

AC01

The Academy Grimsby Student Attendance Policy



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Change Control

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1. Introduction

The Education Act 1996 requires parents/carers to ensure their children receive full time education by regular attendance at a school or by other arrangements. Parents/carers have the responsibility for making sure their children attend The Academy Grimsby (the Academy) regularly and on time.

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#) and [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set out the legal powers and duties that govern school 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 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 and 2024 amendments\)](#)
- [The School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013 and the 2024 amendment](#)

It also refers to:

- [School census guidance](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

2. Aim:

This policy is designed to provide a framework to:

- Support student retention and achievement by raising standards of attendance and punctuality.
- Safeguard students by monitoring attendance and patterns of absence.
- Ensure a consistency of approach to attendance and punctuality across the TEC Partnership

This policy aims to assist all students to take responsibility for their full and prompt attendance which will:

- enhance their learning experience,
- develop their personal skills; and
- promote positive retention, achievement and progression.

3. Principles on which the policy is based:

There are four principles underpinning The Academy Grimsby's (the Academy) approach to student attendance:

- Student attendance should be effectively managed across the Partnership;
- Targets for student attendance should be set and monitored centrally; the target for attendance is 100%. Punctuality and full attendance should be one key benchmark by which the quality of provision is judged;
- Every effort should be made to maximise punctuality and attendance and remove the barriers that prevent it. Actions to support improvement will recognise and reward those students with excellent attendance and take appropriate action against those whose attendance or punctuality is poor.
- If any student's attendance falls below 90% (89% and below is considered persistent absent) this may affect progression into TEC Partnership's Further Education offer.

3. Managing Attendance

The Academy will base its management of attendance on the Department for Education's attendance framework of Expect, Monitor, Listen and Understand, Facilitate Support and Formalise Support"

This policy applies to all students at the Academy. The Academy's attendance policy is managed by the Academy Principal.

Students are entitled to the best opportunities to be successful in their studies and full attendance is known to be a key factor in success. If a student's attendance and punctuality give the Academy cause for concern, discussions will take place between the student and the Personal Tutor to identify any difficulties and provide any appropriate support to improve. The Academy will seek to ensure high attendance by understanding barriers, providing early intervention, implementing individual attendance plans and obtaining multi-agency support where necessary.

Parents/Carers will also be encouraged to attend meetings regarding attendance to ensure a consistent and cohesive approach. The Academy operates a support-first approach to attendance. We will work with families to understand barriers and provide targeted support before considering legal intervention wherever appropriate.

The Academy Principal will provide parents/carers of new students with information about the legal requirements relating to the education of their children and guidelines on how they can support their children in the Academy.

5. Expectations

The Academy is responsible for recording student attendance up to 6 times a day; once at the start of the morning during registration session and up to 5 periods thereafter. An entry must be made in the attendance register for all students. For the first register mark in the morning and afternoon, the list of all register entries is included in appendix 2.

The Academy endeavours to provide an environment where all students feel valued and welcome. For a student to reach their full educational achievement a high level of attendance is paramount. The Academy will consistently work towards a goal of 100%

attendance for all students. Any absence below 100% can be detrimental to learning which increases with the number of days lost.

Each year the Academy will examine its attendance figures and set attendance and absence targets. These will take account both national attendance targets. The Academy will review its systems for improving attendance at regular intervals to ensure that it is achieving its set goals and reflects the most current guidance and legislation.

Senior Management Team Expectations:

- 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
- supporting the staff team with delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

Tutor/ Mentor Expectations:

- Tutors are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the Academy office promptly at the start of each lesson
- The tutor/mentor will inform parents/carers when a concern has arisen about attendance. Reports of any contact between the tutor/mentor and parents/carers will be given to the Academy Principal.
- The tutor/mentor will make parents/carers aware when awards are given for good and improved attendance.
- The tutor/mentor will contact the families of students whose attendance has been a cause for concern when they are making improvement.
- Tutors will make reference to attendance in any reports or records that are sent home and parent/carer evenings.

Parents/ Carers Expectations:

- Encourage full attendance every day on time.
- Inform the Academy via telephone or email to academyabsence@grimsby.ac.uk on each day of every absence before 8:45 and the reason for absence
- Discuss planned absences with the Academy in advance (e.g. family holidays, special occasions) taking on board the Academy ethics around not authorising holidays during term time.
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for the child are made outside of the Academy day.
- Never take holidays in term time

Student Expectations:

- Attend the Academy regularly and on time.
- Inform their personal tutor if there is a problem that may lead to absences in order for support to be discussed and organised.

