



**Inspire
Academy**

Attendance Policy

Date of Issue:	September 2024
Attendance Lead:	Natalie Edwards
Headteacher:	Martyn O'Donnell
Ratified by:	Michael Gray – Chair of Academy Council
Signature:	
Next Review Date:	September 2025

Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of [Working together to improve school attendance 2024 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance-2024) and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures, [parents' guide to Working together to improve school attendance 2024](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/parents-guide-to-working-together-to-improve-school-attendance-2024). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance: Part 6 of the Education Act 1996, Part 3 of the Education Act 2002, Part 7 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010,2011,2013,2016,2024 amendments), The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024. This Policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

Policy Objectives:

- To safeguard the welfare, health, social and emotional development of children
- To reduce persistent/severe absence
- To promote commitment to education and achievement
- To maximise the potential of every individual pupil
- Ensure robust systems are in place to monitor and manage attendance and punctuality throughout the Academy

We believe: Every pupil matters and has a fundamental right to be educated.

- Good attendance and punctuality are key to personal development, progression, learning and achievement.
- Parent/carers have a duty to ensure and encourage maximum attendance and punctual arrival at school and lessons.
- Teachers and Support Staff have a duty to monitor and encourage maximum attendance and punctual arrival at school and lessons.
- Teachers and Support Staff have a duty to record accurately and fully each pupil's attendance. (see '*Working together to improve school attendance*' 19th August 2024 on GOV.UK website)
- Teachers and support staff should encourage maximum attendance of both the individual and the class.
- The Form Tutor and Form TAs have a duty have a duty to monitor the attendance of both individuals and the class.
- All staff and the Attendance Advisory Service will support maximum attendance and punctuality.
- We will praise and reward full and improved attendance and punctuality.

Attendance Expectations

Your child must receive full-time education. As a parent, you are responsible for making sure this happens. Irregular attendance will undermine your child's education. Statistics show that children who miss school can become victims of crime and some are drawn into anti-social behaviour. A low attendance rate will slow down your child's educational progress and affect their learning abilities.

Our minimum expectation for whole school and pupil attendance is **96%**

We provide 190 days of education; the expectation is that pupils attend every single day. Government research shows pupils who have less than 90% attendance (20 or more days missed in a year) achieve, on average, a whole grade lower than expected in examinations. An adult with day-to-day care has a legal responsibility to ensure that their child/ward attends school regularly. Failure to fulfil this responsibility can lead to prosecution or enforcement.

Parent/ Carer Responsibilities

- Parents/carers **MUST** telephone the Academy on 01634 827372 or email office@inspireacademy.org.uk on the first day of absence and subsequent days thereafter.
- If an absence is longer than two days, then medical evidence must be provided.

Academy times and procedures

1. Pupils must register between 8.50am and 9:00am in their Form. Failure to do so will result in an 'L' (Late) mark being recorded. AM registration will close at 9.15am, any pupil arriving after this time will be marked "U" (unauthorised).
2. PM registration opens at 1.10pm and closes at 1.15pm, any pupil arriving after this time but before 1.20pm will be marked as 'L' (late) and after 1.20pm a "U" (unauthorised).
3. If a pupil has not been registered in form, the Welfare Department are responsible for contacting parents/carers to ascertain the reason for absence, record the reason on registers and the Form Tutor to do a follow-up call if necessary.
4. Form tutors are responsible for registering pupils correctly using the appropriate code during registration.
5. The Academy will issue a medical evidence letter to parent/carers, when a child has had 3 days of unauthorised absence, which could be consecutive or individual. If further unauthorised absences occur, parent/carers may be invited in to the Academy for an attendance clinic with the Welfare team and the Local Authority Attendance Officer (AO) after consultation with Mr Martyn O'Donnell (Head of Academy / Attendance Lead).
6. The Attendance Advisory Service to Schools and Academies (AASSA) of Medway Council are purchased by the Academy to initiate legal proceedings on their behalf.
7. The Leadership Group is responsible for supporting Form Tutors in ensuring full attendance and good punctuality and evaluating the effectiveness of systems and the policy.

