



St Mary  
Magdalene  
Academy

# **ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

St Mary Magdalene Academy is a Christian community of learning. We aim to nurture young people to become high achievers and to discover their vocation in the global society.

“Show by a good life that you works are done by gentleness born of wisdom”

James 3.13

## ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY – POLICY STATEMENT

ST MARY MAGDALENE ACADEMY

<b>Approval Committee:</b>	<b>Full Governing Body</b>
<b>Review Committee:</b>	<b>Community Relations &amp; Student Welfare (CR&amp;SW)</b>
<b>Author/Responsible person</b>	<b>Director of Learning: Pastoral</b>
<b>Last Reviewed:</b>	<b>November 2017</b>
<b>Next Review Date:</b>	<b>Autumn 2018</b>
<b>Required to publish on website?</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Statutory?</b>	<b>No</b>

## **Introduction**

- 1.1 The Academy seeks to ensure that all of its students receive a full education, which maximises the opportunities for inclusion and achievement at the Academy so that each student is able to realise his/her full potential.
- 1.2 All people between the ages of 5 and 18 are legally required to be educated.
- 1.3 Students, parents/carers, teachers, support staff and Governors all have a role in maintaining a high standard of attendance and punctuality. The minimum target for attendance set by the Governing Body is 96%.
- 1.4 Every lesson counts! Even casual absence can affect a child's attainment.

## **Aims of the Policy**

- 1.5 To improve the overall attendance of students at the Academy.
- 1.6 To develop a framework which defines agreed roles and responsibilities for all people involved in maintaining student attendance and punctuality.
- 1.7 To implement a system of sanctions and rewards.
- 1.8 To develop a systematic approach to gathering, analysing and responding to attendance data.

## **Recording Attendance Data**

- 1.9 The registers are completed by 9:00am in Key Stage 1 and 2 the beginning of the morning and 1.30pm (1:15pm in KS1) in the afternoon sessions and are returned to the office within 10 minutes. In KS3 and above the registers are completed at 8:50am and every lesson thereafter.
- 1.10 Registers close at 9:15am. Arrival after this time may be marked as an absence.
- 1.11 All lateness must be marked with an L. If a student arrives after the register closes without an acceptable explanation, it is marked with a U and is considered as an unauthorised absence. It is therefore imperative to phone before 9:00am to explain the reason for the absence.
- 1.12 If a staff member other than the Class Teacher receives information about attendance or lateness, they are to inform the Academy Reception staff.

## **Absence**

### **Unauthorised Absence**

1.13 The Academy will follow up on all unauthorised absences, communicating parental responsibility for providing explanations. This will be via:

1.13.1 first day text or telephone calls; and/or

1.13.2 unauthorised absence letters.

### **Authorised Absence**

1.14 An authorised absence is when a student is away for a reason acceptable to the Academy. The Academy (not the parent/carer) determines whether an absence is authorised after receipt of a written explanation from the parent/carer. Explanations from students or siblings are not sufficient.

1.15 **Parents/Carers are strongly discouraged from taking their children away during term time.**

1.16 Special leave of absence can be authorised at the Headteacher's discretion. Longer periods of absence may only be authorised in very exceptional circumstances. Requests should be submitted, as far in advance as possible, using the Application for Term Time Leave form that is available from Reception.

1.17 Any special leave of absence including a request for a child to be out of Academy can only be authorised by the Headteacher.

1.18 Each case will be considered individually based on the nature of the event, history of term time absences, the student's current attendance, age, achievement, and the time of year with respect to the curriculum. Parents/carers will be informed in writing of the decision on their request.

1.19 Any leave of absence for medical appointment or religious observance should be directed to the child's Teacher at KS1 and 2 or Head of Year at KS3 upwards.

1.20 Any time taken without the Academy's authorisation, or any additional time taken over and above the amount authorised will be recorded as unauthorised absence.

1.21 If a student does not return on the agreed date, the Academy will make every effort to contact the family by telephone and in writing. If no contact is made, or if the absence has been extended for anything other than unavoidable circumstances, the Academy will refer the family to the Access and Engagement Service (AES) if they do not return within 10 Academy days. If no contact is made with the family by the AES then a letter will be sent to parent/carer informing them that

the student is taken off roll. This will always be done in consultation with the AES.

