

# Attendance Policy



**#Discover YOUR Incredible**

Adopted	Sep 2019
Lead	TS
Reviewed	



**THE HARMONY TRUST**  
BELIEVE • ACHIEVE • SUCCEED

## 1. POLICY STATEMENT

We want all our children to attend school every day, when the academy is open, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. Our aim is that children will have a positive attitude towards The Academy and their learning so that they will want to attend as much as possible.

Once a child is enrolled at The Academy, parents have a legal responsibility to ensure that their child attends every day, unless prevented from doing so by illness or other exceptional circumstances for absence which are authorised by The Academy.

Under the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, the governing body are responsible for making sure the academy keeps an attendance register that records which pupils are present at the start of the morning session and during the afternoon session. This register will also indicate whether an absence was "authorised" or "unauthorised"

An absence is classified as authorised when The Academy has ascertained that a child has been away from the academy for a legitimate reason and the academy has been notified of this legitimate reason by a parent or guardian.

An absence is unauthorised if The Academy does not find there is a legitimate reason for the absence. An absence can still be unauthorised even if the parent or carer feels the reason is legitimate since only the school can authorise an absence. Therefore, an absence will be unauthorised if a child is away from the academy without good reason, even with the support of a parent.

In law, an offence occurs if a parent fails to secure their child's attendance at school and the absence is not authorised by the school.

## 2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- Ensure children are in school as much as possible so their learning can be maximised and their academic potential realised.
- Clearly explain to parents the reasons why good attendance is necessary and explain consequences for poor attendance.
- Clearly explain to parents what constitutes a legitimate reason for absence.
- Ensure the academy follows correct procedures for registering pupils and following up absences.
- Ensure pupils are safe and their whereabouts are known.

## 3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the responsibility of The Harmony Trust to

- Establish a policy and procedure for attendance and to monitor the effects of the procedure to focus its attention and where necessary its efforts on the total level of absence amongst all its pupils.

- Set an overall absence target for the following academic year by 31 December of each year

It is the responsibility of the Principal to

- Ensure that the academy continues to focus attention and where necessary effort, on the total level of absence amongst all pupils.
- Ensure an overall absence target is set for the following academic year by 31 December of each year, taking into account the performance of the best schools with similar pupil premium rates.
- Have high expectations with regards to attendance and punctuality.
- Create an environment where children want to come and learn in.
- Communicate with parents when problems with attendance or punctuality arise.
- Set a good example with regards to attendance and punctuality.
- Monitor absences in order to provide support and intervention to parents where needed.
- Support pupils who have issues surrounding attendance.
- Liaise with the educational welfare officer on issues surrounding attendance.
- Report yearly to parents on their child's attendance and punctuality.
- Ensure compliance with the legal requirements in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 and associated guidance for the reporting and recording of attendance.

It is the responsibility of all staff to

- Read and comply with this policy.
- Have high expectations in their class with regards to attendance.
- Set a good example with regards to attendance and punctuality.
- Support pupils who have issues surrounding attendance.
- Inform office of any reasons they receive for a pupil being absent.
- Ensure the register is completed and saved accurately each morning and afternoon as soon as possible.

It is the responsibility of all parents to

- Ensure their child turns up to school everyday, unless there is a legitimate reason, on time and with the correct equipment.
- Inform the academy of any reason for absence by telephone call or text on the first morning of any absence. This should be repeated on any subsequent day of absence.
- Not take holiday during term time unless it is for exceptional circumstances as authorised by the academy.

It is the responsibility of all pupils to

- Attend school whenever they are fit and able to do so.
- Complete any catch up work following a longer period of absence.

## 4. PROCEDURES

### Unexpected absences

When a child is unexpectedly absent, you must inform the office either by phone or by text on each morning that they are off.

When a child is absent for an appointment, a letter should be handed to the office with evidence of the appointment. It should be noted that such appointments should be unavoidable for example hospital appointments or emergency doctors or dental appointments.

If we do not hear from you in the morning, the office will make efforts to contact you by phone.

If you do not answer, then the academy may visit your home to check on your child's whereabouts.

Guidance on the consequences for poor attendance can be viewed in [appendix 2](#).

### Requests for leave of absence for a child

We believe that children should be in the academy as much as possible if they are to reach their learning potential.

There is no right for parents to take holiday during term time. Children are required to be in school for 190 days in a year. This leaves 175 days of weekends and academy holidays. Any holidays taken in term time will be unauthorised. Unauthorised absences may lead to a fine of £60 per parent. Guidance on penalty notices can be viewed in [appendix 1](#). Guidance on the consequences for poor attendance can be viewed in [appendix 2](#).

Leave of absence may be granted in exceptional circumstances. Guidance on this can be viewed in [appendix 3](#).

A child who is absent for more than 20 days consecutively without authorisation can be removed from the academy roll.

### Long Term Absence

When children have an illness that means they will be away from the academy for over five days, the academy will do all it can to send work home, so that, where possible, the child can keep in touch with the learning going on in their class.

If the absence is likely to continue for an extended period, or be a repetitive absence, the academy will contact the Local Authority (LA) support services, so that arrangements can be made for the child to be given some tuition outside the academy, where possible.

### Rewards for good attendance

To view rewards for good attendance please see [appendix 4](#).

