which Unauthorised Absence is	«percentage_unauthorised_absences»%

The information below shows how attendance can affect your child's future progression.

Above 97%: Less than 6 days absence a year Excellent attendance! These students will almost certainly get the best grades they can, leading to better prospects for the future. Students will also get into a habit of attending the Academy which will help in the future.
95%: 10 days absence a year These students are likely to achieve good grades and form a habit of attending the Academy regularly. Students who take a 2 week holiday every year can only achieve 95% attendance.
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80%: 38 days absence a year The Government classes students in this group as "Persistent Absentees", and it will be almost impossible to keep up with work. Parents of students in this group could also face the possibility of legal action being taken by the Local Authority.

If you have any queries or would like to talk to anyone about attendance please do not hesitate to contact your child's Head of Year or the Attendance Officer on 01458 254434.

As an Academy we will be following the Local Authority's current process in improving attendance and a penalty notice could/will be applied for your child has at least 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 12 week period.

Yours sincerely

M
Progress Leader

SECOND CONTACT LETTER OF CONCERN

«date_of_printing»

«address_block»

Dear «salutation»,

Since we last wrote to you «chosen_forename»'s attendance has failed to improve significantly, and is now «percentage_attendance»%. This is below what we expect and to put this into perspective 90% attendance is equivalent to missing 19 days of school per year. This would mean that your child will spend more time at home than at the Academy this year.

Ongoing low attendance is a factor often linked to low levels of academic success. It is important that low attendance is dealt with as early as possible to prevent «chosen_forename» from forming poor habits of attendance. Problems with attendance now will make it increasingly difficult for you to ensure your child attends the Academy regularly as they get older.

We wish to help «chosen_forename» to improve «his_her» attendance. We have made an appointment for you to discuss «chosen_forename»'s attendance on the D' M'. If you are unable to attend this meeting please phone 01458 250501 and ask for your child's Head of Year.

We would appreciate your support to make sure «chosen_forename»'s attendance improves.

Our Education Attendance Officer is aware of the attendance issue and if there is no significant improvement then he will then contact you regarding «chosen_forename»'s attendance.

As an Academy we will be following the Local Authority's current process in improving attendance and a penalty notice could/will be applied for your child has at least 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 12 week period.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Yours sincerely

M
Progress Leader

TERM TIME LEAVE - AUTHORISED

AJD/AP/

Date

Name/Address

Dear

Many thanks for your term time leave request. As you are probably aware Government guidelines have recently changed with regards to granting leave during term time. As an Academy we are now strongly advised not to allow term time leave except under very exceptional circumstances for which guidance is laid down and is given on our website.

Having examined your request it is clear to me that there are exceptional circumstances in your case and I am therefore able to authorise the leave. I would appreciate it if you could encourage your son/daughter to ensure they collect work prior to this departure and also that they commit to catching up with any other missed work on their return.

Should the leave be extended for any reason, the extension may be regarded as unauthorised absence which may be used in any legal action for poor attendance.

As an Academy we will be following the Local Authority's current process in improving attendance and a penalty notice could/will be applied for your child has at least 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 12 week period.

Many thanks for your continued support.

Yours sincerely

Mr A Davis
Principal

TERM TIME LEAVE – UNAUTHORISED

AJD/AP/

Date

Name/Address

Dear

Many thanks for your term time leave request. As you are probably aware, Government guidelines have recently changed with regards to granting leave during term time. We are now strongly advised not to allow term time leave except under very exceptional circumstances for which guidance is laid down and is given on our website.

The guidance and exceptional circumstances only allow for leave for specific professions, such as returning armed forces persons, fire fighters, police who are directed when they can or cannot take leave and family issues such as terminally ill family member etc. Account may also be taken of a student's prior attendance record.

Having examined your request I am unable to authorise this leave as an exceptional circumstance. Should you choose to take this leave it will have to be coded as an unauthorised absence and the Educational Attendance Officer may choose to take further actions.

