



Diocese of Salisbury
Academy Trust

ATTENDANCE MANAGEMENT POLICY

for pupils in
Diocese of Salisbury Academy Trust

This model policy will apply to both teaching and non-teaching staff

For adoption and implementation from

Approved

Amended after HR circulation

This policy is a mandatory policy
for all DSAT Academies and
must be implemented with no
amendments.

1. Introduction

Regular attendance at the Academies in the Diocese of Salisbury Academy Trust (DSAT) is crucial in raising educational standards and in ensuring that every child meets his or her full potential. There is compelling and irrefutable evidence which suggests that children with poor attendance tend to fall behind their peers and under-achieve.

In view of the above, DSAT Academies are committed to maximising attendance for all pupils. This policy gives a detailed overview of the way in which attendance will be recorded and monitored and sets out what is expected from Academy staff, parents/carers and pupils.

2. Key Principles

The Academies will approach attendance issues taking into account the following key principles:

- i. Ensuring good attendance at all Academies is the responsibility of everyone in the Academy community including: parents and carers; school staff; Local Advisor Board (LAB) members and pupils.
- ii. The default position is that every pupil should be at school whenever the Academies are open. Any instance of a pupil missing any Academy time should be regarded as wholly exceptional.
- iii. The academies will keep an accurate register of attendance and will monitor attendance figures.
- iv. Staff and pupils alike will be made aware of the registration process. The staff will receive training on registration and their underlying legal duties
- v. Non-attendance will be identified. Efforts will be made to identify the reasons for it and to return the pupil in question to the Academy as speedily as possible;
- vi. The Academies will recognise that there may be many different reasons why a pupil may be absent from the Academy. It will always approach issues of attendance sensitively, particularly in regard to its legal duties under the Equality Act 2010. The Academies will at all times do their utmost to ensure that all pupils feel appropriately supported and valued.
- vii. The Academies will put in place procedures for returning absentees to catch up on missed learning without disrupting the learning of other pupils.
- viii. Good and/or improved attendance will be recognised and rewarded.
- ix. Attendance procedures will be regularly evaluated and reviewed at local Academy level by the LABs and at Academy Trust level. Consultation will take place with communities of each Academy in developing the whole Academy attendance policy.
- x. Parents/carers will be made aware of and expected to comply with their legal duties.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

As stated above, ensuring good attendance at the individual Academy is the responsibility of everyone in that Academy community including: pupils; parents and carers; Academy staff and governors.

Academy and its staff will be expected to:

- Reduce absence including persistent absence;
- Ensure every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled;
- Register and monitor attendance in accordance with procedures set out below;
- Act early to address patterns of absence;
- Encourage good attendance and punctuality through personal example;
- Convey high expectations to pupils regarding attendance and punctuality;
- Promptly investigate all absenteeism, liaising closely with parents/carers;
- Respond to all absenteeism firmly and consistently;
- Offer prompt support to pupils who experience difficulties.

Parents/Carers will be expected to:

- Comply with their legal duty to ensure that a child registered at the academy attends regularly;
- Ensure that children attend punctually, properly dressed and in a fit condition to learn;
- Ensure that children are only absent in cases of genuine illness or other emergency;
- In the event that a child is prevented from attending, notify the academy as soon as possible;
- Follow the leave of absence procedure set out below.

Pupils will be expected to:

- Attend the academy and lessons regularly and punctually;
- Take the information home to their parents/carers about their attendance.

LAB members will be expected to:

- Monitor attendance figures;
- Review the academy's policy and performance as far as attendance goes.

4. Registration and Absence

4.1 By law, schools and Academies are required to record in the attendance register - once at the beginning of the morning session and once in the afternoon – whether any pupil is present, absent, engaged in an approved, supervised educational activity off-site, or unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances. (NAME) Academy will comply with this by adopting the procedure set out below.

- Registers will be called promptly at ****am and at ****pm.
- The morning register will close at ****am.
- If a pupil arrives late, and the register is still open, they will be marked late but present.
- If a pupil arrives before ****am with evidence of a medical/dental appointment or the Academy has received prior parental notification they will be marked 'L' (late).
- If a pupil arrives after ****am, with evidence of a medical/dental appointment they will be marked 'M' (medical).
- If a pupil arrives after ****am with no acceptable reason and/or no communication from parents/carers, they will be marked as a 'U' (late and arrived after the register closed).
- All pupils who arrive late after ****am must sign the Academy late book .(Pupil or parent/carer)
- The afternoon register closes at ****pm.
- If staff do not know why a pupil is absent, the absence should be recorded as 'N' (no reason provided for absence yet). On the first day, Academy absence procedure will be followed and the registration mark amended as appropriate.
- All staff must record absence, using the agreed symbols. Consistent criteria should be applied.

5. Monitoring Absence

- Records of attendance will be reviewed by the Principal/Headteacher on a regular basis.
- Weekly meetings will take place between the Principal/Headteacher and pupil class teachers where individual pupils with high absence
- The Academy implements a “Traffic Lights Approach to Attendance” under which attendance is considered over a fixed period, 4-6 weeks and at the end of the period the pupil is classified under three bands, Green, Amber and Red.
- Those pupils with 100% attendance will be rewarded. (See below)
- Over 95% equates to green.

- Between 94% and 90% equates to amber and a letter will be sent to the parents/carers giving the exact attendance figure and the pupil's attendance will continue to be monitored.
- Under 90% results in a red letter being sent to the parents/carers inviting them to an Academy based meeting with the **Principal/Headteacher** to discuss how working together could improve the pupil's attendance. **(NAME)** Academy recognises that during this monitoring period, the absence may not be typical for the pupil and this will be taken into account. However, if there is no improvement in attendance a further meeting will be called. During this meeting it will be made clear that the Academy will proceed by involving the EWO service and ultimately legal action if no sustained improvement occurs.

