

Attendance policy

Thrunscoe Primary and Nursery Academy



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1. Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to Academy attendance through our whole-Academy culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- › Promoting good attendance
- › Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- › Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- › Acting early to address patterns of absence
- › Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend Academy

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [School attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern Academy 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 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)
- › [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the 'school census', which explains the persistent absence threshold.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

- › Promoting the importance of Academy attendance across the Academy's policies and ethos
- › Making sure Academy leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- › Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data (termly Headteacher report and Full governors meeting)

- › Monitoring attendance figures for the whole Academy
- › Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- › Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy (termly Headteacher report and Full governors meeting)

3.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- › Implementation of this policy at the Academy
- › Monitoring Academy-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- › Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- › Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- › Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- › Leading attendance across the Academy
- › Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- › Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- › Having an oversight of data analysis
- › Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- › Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- › Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is **Mr S P Bate** and can be contacted via telephone 01472 320781

3.4 The attendance officer

The Academy attendance officer is responsible for:

- › Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- › Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- › Providing regular attendance reports to Academy staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher
- › Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence / lateness
- › Advising the headteacher (authorised by the headteacher) when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The attendance officer is **Mrs E Saxby** and can be contacted via telephone 01472 320781

3.5 Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the Academy office by **9 am and 1.20pm**

3.6 Academy admin / office staff

Academy office staff will:

- › Take calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the Academy system
- › Transfer calls from parents to the headteacher / well-being mentor in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance
- › Contact parents daily whose children are absent without reason being provided – safeguarding.

3.7 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- › Make sure their child attends every day on time
- › Call or email the Academy to report their child's absence before **9 am** on the day of the absence and update the Academy regularly if absence is prolonged, and advise when they are expected to return
- › Provide the Academy with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- › Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the Academy day

3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- › Attend Academy every day and on time

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each Academy day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- › Present
- › Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- › Absent
- › Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will be made by the Attendance Officer who will change the absence mark to the appropriate reason for absence and will include:

- › The original entry
- › The amended entry
- › The reason for the amendment
- › The date on which the amendment was made
- › The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

This change will be automatically logged by SCHOLAR PACK.

We will also record:

- › For pupils of compulsory Academy age, whether the absence is authorised or not
- › The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- › The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in Academy by 8.50am on each Academy day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8.50am and will be kept open until 9.20am.

Register for the second session will be taken at 1.10pm and will be kept open until 1.40pm. **After registers close a pupil will be marked absent**

4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the Academy of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by **9 am** or as soon as practically possible by calling the Academy office staff, **01472 320781** (see also section 7), or emailing office@thrunscoe.academy .

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the Academy has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the Academy may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the Academy is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this. If a SAP / LAP meeting has already been held between parents / carers and the Academy / EWO / LA, all absences on the grounds of ill-health without medical evidence will be marked as unauthorised.

4.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the Academy, if possible, in advance of the appointment and if in a position to do so, provide evidence of confirmation of the booking ie medical appointment card / letter.

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of Academy hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of Academy for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the Academy can authorise.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late (Register closed at 9.20am):

- › Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- › After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code
- › Pupils are expected to be in their classrooms for the start of registration. Pupils arriving late but within 30 minutes will be recorded as present and given a late mark.
- › Pupils who arrive after the register closes i.e. 30 minutes after the start of registration, will be marked absent for the whole session and this will be unauthorised unless there are extenuating circumstances.
- › Pupils arriving after 8.50am must be signed into the academy on the screen at the front main reception desk and a reason for the lateness provided. This ensures an accurate record in case of fire or other emergencies on the premises, in accordance with our health and safety procedures.

4.5 Following up unexplained absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend Academy does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the Academy will:

- › Call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the Academy cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the Academy may contact the EWO, particularly for a child who has recurring absences.
- › Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- › Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session

- › Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the Academy will consider involving an education welfare officer on day 5 of absence
- › Parents / carers are required to provide reasons for absence from the academy. If no reason has been provided within 1 week of the absence, the absence will be unauthorised.
- › If a child has recurring absences which have not been explained then the academy will contact the EWO before the fifth day.
- › Half termly checks are carried out by the Attendance officer and Headteacher – persistent lateness / persistent absence is addressed through letters initially followed by EWO workshops to identify potential issues causing lateness / absence and allow the academy to put in support to address this. Continued lateness / absence beyond this will involve a formal Academy Attendance Panel (SAP) meeting involving the parents / carers , Headteacher and EWO. Formal targets will be set and reviewed. Should this escalate further then a Local Authority Attendance Panel Meeting will be held where representatives from the LA, EWO and Academy meet with the parents / carers to set targets of attendance and explore further support opportunities. Should this not impact positively, then the last part of the process involves court papers being served, prosecution and a potential large fine being set for the parent / carer of the child.