8. Form Tutors and Welfare Officers are responsible for meeting with Parents/Carers who have issues with attendance. The new DfE *'Working Together to Improve School Attendance'* guidance emphasises a **'Support First'** ethos, and recognises that *'the barriers to accessing education are wide and complex, both within and beyond the Academy gates, and are often specific to individual pupils and families... [It] is essential for pupils to get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, wellbeing, and wider life chances.'*

Authorised Absence

Only the Head of Academy can authorise an absence. They are not obliged to accept parent/carer explanations. Absence may be authorised for various reasons e.g. sickness, a one-off event, or a family bereavement.

Unauthorised Absence

Absences will not be authorised if:

- Another member of the family is ill
- The family have overslept or had a late night
- There are problems with school uniform
- You have forgotten school dates
- Your child attends a medical/dental appointment for more than half a day without written proof
- There is an annual family event such as a birthday
- You take your child shopping
- The weather is bad (unless the school have notified you of any closures)

The threshold is 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks. A school week means any week in which there is at least one school session. This can be met with any combination of unauthorised absence (e.g., 4 sessions of holiday taken in term time plus 6 sessions of arriving late after the register closes all within 10 school weeks). These sessions can be consecutive (e.g. 10 sessions of holiday in one week) or not (e.g. 6 sessions of unauthorised absence taken in 1 week and 1 per week for the next 4 weeks). The period of 10 school weeks can also span different terms or school years (e.g. 2 sessions of unauthorised absence in the Summer Term and a further 8 within the Autumn Term)

As of August 2024, the penalty amount increased to the following:

- **First offence** - The first time a Penalty Notice is issued the amount will be: £80 per parent, per child paid within 21 days. This increases to £160 per parent, per child if paid after day 21, until day 28. Any non-payment of the Penalty Notice may be referred to the Magistrates Court.
- **Second Offence** (within 3 years) - the second time a Penalty Notice is issued, the amount will be £160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days. Any non-payment of the Penalty Notice may be referred to the Magistrates Court.
- **Third Offence** and Any Further Offences (within 3 years) - the third time an offence is committed, a Penalty Notice will not be issued, and the case may be presented straight to the Magistrates' Court under s.444 of the Education Act (1996) or other legal interventions considered. The Magistrates' Court can order fines up to £2,500 per parent, per child

Term-Time Holidays

Please be aware that since the change of regulations [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2024](#), the law regarding term time pupil absences has changed. The new regulations state that *"Head teachers will not grant any leave of absence during term-time unless there are "exceptional circumstances"*. Therefore, any requests for term-time holidays may not be authorised and any such absences may be referred to the AAP and a Penalty Notice may be sent to each Parent/Carer. A Penalty Notice may be issued to each parent, resulting in a £80 fine, increasing to £160 if not paid within 21 days. Failure to pay the fine will result in a court prosecution for their child's non-attendance.

Only 2 penalty notices can be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within a 3-year rolling period and any second notice within that period is charged at a higher rate:

The application for term-time absence/holiday, must be made in advance in writing to the Head of Academy, stipulating the dates and number of days. The Head of Academy must be satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances which warrant the leave.

Any holiday-related absence taken that includes 10 sessions in 10 weeks, may result in a Penalty Notice. In this instance, a 'Notice to Improve' notification will not be issued beforehand.

Reduced Timetables

All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. In some circumstances their education may be provided partially at school and partially at another educational setting or through education otherwise than at a school in line with section 19 of the Education Act 1996 or section 42 or 61 of the Children and Families Act 2014. Time away from school to receive education in other ways must be recorded in the attendance register using the appropriate codes.

In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a pupil's best interests, there may be a need for a school to provide a pupil of compulsory school age with less than full-time education through a temporary part-time timetable to meet their individual needs.

A reduced timetable will be reviewed weekly involving parents/carers, overseen by the Assistant Headteacher/Welfare Manager with support from the Assistant Headteacher for Teaching and Learning at the Academy. Parents/Carers will complete all relevant paperwork which supports the timetable. The Academy informs the local authority of all pupils on a reduced timetable.