APPENDIX 1

Unauthorised Leave of Absence Authorisation Procedure

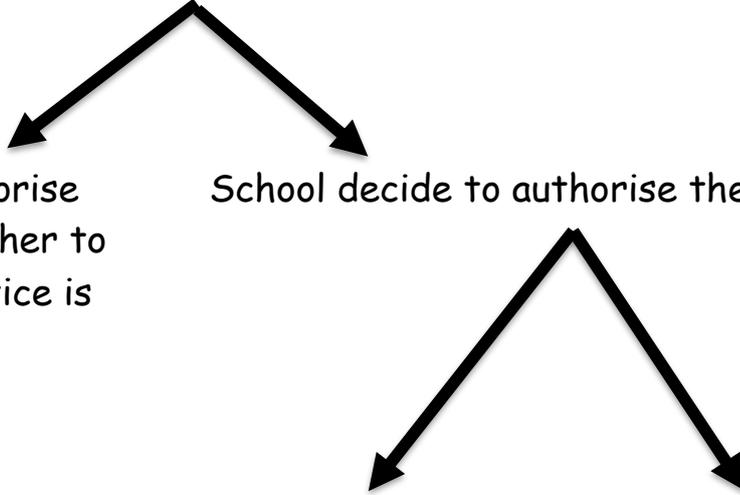
Parents put in a request for a leave of absence

School decide to un-authorise  
the absence & decide whether to  
request that a penalty notice is  
issued

School decide to authorise the absence

Child returns to school  
on the agreed date

School un-authorise  
the absence & decide  
whether to request  
that a penalty notice  
is issued



## APPENDIX 2

### Procedures for poor attendance

Attendance will be constantly by The Academy. A file will be kept by the inclusion manager to track pupils who are under 90% and those who are under 95%.

The Headteacher and the Inclusion Manager will meet weekly to discuss the attendance of pupils at The Academy. Each meeting will have an agenda and notes will be recorded.

At the meeting, pupils who have less than 100% attendance the previous week will be discussed. Where it is decided that a pupil's attendance is a concern, the following procedure will kick in (with escalation to the next stage when attendance either continues to decline or fails to improve significantly).

1. Stage 1 - a warning letter will be sent to parents reminding them of the expectations around school attendance.
2. Stage 2 - parents will be invited in for an informal meeting with the inclusion manager to discuss expectations around school attendance and barriers to good attendance.
3. Stage 3 - parents will be invited for a formal meeting with the inclusion manager and the headteacher to discuss attendance.
4. Stage 4 - a referral will be made to the Education Welfare Officer who has a full range of sanctions available to her.

### Penalty Notices

**Penalty Notices may be considered appropriate if one of the following criteria is met:**

- There is unauthorised persistent absence. "Persistent" means at least 20 sessions of unauthorised absence over a period of twelve school weeks, excluding holidays. These absences do not need to be consecutive.
- There is a period of absence not authorised by the head teacher or in excess of the period authorised by the head teacher.(e.g. family holiday)
- Persistent late arrival at school, i.e. after the register has closed. "Persistent" means at least 10 sessions of unauthorised late arrival over a period of 12 school weeks, excluding holidays. These late episodes do not need to be consecutive.
- The presence of an excluded child in a public place at any time during school hours in that child's first five days of exclusion. An "excluded child" is one who has been excluded from school for a given period under the Education and Inspections Act 2006.
- A Penalty Notice will not be issued in respect of children in the care of the LA with whom other interventions will be used.

**Other conditions.**

- There will be no limit on the times a Penalty Notice for unauthorised leave of absence can be used in an academic year.
- In cases where there is more than one pupil in a family with unauthorised absences, Penalty Notices may be issued for more than one child
- Use of a Penalty Notice or formal warning of a Penalty Notice for unauthorised persistent absence / lateness will be restricted to one notice/ warning per parent of a pupil per academic year.

## APPENDIX 3

### Exceptional Circumstances

When considering whether to grant your child leave during term time, following a request for absence, the following policy will be applied. These guidelines have been developed for our school based on guidance issued by NAHT.

Firstly, it should be noted that by exceptional we mean rare, unavoidable, significant and short. Here are the circumstances where we will consider authorising the absence.

Circumstance	Requirements	Number of days authorised (maximum)
Death of a close family member (parents, siblings and spouses) in another country or this country.	-We expect you to meet with your child's phase leader immediately following your request. -Proof of reason for absence	To be discussed depending on circumstances up to a maximum of 5 days.
Death of other family member in another country	n/a	Time off will not be authorised
Death of another family member in United Kingdom	n/a	Time off will not be authorised
Serious illness of a close family member in another country.	You must be travelling within 2 days of making the request.  We expect you to meet with your child's phase leader immediately following your request.	5 days
Family holiday for armed services personnel returning from active duty.	Proof of deployment will be needed to be given with evidence it would not be reasonable to take the holiday in the designated holidays	5 days
Close family Wedding (parents, siblings or children)	We expect you to meet with your child's phase leader immediately following your request. -Proof of reason for absence	If wedding is on a weekday in this country - 1 day  If wedding is overseas - 2 day  If wedding is overseas and over 5 hours travel by plane or boat - 3 days

Even if your circumstances fall within the above categories please be aware your request may still be refused as your child's prior attendance history will be considered before granted any request.

If your circumstance falls within these categories, please be aware the headteacher will have no authority to authorise more days than the maximum.

If your circumstances fall outside of these categories, please be aware the phase leader will have no authority to authorise the absence. It is, however, impossible to foresee all circumstances that may lead to an absence needing to be authorised. As such, any application will need to be authorised by the headteacher in conjunction with the chair of the management board following a written submission by

## APPENDIX 4

### Rewards for Good Attendance

Although we believe the main reward for good attendance is being in school and therefore being able to get the best out of your education, the following incentives are available for good attendance

- Weekly attendance prize for one pupil with 100% attendance that week.
- Class attendance trophy.
- Termly attendance assemblies with certificates.
- End of year bike raffle for pupils with at least 1 half-term of 100% attendance.