As an Academy we will be following the Local Authority's current process in improving attendance and a penalty notice could/will be applied for your child has at least 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 12 week period.

If you would like to discuss this please contact our Attendance Officer.

Yours sincerely

Mr A Davis
Principal

UNAUTHORISED LATE LETTER

«date_of_printing»

«salutation»

«address_block»

Dear «salutation»,

I am writing to you regarding «chosen_forename»'s persistent late arrival to the Academy. A letter was sent to you regarding this matter but there has been no improvement. I enclose a registration certificate for your information. «chosen_forename»'s has been late xx times this year.

Overall School Attendance	«percentage_attendance»%
Total Number of Late Marks	«total_lates_both»
Number of " Unauthorised " Lates	«total_lates_after»

I am informing you that we will be recording any further late arrivals to the Academy as a 'U' (late after registration.) This counts as an unauthorised absence and 10 or more unauthorised absences will lead to a Penalty Notice being issued.

Please ensure that «chosen_forename»'s arrives to school at the correct time before registration, which starts at 8.55am.

As an Academy we will be following the Local Authority's current process in improving attendance and a penalty notice could/will be applied for if your child has at least 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 12 week period.

Yours sincerely,

Progress Leader

NEW CODE OF CONDUCT LETTER

Dear Parent/Carer

Penalty Notice Code of Conduct

I am writing to inform you about a change to the Local Authority's Penalty Notice Code of Conduct. Since 1 September 2013, schools can apply for Penalty Notices and Warning Penalty Notices for unauthorised absence where there are 10 sessions (5 days) or more unauthorised absences in a 12 week period.

Penalties may be requested and served to each parent/carers per child:

- where the student's absence, perhaps within a rolling academic year, has not been authorised by the Academy.
- where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during Academy hours without reasonable justification during the first five days of a fixed period or permanent exclusion.
- Where term-time leave of absence has not been authorised (authorised leave of absence to take family holidays can only be granted by the Academy in exceptional circumstances).

This new Code of Conduct is in line with *the authority's current policies on improving attendance and the Academy will request and serve Penalty Notices where appropriate. I hope that you will support the Academy in its efforts to improve attendance by ensuring your child attends the Academy every day, unless prevented from doing so by unavoidable circumstances.*

Yours sincerely

Mr A Davis
Principal

ADVISING PENALTY NOTICE REQUEST

AP/student name/form

Date

Name/address

Dear Mr and Mrs XXXXX

Your child has recently been absent from the Academy without authorisation and our records indicate this was due to a period of unauthorised term time leave. As an Academy we felt there was no exceptional reason for the leave as defined in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

As a result of this, I have requested Somerset County Council issue penalty notices to:

(STATE PARENTS/CARERS WHO WILL RECEIVE A PENALTY NOTICE).

In respect of the following children: **(STATE CHILDREN WHO PN REFERS TO)**

Penalty Notices will be issued by Somerset County Council **individually** to **each parent** for **each child**, in accordance with Somerset County Council's Penalty Notice Code of Conduct. You will be contacted by an Education Welfare Officer in due course.

A letter was sent to you on (XXXX) informing you of our decision not to authorise this absence.

Yours sincerely

APPENDIX B

Attendance leaflet provided to parents

Cause for Concern

If your child's attendance falls below 95% then one or more of the following could occur:

1. Regular contact from the Academy via the Attendance officer (Miss Powell) and your son/daughters Form Tutor or Progress Leader
2. Parent Family Support Advisor involvement.
3. Attendance Officer liaison with the Education Attendance Officer and their possible involvement.
4. Follow up attendance meeting for parents, pupil, Progress Leader and Education Attendance Officer.
5. Possible legal action if there is no improvement.

**LATE TO ACADEMY
LATE TO LESSONS
LATE TO WORK**

**STOP THIS HABIT
NOW
BEFORE IT
SERIOUSLY
DAMAGES YOUR
OPPORTUNITIES IN
LIFE**

What Huish is Doing to Support Attendance

At Huish all staff understand how important attendance is and encourage a positive ethos regarding attendance for all pupils. Individual attendance is monitored closely and tutors and teachers monitor attendance lesson by lesson.

