



SCHOOLS COMPANY

Attendance Policy

Principles

The purpose of the SchoolsCompany Devon Academies Attendance Policy is to promote and maximise attendance. We aim to create personal programmes that young people want to attend and that meet the needs of each individual learner. Our intention is to create a sense of belonging and we see it as crucial that each young person sees themselves as part of a learning community and that they want to succeed.

Because every individual student matters we create personalised programmes to meet their educational, social and emotional needs. Clearly, if a young person does not attend sessions we are not meeting their needs or something is preventing them from accessing the provision available to them. We use a Personalised Learning Plan (PLP) that is person centred and starts with what the needs of the young person. If attendance becomes an issue we need to ensure that the PLP is still appropriate, recognising that situations and people change.

There is a clear link between attendance and a young person's ability to achieve their potential in education. We also recognise that a number of our students are vulnerable and that attendance at the SchoolsCompany Devon Academies enable them to be safe and raises aspirations.

It is the policy of SchoolsCompany Devon Academies to celebrate achievement. We actively promote and encourage 100% attendance for all our students. We celebrate good attendance and termly certificates are awarded to all students whose attendance is 95% or above, in addition to personalized rewards for improved or high attendance for individual students.

Poor attendance is robustly challenged: SchoolsCompany Devon Academies give high priority to conveying to parents / carers and students the importance of regular and punctual attendance through telephone contact, personalised letters, home visits and target setting. We recognise that parents/ carers have a vital role to play and that there is a need to establish strong home-school links and communication systems to celebrate attendance and highlight concerns.

Objectives

The objectives of our attendance policy are to:

- Raise achievement by encouraging high levels of attendance and punctuality
- Safeguard young people at all times and ensure that we fulfil our duty of care
- For the majority of students to achieve a minimum of 94% attendance or an incremental improvement in attendance from baseline
- Raise awareness amongst all stakeholders of the importance of good attendance and punctuality in order that young people can meet their potential
- Promote a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which pupils feel safe, secure, and valued, and encourage in pupils a sense of responsibility for their attendance and punctuality.
- Ensure that parents and carers have an understanding of their moral and legal responsibility to ensure that their child attends regularly and punctually
- Make sure that attendance is monitored effectively and that there is a consistent approach to encouraging good attendance and dealing with issues
- Identify appropriate support for young people who are not attending due to personal difficulties;

Statutory Duty of Schools

The Education Act 1996 requires parents and carers to ensure their children receive efficient, full-time education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. Schools are responsible for recording student attendance twice a day; once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session. An entry must be made in the attendance register for all students of compulsory school age who are on the school's admission roll.

We will ensure that all staff are aware of the requirements of the registration process and that they receive training on registration regulations and the law relating to attendance.

School must have two registers:

- Admission register - which is the school roll
- Attendance register - which is called twice a day.

When a student is absent the attendance register must show whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised. Only the school, not the parent/carers, can authorise the absence and the school may require medical evidence to support authorisation.

SchoolsCompany Devon Academies may instigate legal proceedings in cases where absences are unauthorised.

Students must attend unless they are too ill to do so or their absence meets the school's discretionary reasons such as compassionate leave of absence, religious observance or where special educational requirements have been made. Parents/carers should not expect to take annual holiday in term time.

When a young person is dual registered with a school and their attendance is unsatisfactory their original school is notified and support from SchoolsCompany Devon Academies could be withdrawn.

Student Responsibilities

- To attend school regularly.
- To be punctual and appropriately prepared for the school day.
- To inform their mentor or member of staff of any problems or events that may prevent them from attending school.
- To catch up with work missed following an absence.

Parent / Carer Responsibilities

- To ensure their child attends school and values their own learning and the learning of others.
- To contact the school as early as possible on the first day of absence whenever a student is unable to attend school.
- To ensure the school is notified of the reasons for any absence this by phone in the first instance
- To ensure their child arrives at school on time and well prepared for their learning
- To contact the appropriate member of staff to discuss in confidence any problem that may prevent their child from attending school.

