

POLICY DOCUMENTATION

GREAT SCHOOLS ARE CONSISTENT SCHOOLS



POLICY	Attendance - Scholars
RESPONSIBILITY	Vice Principal
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Attendance – Scholars

PRINCIPLES

The Academy is committed to ensuring that scholars and parents understand the absolute importance of high attendance. Attendance in school is incredibly important for academic and social development, but we also need to ensure that we know scholars are safe as well. At Dixons McMillan we aim to create a secure and caring learning environment to ensure our scholars want to attend school.

AIMS

- To maintain exceptionally high levels of attendance and punctuality across the Academy, significantly above local and national averages.
- To work with parents to ensure individual scholar attendance is as high as possible, supporting and challenging where needed.
- To regularly monitor attendance patterns so that the Academy can put appropriate interventions and support in place to support young people and their families.

PRACTICE

- Registration marks are taken twice a day. Morning registration opens at 8.00am and closes at 8.40am; afternoon registration opens at 1.40pm and closes at 2.10pm. Scholars who are in school at 8.10am and 1.40pm will be marked present (A) on SIMS. Registers are completed for all lessons during the day.
- Scholars arriving to the Academy up to 30 minutes after a registration has opened will be marked late 'L' on SIMS and will be issued with a correction to signal the importance of punctuality and to make up the lost learning time.
- Scholars who arrive after the 30 minute deadline following registration, will be marked late after close of registration using the 'U' code on SIMS (this is classed as an unauthorised absence).
- In exceptional circumstances (such as severe weather or public transport disruptions) the closing of registration may be delayed at the discretion of the Academy.
- Parents are expected to notify the Academy of a scholar absence. In the case of an illness parents/carers should phone the Academy on the first day of absence and then each day thereafter.
- The Academy will aim to contact parents/carers on a daily basis (this could include a home visit) if they fail to inform the Academy of an absence. The Academy must be made aware of the reason for a child's absence for safeguarding and educational reasons.
- If a parent knows a child is going to be absent from school a Leave of Absence form should be completed and returned to the Academy with as much notice as possible. Family holidays during term time are not permitted. Any Leave of Absence must be requested in advance and will only be granted in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the Principal. Once the Academy has received the request parents may be invited to a meeting with the Head of Year or Vice Principal.
- The Academy *may* authorise Leave of Absence for the following reasons:
 - A circumstance that the school deems to be *genuinely* exceptional. These absences, if granted, will be recorded as authorised using the 'C' code on SIMS.
 - For medical appointments which cannot be made outside of school. These absences, if granted, will be recorded as authorised using the 'M' code on SIMS. When making these appointments

parents/carers are expected to ensure that scholars are only missing education for the minimum amount of time necessary.

- For a day set aside *exclusively* for religious observance, scholars will be granted one day for each occasion of religious observance, with a maximum of 3 days over one academic year. These absences, if granted, will be recorded as authorised using the 'R' code on SIMS.
- For periods of time when Traveller families are known to be travelling for occupational purposes, these absences, if granted, will be recorded as authorised using the 'T' code on SIMS.
- Scholar absence will be recorded as unauthorised when the Academy is not satisfied with the reasons for the absence:
 - Code 'G' will be used for unauthorised holidays. Where family holidays are taken during term time, the Academy may respond with a fixed penalty notice from the Local Authority.
 - Code 'N' will be used when parents/carers have not yet provided the Academy with a reason for an absence.
 - Code 'O' will be used when no satisfactory reason for a child's absence has been provided.
- The Academy takes seriously its duty to safeguard the welfare of all its students. Unexplained absences and a lack of contact from parents/carers may cause us concern and lead us to involve other agencies such as Children's Social Care. We will contact Children's Social Care within 2 days for any child with a Child Protection Plan.
- Students must have strong attendance in order to qualify for an Academy reward event. The Academy also rewards excellent attendance through reward postcards.
- The Academy carefully monitors attendance on a daily basis and attendance is discussed twice a week (once at the Senior Leadership Team tactical meeting and once at the Inclusion meeting).
- Parental meetings are held to challenge and support our parents/carers in raising the attendance of any child the Academy has concerns about.
- Where a child is failing to attend the Academy an Attendance Plan will be drawn up in consultation with the family and possibly external agencies, including Education and Social Welfare workers.