Following a student's absence we will support every individual in catching up on any missed work. Should a pupil have a long term or recurring illness work will be sent home via the Academy office.

Those students whose attendance falls below 90% and fall into the **CONCERN** band will be referred to the Education Attendance Officer.

Parent Family Support Advisor (PFSA)

Huish Episcopi has a dedicated Parent Family Support Advisor, Mrs C Kelly. Her role is to work in partnership with families and the Academy helping every child to be as successful as possible.

Mrs Kelly is based in the Academy. She can be contacted by phone or via email and can make a home visit if preferred.

Mobile number; 07500 882411

Email: clkelly@educ.somerset.gov.uk

Education Welfare Officer (EAO)

The Education Welfare Officer visits the Academy on a fortnightly basis liaising with the Attendance Officer regarding concerns over attendance. The EAO can be contacted via telephone on 01935 476130



HuishEpiscopi



'Let Us Strive'

Huish Episcopi Academy

College for Science, Languages and
Applied Learning
Wincanton Road, Langport
TA10 9SS

**ATTENDANCE AT THE ACADEMY
IS A PRIORITY**

**Guidelines for Parents
and Students**

Why does attendance matter? The Importance of Good Attendance.

Research shows that there is a direct link between good attendance and achievement in school. Poor attendance can have a direct effect on a student's attainment and their future life chances.

For example, 90% attendance might sound quite acceptable but what that means in reality is.....

- On average half a day's school missed every week. (Would an employer think this is an acceptable rate of attendance?)
- This would also mean in one year 4 whole weeks of schooling missed.
- In 5 years it would mean half of a school year missed.
- And could result in a GCSE grade drop in attainment in each subject.

Habits of poor attendance and lateness in school are often repeated in working life which is why employers do ask the Academy for such information as part of references.

It is the responsibility of parents or guardians to contact the Academy as early as possible on the first day of absence. If a student is absent for more than one day the Academy must have a written note of explanation.

Categories of Attendance

Attendance is reviewed regularly and pupils fall into one of the categories below:

	100% Excellent
	98.0% Very Good
	Below 95% CONCERN 1st letter
	Below 90% Serious CONCERN Education Attendance Officer involvement

If a student falls below 90% there may also be a referral made to the Parent and Family Support Advisor.

If a student has more than 10 unauthorised sessions of absence in a year legal action may be considered.

ATTENDANCE LINE

Call the Attendance Office Miss Ali Powell on
01458 254434 Mobile: 07827 289504
Email: APowell3@educ.somerset.gov.uk

Information you will need to have to hand

- Pupil's Name
- Pupil's Tutor Group
- Symptoms
- Have you made a doctor's appointment?

Two Major Issues Affecting Attendance

TERM TIME/MEDICAL ABSENCE

There are only 190 school days in a year and 175 non-school days.

Term Time Absence

Taking your son/daughter out of the Academy for two weeks (10 days) will reduce attendance to 94% before any account is taken of days off for illness or other circumstances.

Pupils who are taken out of the Academy for holidays may never catch up on work missed. This can affect test results and is particularly harmful if the absence occurs in an examination year.

The law says that parents do not have the right to take their children out of school for holidays during term time.

Huish will only authorise term time leave in **EXCEPTIONAL** circumstances.

If the Academy refuses a request for term time leave and the pupil is still taken out of the Academy this is recorded as an **UNAUTHORISED** absence. A Warning Penalty Notice can be issued in this instance.

Medical

We as an Academy have to satisfy ourselves that absences are genuine but we would not expect any parent to send their child to school if they are **genuinely** ill.

Long term or recurring medical absence needs to be supported by a Doctor's note.

ATTENDANCE LINE

Call the Attendance Officer Miss Ali Powell on
01458 254434 Mobile: 07827 289504
Email: APowell3@educ.somerset.gov.uk