Academy Responsibilities

- We ensure efficient and accurate recording of attendance information.
- We support parents/carers and young persons to understand their responsibilities to ensure full attendance at school, as required by law.
- We monitor all attendance daily on SIMS. Outreach staff maintain a paper register that is transferred to SIMS weekly and notify the attendance administrator daily of absences. Students arriving at one of our centres after 09.00 are recorded as late unless there is a genuine reason. Phone calls home are made by 09.45 for all young people who have not arrived.
- The attendance administrator notifies the Social Worker of any young person who has a Child Protection Plan if they are absent.
- When a young person's attendance falls below 85% or they have 2 or more unauthorised absences a personalised letter is sent to parents. If a young person's attendance fails to improve an attendance meeting with a member of the leadership team is called and targets set. If attendance continues to cause a referral to the Education Welfare Service is made and a formal meeting held.

- We work with external providers to ensure they are following our attendance policy. All providers will promote positive attendance and work collaboratively with us to ensure good attendance.
- We work in partnerships with other agencies to overcome attendance problems. These agencies may include: Educational Psychology Service, Integrated Children's services, Social Care, Youth Services, Medical services, Youth Offending Team and the 0-25 Special Educational Needs Team.

Staff Responsibilities

- **The Principal** is responsible for overseeing the Attendance Policy and reporting to the governing body and Schools Company Trust
- **The Student Support Managers and a member of the SLT** are responsible for ensuring the attendance policy is implemented across the service and reporting to the principal on progress and challenges. They are also responsible for ensuring the monitoring of all attendance and the review of attendance with the EWO. Student Support managers also investigate and address the cause of unauthorized absence.
- **Administrators** on each site takes responsibility for calling home when young people do not arrive at school by 09.45 at the latest
- **Outreach staff** will maintain a lesson register and email it weekly to the Attendance Administrator. They will notify the Attendance Administrator daily of any absence and determine the reason for absence
- **Every Member of Staff** will promote the importance of full attendance, model outstanding attendance and review PLPs for young people whose attendance is causing concern.

Procedures

- Registration opens at 09.00 and closes at 09.45 and opens again at 12.30 and closes at 13.15. Students arriving after 09.00 and 12.30 will be marked as late but if a student is more than 45 minutes late to registration the late will be recorded as an absence.
- All students needing to leave the academy during the school day will require a letter from a parent / carer and must sign out before leaving the building.
- Any student leaving the academy during the school day without permission will be recorded as an unauthorised absence; parents/carers will be notified immediately. When a parent/carers cannot be contacted, the police will be informed.
- Where there is a concern about medical authorisation of absence a doctor's note may be required.

See Appendix A for attendance procedures

Appendix B for attendance information for parents

Appendix C for Green, Amber and Red Attendance letters

Holidays

- The Academy holidays dates are published in advance and it is in student's best interests that parents / carers book their holidays during the school holidays.
- In exceptional circumstances, a request must be made in writing to the Principal using form S2 that is available on request.
- In exceptional circumstances, the Principal has the discretion to grant holiday absence and may consider authorising a holiday request provided that there is a valid reason for taking holiday during term time and a student's attendance rate is above 95% and that no important period of examination or assessment is missed.

Fast Track Prosecution

- Where there is serious and persistent non-attendance (with a threshold of 85% attendance and 10 unauthorised absences) the school may work with the Education Welfare service to instigate 'Fast Track Procedures Fast Track meetings with parents will be lead by the Educational Welfare Officer with a school representative and parents in attendance.'

Evaluating and Reflecting on Policy

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored in the following ways:

- An Action Plan is created following the annual attendance audit and reviewed every term by the Principal and Executive Principal
- The attendance policy is reviewed annually with governors
- Attendance is on the agenda of every Extended Leadership meeting and every half termly student focus meeting.
- Each young person whose attendance is below 85% is monitored weekly and discussed at the weekly academy
- The Education Welfare Officer and a member of the SLT will meet at least monthly to discuss strategies to improve the attendance of individual young people.