6. Procedures

The attendance register is taken at the at the start of the tutor period and every lesson of the day. During the Academy day there are up to 6 individual periods when students are registered and each of these accounts for 1/6th of their daily attendance. The register will mark whether every pupil is:

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

Any student who is absent from the Academy must have their absence recorded accurately once the reason for this absence has been obtained from parents/ carers. Until then, a register mark of N is used. Only a member of SMT can authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence will remain recorded as unauthorised. (See Appendix 1 for definitions)

In the case of a long-term absence, which may be due to illness, family bereavement, breakdown in the family unit etc, will be supported by the Academy. In such instances work will be provided for the duration and an integration programme where required.

Morning registration will take place at the start of the day at 8.45am. The registers will remain open until 9.00am and students arriving before this time will be marked with an L.

After this time, when registration has closed, students arriving late will be marked with an U. Any student arriving after this time will be marked as having an unauthorised absence unless there is an acceptable explanation. In cases, for example, where the absence at registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate absence code will be entered (if medical evidence can be provided). See Appendix 2 for Definitions of Absence and Attendance Codes.

In the event of a learner being absent from the Academy and no reason being given, either via the phoneline or email, or where any student expected to attend does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the Academy will:

- Send a text message to the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the text is not answered, we will follow up with a phone call to give parents a further opportunity to respond. A student who has been put on an attendance plan or monitor list will be telephoned before 11am.
- 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.
- 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 further support as well as undertaking home visits.
- All texts/ calls and other actions are recorded promptly in ProMonitor.

If notification is then received, via the phone line or Academy email, ProMonitor is then updated with the communication and reason given.

If the student is on the Safeguarding list and/or supported by the SEND team, a home visit takes place to ascertain the reason for absence and carry out a welfare check on the student and family. If no contact remains, or the absence continues, the Academy may take the decision to contact the local authority, or call the police.

For students not on Safeguarding lists or supported by the SEND team, after 3 days of unexplained absence a home visit is undertaken and an offer is made to parents/carers inviting them in to discuss issues surrounding attendance and to offer support if needed. A student on attendance plan or monitoring list they will receive a visit on day 2 of absence.

It is important that on return from an absence that all learners are made to feel welcome. This should include ensuring that the student is helped to catch up on missed work and brought up to date on any information that has been passed on to the other students.

Notes received from parents explaining absence should be recorded and kept on file for the remainder of the academic year. If there are attendance concerns about the learner, that may require further investigation, then the notes may need to be retained for a longer period.

The Academy will use opportunities as they arise to remind parents and carers that it is their responsibility to ensure that their children receive their education.

Persistent and Severe Absence

The Academy recognises that pupils who are persistently or severely absent are at greater risk of poor educational outcomes, reduced wellbeing and safeguarding concerns. The Academy will identify attendance concerns at the earliest opportunity and work in partnership with pupils, families and external agencies to remove barriers to attendance.

Persistent Absence

A pupil is classified as persistently absent where their attendance falls below 90%. The Academy will monitor attendance data regularly to identify pupils at risk of persistent absence and provide timely support. This may include:

- Early conversations with parents/carers and pupils.
- Attendance review meetings.
- Individual attendance targets.
- Pastoral, safeguarding or SEND support.
- Referrals to external agencies where appropriate.
- Development of an Attendance Support Plan.

Severe Absence

A pupil is classified as severely absent where their attendance falls below 50%. Pupils with severe absence will receive intensive support and intervention. The Academy will work

closely with parents/carers, the local authority and other relevant professionals to understand and address barriers to attendance. Interventions may include:

Multi-agency meetings.

Enhanced safeguarding oversight.

Individualised reintegration plans.

Consideration of reasonable adjustments for pupils with SEND or medical needs.

Support to address emotional, mental health or wellbeing needs affecting attendance.

Monitoring and Review

Attendance data will be reviewed regularly by Academy leaders to identify trends and patterns of absence, particularly amongst vulnerable groups, including pupils with SEND, disadvantaged pupils, children with a social worker, looked after children and previously looked after children. The impact of interventions will be monitored and adapted where necessary.

There will be weekly meetings with the SLT, Pastoral and safeguarding team focusing on attendance.

This will focus on the following key areas:

- weekly monitoring
- half-termly reviews
- cohort analysis
 - disadvantaged pupils
 - SEND
 - persistent absence
 - severe absence
 - punctuality patterns
- intervention triggers

7. Rewards and special initiatives

The Academy has a rewards system in place for good attendance. At the end of every term an attendance summary is sent home. Students who have achieved 100% attendance will receive a certificate to place in their Progress File.

Students who achieve 100% attendance for the whole year will receive a voucher as well as a certificate.

Additional rewards will be introduced to include rewarding improvement in attendance and low stakes recognition of attendance on a regular basis.