## **Punctuality**

- 1.22 Academy starts at 8:55am in KS1 and 2 and at 8:40am in KS3 and 4. Children are to enter through the Lough Road gate for KS1 and 2. Students in KS3 and 4 must enter through either the entrance on Sheringham Road or the entrance on Liverpool Road. It is expected that all students arrive in good time.
- 1.23 If secondary students arrive after the student gate has closed, they are to come through the main Academy entrance on Liverpool Road. They will be marked as late (L on the register) and sit a 30 minute detention at lunchtime that day.
- 1.24 The Academy expects parents to support prompt arrival of their children to school. If your child has not arrived by the time the register closes, a member of staff will contact you by text message if you have enabled this service with a valid mobile number. In addition to monitoring absence, this is also a safety check in case your child is old enough to come to Academy by him/herself & has not arrived.
- 1.25 A late letter will be sent to parents/carers if there is regular lateness.
- 1.26 All unauthorised lates (those after the register closes) are treated as absences.

## **Monitoring attendance and responding to patterns of absence**

- 1.27 Academy staff will respond when a pattern of low attendance emerges.
- 1.28 The Academy is responsible for initial interventions. When a pattern of poor attendance emerges, a discussion is needed between the Class Teacher/ Head of Year and senior management to determine a course of action.
  - 1.29 If a Class Teacher/Head of Year makes initial contact with a parent/carer and there is no improvement after suitable interventions by the Academy, a formal attendance contract will be drawn up and the parent is at risk of receiving a Penalty Notice, along with the offer of a referral to outside agencies for support.
- 1.30 Although all cases are considered individually, the EWO will generally become involved when a student's attendance falls below 90%.
- 1.31 To ensure that all patterns of low attendance are identified, the EWO will meet with a member of the Academy's Pastoral team and agree a course of action for all students with attendance under 90%. The agreed action may include:
  - 1.31.1 closely monitoring the situation;
  - 1.31.2 a letter from the Academy;
  - 1.31.3 a meeting with the Academy (possibly with EWO present); and/or

1.31.4 a formal referral to EWS if attendance falls under 90% (which can include home visits, referrals to outside agencies and statutory action in the form of a court warning or penalty notice).

1.32 A series of standard letters and meeting opportunities are available for parents/carers, notifying them of attendance concerns.

### **Supporting the reintegration of students after extended absences**

1.33 All students who return to the Academy after an extended period of absence need to be supported. Each case will be considered individually and a plan will be drawn up to best support the student's academic and social reintegration into the Academy.

### **Taking students off roll**

1.34 All students who leave the Academy to attend another school (except for secondary Academy transfers) will remain on roll until their admission elsewhere is confirmed.

1.35 In the case of students who disappear (i.e. leave with no indication of where they are going or whether they will return), the Academy will make every effort to contact the family on the telephone and in writing. If contact cannot be established, the Academy will make a formal referral to the Access and Engagement Service.

1.36 The Academy will send out letters advising parents/carers' of the deadline by which they must respond before the Academy takes their child off roll.

### **Encouraging good attendance and punctuality**

1.37 Whole Academy activities will raise the profile of attendance and punctuality through:

1.37.1 newsletters;

1.37.2 attendance bear, attendance trophy, punctuality bear and punctuality draw (Foundation, KS1 and 2);

1.37.3 celebratory assemblies;

1.37.4 certificates for 100% attendance for each term;

1.37.5 badges for 100% attendance and punctuality in one term; and

1.37.6 displays around the Academy.

## **Expectations of Parents/Carers**

- 1.38 It is essential the parents/carers of all students understand the Academy's attendance policy and their role in ensuring their child has good attendance.
- 1.39 Parents/carers are responsible for ensuring their children arrive at the Academy on time each day.
- 1.40 Parents/carers must contact the Academy or on the telephone or in person to provide an explanation on the first day their child is absent. They should also provide a written note explaining the absence when the child returns to school so that the register can be marked with the correct absence code.

# **ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY CONTRACT**

## **2 Attendance and Punctuality Policy Contract**

- 2.1 The staff and Governors of the Academy believe that regular attendance at the Academy is essential if children are to receive the education to which they are entitled and which they deserve. Children who are regularly away from Academy, or who are persistently late, will not achieve the progress that they should. Poor attendance leads to poor attainment.

