Garstang Community Academy

Attendance Policy

Philosophy

Garstang Community Academy is committed to providing a full and efficient educational experience to all students. We believe that if students are to benefit from education, punctuality and good attendance are crucial. As an Academy, we will organise and do all we can to ensure maximum attendance for all students. Any problems that impede punctuality and regular attendance will be identified and addressed as speedily as possible.

It is the policy of our Academy to celebrate achievement. Attendance is a critical factor to a productive and successful Academy career. Garstang Community Academy will actively promote and encourage 100 per cent attendance for all our students.

Garstang Community Academy will give a high priority to conveying to students and parents the importance of regular and punctual attendance. We recognise that parents/carers have a vital role to play and there is a need to establish home-Academy links and communication systems that can be utilised whenever there is concern about attendance.

If there are problems that affect a student's attendance we will investigate, identify and strive in partnership with parents/carers and students to resolve these problems as quickly and efficiently as possible. We will adopt a clear and focussed approach aimed at returning the student to full attendance at all times.

PRINCIPLES

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.
- Stress 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 at the start of each academic year.
- Promote the role of the form tutor/class teacher in monitoring and rewarding good attendance for students in their form and classes.
- Promote positive staff attitudes to students returning after absence.
- Consult with all members of the Academy community 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/carers 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, they will be missed.
- Have in place procedures that will allow absentees to catch up on missed work without disrupting the learning of others.

PROCEDURES

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

- Contact the parent/carer by telephone or text message.
- Send out the attendance officer to complete home visits where appropriate.
- After five days of absence the Attendance Officer (AO) will incorporate the student in the weekly discussion with the Deputy Headteacher.
- After a maximum of 10 days absence, the AO will conduct further home visits or ask 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.
- Initiate an attendance plan for students' whose attendance falls below 95 per cent or they have a pattern of broken weeks. Attendance targets will be set which will be monitored by Form Tutors with the support of the AO and Achievement Hub Team. The parents/carers will be asked for their support in fulfilling the legal requirements regarding Academy attendance.
- Help the student's re-integration if returning to the Academy after an absence of longer than two weeks. In the event of a student returning after a long-term absence an individual reintegration programme will be initiated by the Achievement Hub Team in conjunction with Inclusion.
- AO and Caseworker will make a referral to the Achievement Hub Team as appropriate.

The Hub will adopt strategies that include:

o Long term absence from the Academy will require the AO and Inclusion Manager to be involved in the individual reintegration programme in order to create an effective `Action Plan'.

o Monitor attendance in lessons via monitoring check e.g. intense lesson by lesson, 2/3 spot checks through the day, 1 spot check daily monitoring.

o Initial daily contact with parents to `iron out' any problems occurring.

o `Wake up' calls in the case of truants.

o Positive rewards integrating into existing rewards scheme.

o Establishing a good relationship with parent/student in order to provide the support needed for `better' attendance or reintegration programmes.

o Register with the Caseworker or Form Tutors, at the `end' of the day.

- Reward good and improved attendance through:

  o Attendance Rewards
  o Reward Points
  o Attendance assemblies

- Reward good and improved punctuality through:

  o Punctuality rewards
  o Assemblies

Fast track to Positive outcomes and Fixed Penalty Notice initiative (FPN)

Garstang Community Academy, may identify cohorts of students whose attendance is lower than 95 per cent or missing 10 or more sessions. These students and their families could then form part of the `Fast track' programme or FPN initiative. The AO would discuss these students with the Deputy Headteacher. The AO would identify this group of students and be responsible for monitoring their daily attendance in order to support the improved attendance of the identified students.

Unauthorised leave during term time

In addition to this and in support of the philosophy of this policy, holidays during term time will be unauthorised for all children. Fixed penalty notices will be utilised for requests of 5 days or more, even if attendance is 100%. As a Trust we expect parents/carers to utilise clear school closure times for holidays. In very exceptional circumstances, holidays may be authorised by the Headteacher. If you feel there are exceptional circumstances you must write to the Headteacher requesting leave during term time.

The Headteacher's discretionary decision on whether an absence is to be authorised or unauthorised is ___final___ and there is no right of redress for parents/carers through the complaints process.

Non routine admissions

Where long term absence from the Academy has been a feature of the student's school history, prior to admission:

The Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher responsible for admissions will:

• Initiate the appropriate admission for the student, through liaison with the AO. This may involve a reintegration plan or referral to support staff.

• Initiate a planning meeting, to be chaired by either the AO or a representative from the Local Authority as appropriate.

• Liaise with both the Assistant Headteacher and the relevant Caseworker or Year Lead to ensure the accurate transfer of information occurs prior to the student being entered on the Academy roll.

• Ensure that the Academy records are requested by the office staff and that the information held within the records is distributed by the AO to the appropriate member of staff.

The Achievement Hub Team will:
•   Initiate an action plan that will closely monitor the attendance of the student.
•   Maintain regular liaison with the family of the student
•   Facilitate the appropriate support that a student may need in order to attend the Academy on a regular basis
•   Monitor and review attendance for a fixed period of time
•   Refer to Caseworker or appropriate pastoral support if problems still exist after this period of time

Punctuality

Students are expected to arrive at the Academy on time every day. It is very disruptive to their own education and that of others in their class, if they are late.

Students who arrive after the register closes will be marked absent for the whole session (a session being a morning or an afternoon). This absence will be unauthorised unless the Academy is satisfied that there is a legitimate reason for the student to be late. Such a reason will not include things such as missing the bus, clothes in the washing machine or lost shoes. A student who is persistently absent by reason of lateness will be dealt with in the same way as other students with an emerging pattern of absence. If the matter is not resolved quickly, it may be dealt with via a Fixed Penalty Notice.

We are committed to ensuring that students set excellent standards of punctuality and attendance and therefore students who are late will complete a C4 lunch time detention on the same day.. Persistent lateness will result in placements within AIR.

Performance

Garstang Community Academy has been set attendance targets as identified in the Academy Improvement plan.

When evaluating success the Academy will consider whether or not:

- Attendance has improved.

- Punctuality has improved.

- Parental response to absences has improved.

- Re-integration plans have been successful.

- The Academy has been successful in raising the profile of attendance within the Academy.

- Students are fully aware of the importance of punctuality and regular attendance and the attendance procedures operating within the Academy.

- Attendance issues have been included as topics in Academy assemblies, discussions between staff and students and throughout lessons where possible.

Practice
The Academy will recognise the importance of good practice by:

- Keeping and maintaining registers accurately.

- Maintaining a consistent approach to marking registers

- Regularly analysing attendance data.

- Ensuring prompt follow-up action in cases of non-school attendance.

- Liaising with multi-disciplinary teams.

- Recording carefully, all telephone messages.

In order to ensure the success of this policy every member of the Academy staff will make attendance and punctuality a priority and convey to the students the importance of their education.