**Attendance Strategy 2024/25**

**Vision**

To ensure our pupils achieve success at Aspire Academy by attending school regularly because:

* they feel part of a positive, supportive community;
* they believe and trust in staff and those responsible for their care to have their best interests at heart;
* and so they believe they can overcome the barriers they face in order to attend school and strive to become the best version of themselves.

**Philosophy**

Aspire Academy is committed to providing an equitable educational experience to all pupils.

We believe that if pupils are to benefit from education, punctuality and good attendance is crucial. As an Academy, we will organise and provide support to all stakeholders to ensure maximum attendance for all pupils. Any problems that impede punctuality and regular attendance will be identified and addressed in a timely manner to support building a culture of good attendance.

Aspire Academy will give a high priority to conveying to pupils, parents/ carers and teachers the importance of regular and punctual attendance and that absence from school is a potential safeguarding risk. We recognise that all teachers, parents/carers have a vital role to play in keeping children safe and there is a need to establish home-Academy links and communication systems that can be utilised whenever there is concern about attendance.

It is the policy of our Academy to celebrate achievement. Attendance is a critical factor to a productive and successful Academy career. To support this Aspire Academy will actively promote and encourage 100 per cent attendance for all our pupils and home through internal and external communication.

Regular and punctual attendance is of paramount importance in ensuring that all

children have full access to the curriculum. Valuable learning time is lost when children

are absent or late and there is a clear correlation between academic success and school

attendance of over 97%. Children should be present, on time, every day the school is

open, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. Permitting absence without a

good reason is an offence by the parent or carer.

Every half-day absence has to be classified by the school (not by the parents or carers)

as either ‘authorised’ or ‘unauthorised’. This is why information about the cause of each

absence is always required, preferably in writing.

‘Authorised’ absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for unavoidable

reasons such as genuine illness.

‘Unauthorised’ absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and

for which no permission has been given. These include:

● Truancy before or during the school day

● Absences which have never been reported by parents or carers or properly

explained

● Children who arrive to school after the register has closed (\*insert time\*)

● Extended term time absence such as holidays

● Parents or carers keeping children off school unnecessarily

If there are problems that affect a student’s attendance we will investigate, identify and strive in partnership with home and pupils to resolve these problems as quickly and efficiently as possible. We will adopt a clearly, focussed, approach aimed at returning the pupil to full attendance at all times.

**Objectives**

Research suggests that there is a strong link between attendance, curriculum and ethos . When pupils feel happy, safe and want to come to school. To achieve this we need to ensure that

* There are clear, strong and consistent high expectations communicated to pupils and home.
* We listen, understand, empathise and support but do not tolerate poor attendance or punctuality.
* Strong relationships between school, pupils and parents, underpinned by the trauma informed approach, support a solution focused approach to improving attendance.
* Staff at every level understand their role in the drive to achieve high attendance for all pupils.
* Tracking and analysis of the key groups across school is robust to better inform strategies used with attendance.



Based on Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs (1943, 1954)

**Procedures**

The Academy will:

* Ensure that all staff are aware of the registration procedures, registration regulations and education law.
* Complete electronic or paper registers accurately at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session.
* Complete electronic registers at the beginning of each lesson.
* Communicate to parents/carers the importance of contacting staff early on the first day of absence.
* Display attendance rates around the Academy and reward good and improved attendance of all students.
* Set targets for attendance as outlined in the attendance action plan.
* Promote the role of the form tutor/class teacher in monitoring and rewarding good attendance for students in their form.
* Promote positive staff attitudes to students returning after absence.
* Consult with all members of the Academy community and the Pupil Welfare Officer (PWO) service in developing and maintaining the whole Academy attendance policy.
* Ensure regular evaluation of attendance procedures by Senior Leaders and the Academy Council.
* Include attendance and related issues in the newsletters sent to parents and students.
* Report to the Academy Council each term.
* Work towards ensuring that all students feel supported and valued. We will send a clear message that if a student is absent, she/he will be missed.
* Have in place procedures that will allow absentees to catch up on missed work without disrupting the learning of others.

**What if a pupil is genuinely ill?**

We understand that pupils may be ill on occasions and when this is the case we accept

that they should be kept at home and away from school.

Procedure for parents and carers if a pupil is too unwell to attend school:

If no contact is received from the parents/carers of an absent student on the first morning of absence we will:

* Contact home by telephone, text message or a home visit.
* Send out the attendance officer to complete home visits where appropriate
* After five days of absence the Senior Attendance Officer (SAO) will incorporate the student in the weekly discussion with the PWO.
* After a maximum of 10 days absence, the Senior Attendance Officer will ask the PWO or the Police to call at the student’s home. The aim of this being to identify and resolve the difficulties that are preventing the student from attending the Academy or to safeguard the student. The parents/carers will be made aware of the legal requirements regarding Academy attendance.

Additionally, moving forward, FCAT have made the decision that we will not be sending pupils home unattended. If a pupil is unwell and needs to go home, we ask that they made this known to a member of staff. The attendance office will then make contact home. They will need to be collected by an adult whose contact details are on our school system. If a pupil is too ill to be in school, it is important that there is an adult at home to care for them.

**Home Visits**

Home visits are taken by the academy for a number of reasons and not purely for safeguarding reasons. A visit will commence following 2 consecutive days of absence. If a pupil is off ill, a home visit may be undertaken to check in with the family as well as signposting to relevant online education resources that the pupil may wish to work on (if capable) so that any lost learning is kept to a minimum. The visit may also be put in place to offer avenues of support for those pupils who may be experiencing barriers to attending school. Collaboration with families to limit school absence is the best way to address any concerns and it is important to notice that these actions are undertaken without judgement with the overall aim of meeting the best interests of the pupil.

**Late arrival**

Late arrival is recorded for all students regardless of the reason and sanctions will be

given. If a student arrives between 8:35 am and 9am they will enter via the late gate and have their name taken for a lunchtime detention. If pupils arrive after 9am they must enter through the attendance office. If a student arrives after 9:30 am without a good reason, this will count as one whole session of unauthorised absence (i.e. half a day).

On the day a student is late, a lunch time detention will be put in place. This will be served in the Academy hall between 1pm and 1:30pm for Years 7 and 11 and 1:30pm until 2pm for Years 8, 9 and 10.

If a student is late 3 times within the space of 1 week, then a 1 hour after school detention will be served on the Friday of that week.

We understand that sometimes there are genuine reasons as to why students may be late to school. If this is the case, we encourage you to contact the school on 01253 353155 so we are made aware of these.

**If parents and carers are experiencing difficulty in getting pupils to school**

Parents and carers should contact the pupils head of year or the attendance team by email. The head of year and attendance team are the person in school who will usually know pupils the best and will be able to suggest strategies if the problem persists. They may be a revised timetable with later/earlier starts and the employment of our Bridge provision, which is used to aid transition into mainstream lessons. However, both of these strategies are only intended to be used as short-term measures and not for an extensive period of time.

**Encouraging high attendance**

Aspire Academy rewards students for high attendance by:

● Awarding achievement points for 100% attendance in a term

● Providing students with achievement certificates for 100% attendance

● Providing students with achievement certificates for improved attendance

● Making attendance part of every formal school report sent home to parents and

carers