This policy was adopted by the SchoolsCompany Trust in December 2015

This policy was reviewed in October 2016

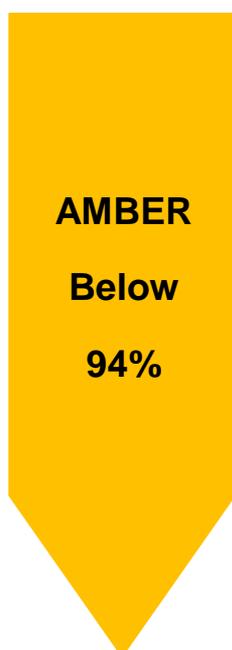
This policy will be reviewed in October 2017

Encouraging Good Attendance at the SchoolsCompany Devon Academies



**EXCELLENT
ATTENDANCE**

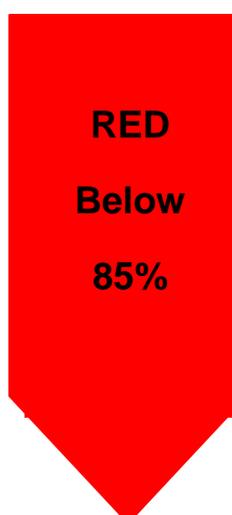
WELL DONE



**ATTENDANCE
CONCERNS**

SCHOOL MAY START
UNAUTHORISING ABSENCES
WITHOUT SATISFACTORY
EVIDENCE OF ABSENCES BEING
UNAVOIDABLE.

IF ABSENCES ARE BEING
UNAUTHORISED THEN URGENT
IMPROVEMENT IS REQUIRED.



POOR ATTENDANCE

SCHOOL WILL ESCALATE TO
DEPUTY HEAD TEACHER WHO
WILL DISCUSS WITH
CHILD/PARENTS/CARERS TO
AGREE IMMEDIATE
IMPROVEMENT.

IF NO IMPROVEMENT

Encouraging Good Attendance at the SchoolsCompany Devon Academies

Academy Intervention

Following initial attendance concerns (unauthorised absences or less than 85% attendance).

- **GREEN LETTER** issued.
- Mentor to talk to student and parent and complete **GREEN ATTENDANCE CONTACT LOG**.
- Log forwarded to Attendance Administrator.

If school believes absences are avoidable

MEDICAL LETTER sent requiring medical evidence.



EWS Intervention

Following initial attendance concerns

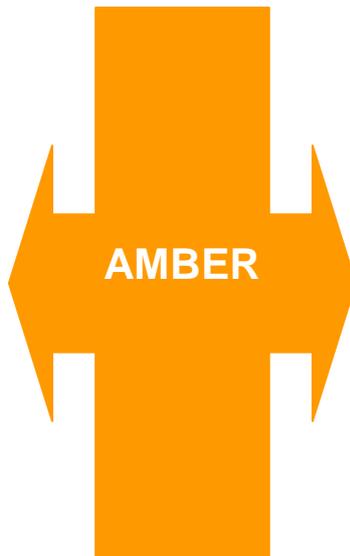
- Discuss at Referral Panel and advise EWO of concerns and possible future referral.

Green Letter, Medical Letter and Green Contact Log (detailing conversation with student and parent) to be filed. Following completion of the above, with a minimum of 10 unauthorised absences and no significant improvement to attendance (without good reason) consider escalate to Amber.

- **AMBER LETTER** issued.
- Meeting with parents & student arranged with Student Support Manager.
- **ATTENDANCE ACTION PLAN** completed at meeting and filed,
- Student Support Manager / Mentor to monitor and support. Absences routinely challenged and investigated.

If no improvement, refer to SLT

- SLT to talk to student and parent and complete **AMBER ATTENDANCE CONTACT LOG**.