Frequent/Persistent Absence Procedures

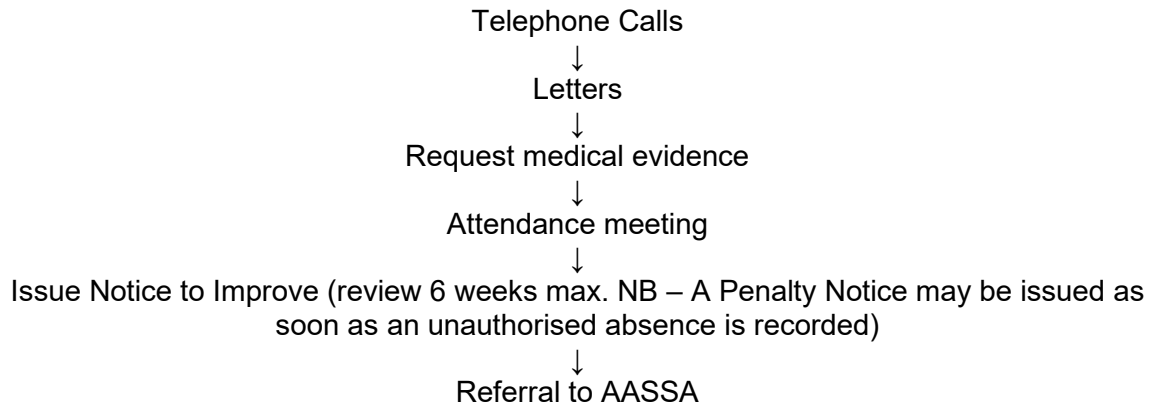
Persistent Absentee – Where absence escalates and pupils miss 10% or more of school (equivalent to 1 day or more a fortnight across a full school year), schools and local authorities are expected to work together to put additional targeted support in place to remove any barriers to attendance and reengage these pupils.

Severe Absentee – Where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

Daily monitoring of the registers and analysis of data will be made by the Welfare officer for attendance, to identify pupils with a pattern of absences that may lead to Persistent absence

(PA) and Severe Absence (SA). The Welfare officer for Attendance will be responsible for putting in place actions for each pupil of concern. Initially the Academy will try to resolve the problem with parents/carers and this may involve requesting medical evidence in order for the Academy to authorise any further absences due to ill health and/or an attendance clinic with the Attendance Advisory Service and relevant staff and/or outside professionals.

Attendance process for falling attendance:



Examples of Medical evidence are as follows:

- Hospital discharge letter
- Note from GP or Copy of appointment card from your GP
- Copy of prescription or medication label
- Note from pharmacist
- Note from other healthcare professional

If a child has left Inspire Academy with no forwarding school or academy:

Referral to Children Missing Education, Medway via the AO from school/academy with as much information about the child as known by the school/academy or other referrer;
Enquiries made of partners and other agencies including Children’s Social Care and partner agencies with responsibility for housing to establish any additional risks to young person;

Monitoring and evaluation

The Leadership Group will monitor the effectiveness of the policy.

Appendix 1: School Attendance and Absence Codes 2024-2025

Present/Authorised Codes

/ \	present during registration
B	educated off site and taster days and do not fit K, V, P or W codes
K	attending provision arranged by the local authority
L	arrived after the register has started but before it has closed
P	Sporting activity with prior agreement from school
V	educational visit or trip
W	work experience

Absent Codes

Authorised Absences

C	exceptional circumstances
C1	in a regulated performance/undertaking regulated employment abroad
C2	absent due to part-time timetable
D	dual registered
E	suspended or permanently excluded
I	illness (not medical or dental appointments)
J1	job/school/college interview
M	medical or dental appointment
Q	unable to attend because of a lack of access arrangements
R	religious observance (only 1 day allowed, any more coded as C if agreed)
S	study leave
T	parent travelling for occupational purposes (no fixed abode)
X	non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school
Y1	unable to attend due to transport provided not being available
Y2	unable to attend due to widespread transport disruption
Y3	unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed
Y4	unable to attend due to whole school closure
Y5	unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention
Y6	unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law
Y7	unable to attend due to other avoidable cause (must affect the pupil NOT the parent)

Unauthorised Absence

G	holiday (not agreed)
N	reason for absence not yet established (must be corrected within 5 days)
O	absent in other or unknown circumstances
U	late after register has closed
Z	pupil not yet on register
#	planned whole school closure (eg holidays, insets and polling station days)