### **Aims of the Academy in respect of attendance and punctuality**

- 2.2 At the Academy we aim to:
- 2.2.1 ensure that every student achieves attendance of at least 96%;
  - 2.2.2 ensure that every student arrives at Academy on time (8.55am in KS1 and 2, 8:40am in KS3 and 4) every day with immediate effect; and
  - 2.2.3 reduce the number of families taking special leave of absence in term time.

### **Objectives of the Policy Contract**

- 2.3 To fulfill the above aims, the Academy will:
- 2.3.1 Require that every parent/carer telephones the Academy before 9:15am if their child is ill.
  - 2.3.2 Monitor registers daily to check for children who are absent, and whose parents/carers have not telephoned the Academy. The Academy will telephone such parents/carers to remind them that they should telephone the Academy if their child is absent and to find out why the child is absent. If a further absence occurs without telephone notification, parents/carers will receive a further letter with a reply slip warning that the Access and Engagement Service may become involved.
  - 2.3.3 Monitor registers daily to check for children who are late, and whose parents/carers have not telephoned the Academy to tell us why. Such parents/carers will receive a letter with a reply slip to inform them of the necessity of arriving at Academy on time. If a further lateness occurs without telephone notification, parents/carers will receive a further letter with a reply slip warning that the Access and Engagement Service may become involved.



- 2.3.4 Close registers at 9.00am each day, after which a child is counted as absent for the remainder of the morning. Children who are not lined up/in Academy when the bells go will be marked late for the morning session. Children who continually arrive late seriously disrupt continuity and progress within the class.
- 2.3.5 Authorise absences only if a child is ill. In some cases, a medical certificate will be required to explain absence. Any other absence will only be authorised if permission is given in advance.
- 2.3.6 Provide time for parents/carers to discuss attendance or lateness issues with the Senior Team, Class Teacher or Head of Year when parents/carers require this.
- 2.3.7 Will not authorise special leave of absence for any child or family except in exceptional circumstances. Permission for all special leave of absence must be requested from the Headteacher in writing prior to absence via the use of the Application for Term Time Leave form.
- 2.3.8 Will refer to the Access and Engagement Service any child who remains on holiday longer than the agreed holiday dates.
- 2.3.9 Monitor the return of reply slips from parents/carers regarding attendance or lateness.

### **Parents' obligations**

- 2.4 Parents/carers whose children are at the Academy agree to:
  - 2.4.1 Keep a child at home only if the child is genuinely ill.
  - 2.4.2 Telephone the Academy on the first day of a child's absence to explain why the child will not be present by 9:00am.
  - 2.4.3 Ensure that their children arrive at Academy on time by being in the playground by 8:50am in KS1 and 2 and 8:30am in KS3 and 4.
  - 2.4.4 Ensure that their children are collected from Academy on time.
  - 2.4.5 Ensure that when one child in a family is ill and must be kept at home, parents/carers must send, bring or make arrangements for other children in the family who are well to get to Academy.
  - 2.4.6 Send reply slips from Academy letters about attendance and lateness back to Academy promptly.

- 2.4.7 Make and keep appointments with the Senior Team, Head of Year, Class Teacher or Educational Welfare Officer to discuss attendance or lateness issues.
- 2.4.8 Avoid taking their children on special leave of absence during term time or to do so only with the express permission of the Headteacher.
- 2.4.9 Ensure their child is at Academy if the parent is ill. Arrangements for collection will need to be made if no other family member is available.

### **Students' obligations**

- 2.5 Students at the Academy agree to:
  - 2.5.1 Get up, wash, brush teeth, dress, have breakfast – or bring money to have breakfast in school - and be ready to go to Academy when their parents/carers ask.
  - 2.5.2 Come to Academy every day when they are not ill.
  - 2.5.3 Arrive at Academy on time.

### **Definitions of terms**

- 2.6 In this Attendance and Punctuality Policy Contract,
  - 2.6.1 Authorised Absence means an absence that has been agreed by the Academy and has been supported by a medical certificate or acceptable note from a parent/carer explaining the reason for the absence. (Note: not all notes from parents/carers will be accepted and further proof of the reason for absence may be required);
  - 2.6.2 Unauthorised absence means an absence where an acceptable reason or proof for absence has not been given or the reason given has not been accepted by the Academy or a child has had a holiday during term time.

I have received and read the Academy's Attendance and Punctuality Policy and talked about it with my child. (Please return this contract to Academy).

Signature of Parent/Carer: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's/Carer's name in block capitals: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of child: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Child's name in block capitals: \_\_\_\_\_