6. Responding to Absence

Involvement of Parents/Carers

- 6.1 If no contact is received from the parent/carer of the pupil on the morning of the first absence, the Academy will contact the parent/carer by text and telephone on the morning of each absence, or if the parent/carer is unavailable, write a letter requesting information. If this action does not result in an explanation or the return of the pupil to the academy, a further letter will be sent.
- 6.2 Continued absence will result in an Academy Attendance Meeting being arranged. This will involve the **Principal/Headteacher** and/or***** (Family Liaison Officer/PSA) contacting the parent or carer to discuss the matter. If the attendance does not improve, the **Principal/Headteacher** will invite the parents/carers to a meeting. The parents/carers will be made aware of the legal requirements regarding Academy attendance.
- 6.3 Pupil's whose attendance is below 85% are closely monitored by the Academy's leadership, including LAB members. Regular meetings with the pupil and/or parent/carer will be held.
- 6.4 If the pupil's difficulties are not resolved and the attendance does not improve, a formal Common Assessment Framework referral will be made to the Education Welfare Service. In consultation with the Education Welfare Service and the Executive Principal a recommendation for issuing a fixed penalty fine will be considered.

Safeguarding

- 6.5 It is recognised that frequent absence from and lateness to the Academy could be an indication of abuse or/and an impact of abuse. Attendance reviews therefore consider all aspects of safeguarding as outlined in the Safeguarding Policy. Where concerns have been raised about a pupil, additional attendance monitoring/reviews will be carried out.

Reintegration

- 6.7 In the event of a pupil returning after a long term absence, an individual re-integration programme will be implemented by the **Principal/Headteacher** and monitored by the class teacher.

Rewards

- 6.8 Every week, there is a reward for the class from each Key Stage with the best attendance: a certificate and ownership of 'Attendance DSAT Ted' for the week. Each term there is a reward for the class in each Key Stage with the best attendance of a certificate and prize for the class to share. Pupils are rewarded for 100% attendance over a monitored period receiving a certificate and entry into a raffle for a major prize.

7. Other Procedures

Notifying the Academy of Absence

- 7.1 Parents and carers should ring the Academy on **each and every day** of their child's absence by 9.00am giving reasons for the absence. An absence of more than 5 days may require the parent/carers to provide further medical evidence in the form of an appointment card, a copy of prescription medication or a letter from the GP.
- 7.2 Failure to notify the Academy of an absence will result in the absence counting as 'unauthorised'. Parents/carers are informed that it is an offence if they fail to ensure their child attends the Academy regularly, even if they are absent without the parent/carer's knowledge. Parents/carers should avoid, wherever possible, making medical/dental appointments during academy hours. We are unable to sanction absences for reasons such as shopping, waiting in for a delivery, birthdays or holidays.
- 7.3 Staff are available to give advice from ****am every Academy day should parents/carers be uncertain whether their child should be at the Academy or not.

Requesting Leave of Absence

- 7.4 The Leave of Absence request form can be found on the Academy website. We are not permitted to allow permission for holidays in term time on top of the 13 weeks holiday a year that students already have.
- 7.5 A leave of absence request will only be authorised if it is for **exceptional** circumstances (not a holiday) and the student has a 95% attendance or above.
- 7.6 If a leave of absence request is refused permission by the Academy, parents/carers will be issued a Penalty Notice if they still take their child on holiday. Penalty Notices are a fine of £50 per parent/carer per child, which rises to £100 if not paid in 4 weeks. If the £100 is not paid after a further 2 weeks, the parents/carers could be taken to court and receive a much larger fine.

Deletion from Academy Roll

- 7.7 If the Academy receives notice from parents/carers that a pupil is moving to another school/Academy, we will notify the Local Authority (LA) as soon as we become aware.

- 7.8 If the Academy receives verbal notification that parents/carers are withdrawing their children from the Academy to home educate them, the Academy will not wait for the written confirmation before informing the LA via the Education Welfare Officer (EWO). (NAME) Academy will only delete the child from roll once they have received written confirmation from the parents/carers, and been contacted by the intake school and/or notification has had time to be received by the LA. The Academy will not wait until the LA acknowledges the notice nor seek the LA's approval of the deletion.

Children Missing From Education

- 7.9 A child missing from education is a child of compulsory school age who is not on an Academy/school roll, nor being educated elsewhere. If a pupil does not attend the Academy for 10 Academy days and there has been no response from the parent or carer to our request for information on the whereabouts of the pupil, the Academy will complete a Missing from Education form and send it to the Education Welfare Service.

8. Review

As noted above, this policy and the practices contained in it will be subject to constant review by both the LAB and the Multi-Academy Trust Board. Part of the evaluation process will be to consider what interventions have been successful. For instance:

- Has the attendance and punctuality of individual pupils and/or attendance as a whole improved?
- How successful has pupil reintegration plans been?
- Has the academy been successful in raising the profile of attendance both within the academy and the local community?
- How well informed are new pupils and their families about the importance of attendance and the policies and procedures operating within the academy?
- Have attendance issues been included as topics in assemblies or worship, lessons or as a theme for any other curricular lessons?
- Have appropriate and timely referrals been made to the Education Welfare Service and advice sought as necessary?

This policy and practice will be updated on a regular basis in the light of the review findings and changes from the government.