

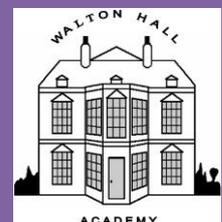
# WALTON HALL ACADEMY

# ATTENDANCE POLICY

*Developed:*

Revised: April 2018

Review Date: April 2019





## ATTENDANCE POLICY

Promoting positive behaviour and excellent attendance is the responsibility of the whole academy community.

The academy will promote positive behaviour and good attendance through its use of curriculum and learning materials. Good attendance and behaviour by students will be recognized appropriately.

All children should be at academy, on time, every day the academy is open. The academy day starts with registration at 08:55am and students will be expected to be in the classroom at that time.

08.55 – 09:00	Registration
09:00 – 09:30	Reading
09.30 – 10.20	Lesson 1
10.20 – 10.30	Break
10.30 – 11.20	Lesson 2
11.20 – 12.10	Lesson 3
12.10 – 13.10	Lunch
13.10 – 13.15	Registration
13.15 – 14.05	Lesson 4
14.05 – 14.15	Break
14.15 – 15.05	Lesson 5
15.05 – 15.15	Pastoral/Circle Time
15.15	Students dismissed from class
15.20	End of day dismissal

All children are sometimes reluctant to attend academy. Any problems that arise with attendance are best resolved between the academy, the parents and the child. If a child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to

cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and may make things worse. Permitting absence from academy without a good reason is an offence by the parent.

The Academy required to take an attendance register twice a day, and this shows whether the student is present, engaged in an approved educational activity off-site, or absent. If a student of compulsory school/academy age is absent every half-day absence from academy has to be classified by the academy, as either **AUTHORISED** or **UNAUTHORISED**. **Only the academy can authorize the absence, not parents.** This is why information about the cause of each absence is always required, preferably in writing.

The attendance and behaviour policy must include procedural referral agreements that are designed to promote and safeguard the welfare of students.

The Academy has a duty in law to refer any absence of 10 days or more where they have been unable to make contact with the parent/child or have general concerns about the absence to the Local Support Team.

**Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from academy for a good reason.**

**Unauthorised absences are those which the academy does not consider reasonable and for which no “leave” has been given. This includes:**

- **Parents keeping children off academy unnecessarily**
- **Truancy before or during the academy day**
- **Absences which have never been properly explained**
- **Children who arrive at academy too late to get a mark**
- **Holidays during term time**

Parents whose children are experiencing difficulties should contact the academy at an early stage and work together with the staff in resolving any problems. This is nearly always successful.

If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the academy or the parent may refer the child to the Local Support Team. He/she will also try to resolve the situation with voluntary support, if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed, these team can issue Penalty Notices or use court proceedings to prosecute parents or to seek an Education Supervision Order on the child.

### **Persistent absence**

Persistent absentees are defined as those pupils missing around **10%** or more of the typical amount of possible sessions across a given period.

### **Period of time used to measure persistent absence and lateness**

If a student has had 10 days unauthorised absence or is late 10 times over a twelve week period, parents may receive a penalty warning notice and also potentially a fine.

Further a penalty notice can be considered for persistent late arrival at academy i.e. after the register has closed where there are at least 10 sessions of late arrival. These lates do not have to be consecutive for a penalty notice to be issued. Parents are encouraged where possible to ensure pupils attend school on time.

The penalty notice fine would be:

- £60 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days, rising to
- £120 per parent per child if paid within 21-28 days (regardless if child is living with parent)
- If the fine is not paid within 28 days you may be prosecuted on S444.1 of the Education Act 1996.

If a prosecution takes place please be advised that the maximum fine is £1000 per parent per child. This reflects the seriousness of unauthorised absence from Academy.

### **Penalty Notice for unauthorised leave of absence (holiday) in term time.**

From 1<sup>st</sup> January 2018 **any** period of unauthorised leave may result in parents receiving a penalty notice fine. The Principal will continue to be the only person able to authorise leave in term time, but this will apply only in exceptional circumstances. Any unauthorised absence will be referred by the Principal to the Local Authority.

Alternatively, parents or children may wish to contact the Local Support Team themselves to ask for help or information. They are independent of the academy and will give impartial advice. Walton Hall Academy's allocated Education Welfare Worker from the Local Support Team is Adrian Rawsthorne, telephone number 01785 895421/07854249307.