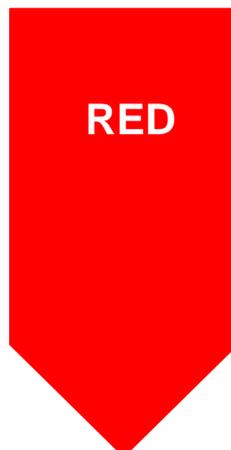


- EWS Letter 1

Amber Letter, meeting with parents & student and Action Plan completed and filed (as evidence). If no significant improvement - SLT to consider escalation to Red.

No Improvement and significant attendance concerns

- **RED LETTER** sent
- Mentor to monitor and support. Absences routinely challenged and investigated.



No Improvement and significant attendance concerns

Discussed at Panel and consider either;

- General Attendance Meeting
- Legal Meeting

Possible Legal Escalations



SCHOOLS COMPANY

Date

Dear Parent/Carer

Persistent Absence - Green Letter

NAME OF YOUNG PERSON:

DATE OF BIRTH:

ATTENDANCE PERCENTAGE:

I am writing to express concern over your child's level of attendance. Our records show that your child's attendance falls below the acceptable level allowed for our service. This has been drawn to the attention of our Education Welfare Officer.

You will be aware that regular and punctual attendance at school is vital so that students are able to take full advantage of the opportunities available to them. Additionally, it is a parent's responsibility to ensure that their child attends school regularly and punctually.

I have attached a copy of your child's attendance record for your information. It may be helpful to look at the pattern of absence and the reasons for it and discuss it with your child.

We want to work with you to try and resolve the matter, as working together is often the most effective way of making progress in improving both your child's attendance and increasing their learning. If you wish to discuss any aspect of the record or any concerns, please contact our attendance administrator who answer your query or will arrange for the student support manager to speak to you.

We will review your child's attendance record in two weeks' time and hope to see an improvement. If no or little improvement has been made we will contact you to arrange for you to come into discuss the matter.

Yours sincerely



SCHOOLS COMPANY

DATE

Dear Parent/Carer

Persistent Absence - Amber Letter

NAME OF YOUNG PERSON:
DATE OF BIRTH
ATTENDANCE PERCENTAGE:

Following our previous letter advising you of your child's low level of attendance, our records show that your child's attendance still falls below the acceptable level allowed for our service. Due to our continuing concerns over low attendance, we now ask that you meet with and the education welfare officer on *****to discuss and resolve this issue as a matter of urgency.

I must make you aware, at this stage, that if your child's attendance does not improve with immediate effect, the Education Welfare service will investigate cases, where attendance is below an acceptable level. There may be a possibility of legal escalation under the 1996 Education Act which could be considered. Alternatively, if it is felt appropriate, then other opportunities for support could be explored during the meeting as an alternative to legal proceedings. The purpose of this meeting is to assist you in addressing any issues, so that this can be avoided.

However, if there are genuine and justifiable reasons for your child's absence levels, then you should contact the school immediately to discuss how your child's attendance and education can be best supported.

I have attached a copy of your child's attendance record so that you can see the seriousness of the situation and carefully consider the reasons for it.

Please contact ++++++, Attendance Administrator on ++++++ to confirm your attendance at this meeting.

Yours sincerely



SCHOOLS COMPANY

DATE

Dear

Persistent Absence - Red Letter

NAME OF YOUNG PERSON:

DATE OF BIRTH:

ATTENDANCE PERCENTAGE:

As a result of continuing low attendance, your child is now considered to fall into the category of a Persistent Absentee as designated by the criteria laid down by the Department for Children, Schools and Families.

Our Education Welfare Officer is monitoring attendance and will be looking for immediate and significant improvement. To assist you in achieving this, we would like to meet with you on ++++++++to agree a plan of action which will meet this aim.and the Education Welfare Officer will also be present at this meeting.

I have attached a copy of your child's attendance record so that you can see the seriousness of the situation and carefully consider the reasons for it.

Please confirm your attendance at this meeting by contacting ++++++++ (Attendance Administrator) on ++++++++ on receipt of this letter.

Yours sincerely