8. Related policies

Safeguarding Policy

The Home/Academy Agreement

Behaviour Policy

9. Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

The Academy Principal takes the lead on the implementation of the policy. This individual will monitor the effectiveness of this policy and procedures and where necessary, make recommendations to the Group Senior Management Team for improvement.

The Curriculum and Quality Oversight Committee will receive regular attendance reports and will monitor attendance levels, persistent absence, severe absence and attendance amongst vulnerable pupil groups. Curriculum and Quality Oversight Committee will challenge and support leaders in improving attendance outcomes across the Academy.

10. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Definitions

Appendix 2 – Attendance Codes

Appendix 3 – Fixed Penalty Notices

Appendix 1 - Definitions

Parent/carer:

Section 576 of the Education Act 1996 defines 'parent' to include:

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not
- Any person who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person
- Any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person

Each 'parent' has the responsibility of ensuring the child or young person's school attendance.

You are a carer if a child or young person lives with you and you are:
a stepparent; a partner living in the home; a grandparent; an auntie; an adult sister; a friend.
a boyfriend.

Authorised absence:

An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the Academy has received notification from a parent/carer. Only school can make an absence authorised. Parent/carers do not have this authority.

Unauthorised absence:

Learners where no reason has been provided, or whose absence is deemed to be without valid reason.

Approved Educational Activity:

This covers types of supervised educational activity undertaken off site but with the approval of the Academy

Exceptional Circumstances include:

- Service Personnel parents restricted due to work
- Acute Crisis
- Court Order or separation agreement.

Evidence of the above will be required for the Academy Principal to authorise.

Appendix 2 - Attendance Codes

DfE School Attendance Register Codes (England – from August 2024)

Code	Description
Present & Attending	
/	Present at the Academy (AM)
\	Present at the Academy (PM)
L	Late before register closes
Approved Educational Activity (Counts as Present)	
B	Off-site educational activity
K	Education arranged by local authority
P	Sporting activity
V	Educational visit/trip
W	Work experience
Authorised Absence	
C	Leave of absence (exceptional circumstances)
C1	Performance/employment abroad
C2	Part-time timetable
E	Excluded (no alternative provision)
I	Illness
J1	Interview
M	Medical/dental appointment
R	Religious observance
S	Study leave
T	Traveller absence
Unauthorised Absence	
G	Holiday not approved
N	Reason not provided
O	Other unauthorised absence
U	Late after register closes
Not Counted in Attendance	
D	Dual registration
Q	Transport/access issues
X	Non-compulsory school age
Y1	Transport unavailable
Y2	Travel disruption
Y3	Partial Academy closure
Y4	Whole Academy closure
Y5	Criminal justice detention
Y6	Public health restriction
Y7	Other unavoidable cause
Z	Not yet on roll
#	Planned Academy closure

The Academy will make every endeavour to establish the reason for a student's absence. Until a reason is obtained, the absence will be coded using code N.

The Academy has an internal system in place to follow up any absences each day and establish the reason for them in liaison with parents and carers.

Repeated Unauthorised Absences

The Academy will monitor and contact the parent/carers of any student who has an unauthorised absence. If a student has a repeated number of unauthorised absences, the parent/carer will be asked to visit the Academy and discuss the problem. Academy staff and support teams will undertake a monitoring process, in order to improve the student's attendance and ensure that parents/carers understand the seriousness of the situation.

The Senior Management Team, supported by the Education Social Worker, reserve the right to consider taking legal action against any parents/carers who repeatedly fail to accept their responsibility for sending their children to school on a regular basis.

Appendix 3 –Fixed Penalty Notices

From August 2024, under the new national framework, all schools are required to consider a fine when a child of compulsory school age has missed 10 or more sessions (5 days) for unauthorised reasons, in a rolling period of 10 school weeks. The period of 10 weeks can span different terms or school years. The threshold can be met with any combination of unauthorised absence.

The local authority retains the discretion to issue a fine before the threshold is met. If issued with a fine or penalty notice, each parent is fined £80, which rises to £160 each if not paid within 21 days. In the case of repeated fines, if a parent receives a second fine for the same child within any three-year period, this will be charged at the higher rate of £160. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Fines per parent will be capped to two fines within any three-year period. Once this limit has been reached, other action like a parenting order or prosecution will be considered. If a parent is prosecuted and attends court because their child hasn't been attending the Academy, they can be fined up to £2,500.

Penalty notices can be issued by the Principal, local authority officer or the police. 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 School 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.

A penalty notice may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during academy hours without reasonable justification, during the first 5 days of a suspension or exclusion (where the academy has notified the parents that the pupil must not be present in a public place on that day). These penalty notices are not included in the National Framework, not subject to the same considerations about support being provided, and do not count towards the limit as part of the escalation process.

In these cases, the parent must pay £80 within 21 days, or £160.

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