## Procedures

The academy applies the following procedures in deciding how to deal with individual absences.

Clear instructions are laid down for the completion of attendance registers in each lesson.

- 1 Class teachers are expected to request letters from home to support periods of absence.
- 2 Absences not supported by absence notes must always be reported to the appropriate member of staff.
- 3 Parents are requested to telephone the academy on the first morning of an absence. If no telephone message is received the academy receptionist will generate a phone call or text message. Parents are asked to formally give reasons of any absence preferably in writing by letter or in planner. **The academy reserves the right to authorise any absence not parents.**
- 4 Academy will always endeavour to contact home for an explanation of absence on the first day. If after three days of absence there is still no contact, then the academy will contact other agencies such as LST or others depending on the circumstances and what is known about the student. Where it is known that a false excuse has been given by a parent for an absence, this will be challenged.
- 6 The Attendance Officer will identify trends and patterns, and will often make spot checks on particular absences. Where attendance cannot be secured in spite of any known illness the Local Support Team is expected to pursue such cases with vigour and keep the academy informed accordingly.
- 7 Good attendance is encouraged by the rewarding of Attendance Certificates and attendance events and book tokens at the end of the academic year.
- 8 If attendance drops the Behaviour Support Officer from Walton Hall may complete a home visit to discuss attendance issues.
- 9 Attending academy regularly and attending on time are considered to be equally important. Sanctions are put in place for persistent poor punctuality which may include detention at break, lunch or after academy. Very firm pressure is put on children and their parents to ensure punctuality which will include regular contact with parents, meetings with the Principal.
- 10 There are a few families who have great difficulty in organising their affairs to secure good attendance and punctuality and whose aspirations for their children are low. Great efforts are made by the senior staff to provide support and encouragement, using a mix of understanding and resolution that works in some cases but not all. Penalty notices will be issued where necessary.
- 11 Students attendance should always be at or above 95%
- 12 The academy aims to have all of its students maintaining higher than 95% attendance. When an individual student's attendance level falls below 95% the academy will monitor attendance very closely and may require parents and students to attend regular meetings to implement improvement strategies.

If attendance continues to fall the student and parent will need to attend more formal meetings with senior staff within academy.

If attendance falls at or below 90%, without good reason, a referral to the Local Support Team will be made by the Academy. Following investigation any unresolved issues could result in the parent receiving a Penalty Notice or ultimately a prosecution under the Education Act 1996 s.444.

13 It is not appropriate for the academy to authorize absences for shopping, looking after other children, haircuts etc. Leave may be granted in an emergency or for **unavoidable medical appointments** during academy time. Making medical, dental and other appointments after lunch rather than in the morning will help your child maintain good attendance. Additionally, returning to academy after a morning medical appointment will also greatly improve attendance

14 Students are NOT allowed to take holidays during academy time. Amendments to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 which came into effect on the 1 September 2013, now make it clear that head teachers will only authorise a holiday in academy time under exceptional circumstances. Parents who take their children out of academy for a holiday could result in the parent receiving a Penalty Notice or ultimately a prosecution, even if their attendance has been at or above 95%. In cases of unauthorised leave of absence both parents or carers will be fined regardless of which one applied for the leave.

15 The academy has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend. Academy staff are committed to working with parents as the best way to ensure a high a level of attendance.

16 If illness persists for 3 days or more then medical evidence / confirmation must be given to academy.

17 Code B – off-site educational activity – this code is used for pupils present on an off-site educational activity that has been approved by the academy. Academy is responsible for the safeguarding and welfare of pupils educated off-site.

18 See attached appendix re attendance codes, descriptions and meanings.

Walton Hall Academy recognises the importance of the Disability & Discrimination Act and will take every opportunity to ensure it is implemented for the benefit of all students, staff, parents and visitors.

## Sources of information

DFE School attendance policy - [Advice on school attendance.pdf](#)

SCC Code of Conduct for issuing Penalty Notices [Code-of-Conduct-September 2017.pdf](#)

[SCC Children Missing Education Policy](#) September 2017

**RATIFIED BY ACADEMY COUNCIL**



**DATE 17<sup>th</sup> June 2015**

**Updated August 2016**

**Ratified by Academy Council .....Date ...7.11.2016..**

**Updated 9<sup>th</sup> March 2017**

**Ratified by Governors..... Date .....**

**Updated 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2018**

**Ratified by Governors ..... Date .....**