4.6 Reporting to parents/carers

The Academy will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels and these will be shared termly with parents via a parent meeting and associated parent meeting slip and an end of year report.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence (EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES)

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

We define '**exceptional circumstances**' as '***circumstances that could not be reasonably foreseen and for which there was insufficient time to take the necessary action to resolve the situation arising from those circumstances***'

The Academy considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 2 weeks before the absence, by completing the leave of absence request form, available from the main reception area. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence. The academy cannot grant a leave of absence retrospectively; all applications must be made in advance.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- › Illness and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- › Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the Academy will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- › Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the Academy, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision
- › If a child performs in any theatrical activity or sporting activity on a regular basis, which is not organised by the academy, the child must have a performance licence issued by the Local Authority. Any child taking part in a modelling assignment must have a modelling licence issued by the Local Authority. Holding a license does not guarantee absences will be authorised, the decision remains with the headteacher. The headteacher may grant permission for occasional theatrical or sporting activities where a licence is not required.

➤ **HOLIDAYS DURING TERM-TIME:** Parents/carers do not have the right to withdraw their children from the academy for family holidays. In line with government legislation, holiday absence will only be authorised under extenuating circumstances. Parents wishing to take their children out of the academy for the purpose of a family holiday must consult with the academy before booking the holiday: a holiday form must be completed prior to arranging a meeting with the headteacher.

Extenuating circumstances include:

- Service personnel and other employees who are prevented from taking holidays during term time if the holiday will have minimal disruption to the pupil's education.
- When a family need to spend time together to support each other during or after a crisis.
- Designated holiday by an employer (with written confirmation from the Personnel department that holidays cannot be taken at any other time). The Academy will contact employers for verification.
- A pupil's overall attendance record will be considered when deciding whether or not to authorise holidays.

➤ **Attending a wedding (abroad or within this country) is not deemed to be exceptional circumstances. Such absences will therefore be unauthorized**

➤ **There is no requirement for schools to record whether the absence of pupils not of a compulsory age is authorised or not, but the Academy will use national attendance and absence codes to help us monitor such pupils in order to form good attendance habits – this is in line with national guidance.**

5.2 Legal sanctions

The Academy or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from Academy, where the child is of compulsory Academy age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during Academy hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

WEEKLY:

- Each week we will run a weekly attendance lottery in our whole Academy assembly. If a child's lottery ball is chosen in the draw and they achieved 100% attendance the previous week, they will win a £10 TESCO voucher. If the child chosen didn't achieve 100% attendance the previous week then the prize will roll over to the following week - so there would be £20 to be won. And so on and so on as the weeks progress. Pupils' names will only ever be mentioned if they win.
- The highest attending class for each week will win the weekly attendance cup – this will be filled with treats to share amongst the class. The class will also gain an extra 10 minute break.
- Reporting back to pupils during weekly celebration assembly class / targets / current attainment

TERMLY:

- At the end of a full-term (every 12-14 weeks depending on the length of a full-term) any child with a cumulative attendance figure of 95% or more will be entered into a full term draw.
- Full-term draw (every 12-14 weeks depending on the length of a full term).

TESCO VOUCHERS

1st prize: £50 for the child and £50 for their parents / carers;

2nd prize: £30 for the child and £30 for their parents / carers;

3rd prize: £20 for the child and £20 for their parent / carers.

- Any child who gets 100% attendance for an entire full-term (12-14 weeks) will receive a 100% certificate.
- The highest attending class for each term will win a termly prize ie a film and food ordered in etc

YEARLY

- At the end of each academic year, any child that has achieved a cumulative attendance figure of 95% or more will be entered into the end of year draw where they could win a brand new bicycle. There will be 3 bicycles to be won.
- Any pupil achieving 100% attendance for the entire year will receive a certificate, an attendance medal and a £10 voucher.

7. Attendance monitoring

7.1 Monitoring attendance

The Academy will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data daily, weekly, monthly, termly and yearly across the Academy and at an individual pupil level.
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's Academy absence national statistics releases. The underlying Academy-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The Academy will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing board.

7.2 Analysing attendance

The Academy will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly (monthly) to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

7.3 Using data to improve attendance

The Academy will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers and other Academy leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

7.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of Academy, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of Academy.

The Academy will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the Academy (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at Academy
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance
- Refer to section 6.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum each academic year by Mr S P Bate (Headteacher). At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

9. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy.

Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on Academy attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the Academy
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the Academy
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the Academy
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	Academy has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment

R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and traveller absence	Pupil from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the Academy
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the Academy
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	Academy is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at Academy after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in Academy	Pupil of non-compulsory Academy age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	Academy site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the Academy
#	Planned Academy closure	Whole or partial Academy closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day