



Dixons City Academy

Policy Documentation

Policy: Attendance - Students

Responsibility for Review: Assistant Principal – Ethos and Aspiration
Date of Last Review: March 2017



Attendance - Students

Statement of Policy:

The Academy is committed to ensuring that students and parents/carers understand the absolute importance of full attendance at the Academy.

The aims are:

- To create an environment in which students are enabled to become mature and industrious, accepting responsibility for their own actions and preparing for future success.
- To form an active partnership with parents/carers to support the learning of their children.
- To ensure regular contact with students in order to safeguard their well-being.
- To provide every opportunity for our students to secure outstanding outcomes and reach their full potential.

Outstanding attendance is everyone's responsibility

The Academy will:

- Reward good attendance and punctuality.
- Intervene when poor attendance/punctuality becomes a problem and before it becomes a habit.
- Deal sympathetically with any problem a student may have which is causing attendance/punctuality to decline and always stay in regular contact with parents/carers.
- Automatically involve the Local Authority when all other intervention has failed.
- Automatically involve the Local Authority when parents take their children on unauthorised holidays during school time.

Parents/carers will:

- Encourage their children to attend the Academy daily, be punctual and inform the Academy immediately if their child is absent.
- Inform the Academy in advance of any hospital appointment unavoidably scheduled during school time via the 'Request for Medical Leave of Absence' form which is available from the Home Link Officer.
- Inform the Academy of any problems which might affect their child's attendance.
- Cooperate with the Academy if their child's attendance/punctuality is unsatisfactory.
- Make requests for special leave of absence for their child during term time by completing an 'Application for Leave in Exceptional Circumstances' form which is available from the Home Link Officer.

Students will:

- Always attend the Academy unless prevented by a specified illness or unavoidable circumstances.
- Always arrive to the Academy and lessons on time.

Targets, Attendance and Punctuality

Targets for attendance and punctuality are set on a yearly basis and can be found in the Improvement Plan. The target for all students is to achieve 100% attendance and 100% punctuality. The minimum expectation for all students is attendance over the academic year of 97%.

The Impact of Poor Attendance on Academic Progress

Attendance During One School Year	Equivalent Days	Equivalent Session	Equivalent Weeks	Equivalent Lessons Missed
95%	9 Days	18 Sessions	2 Weeks	54 Lessons
90%	19 Days	38 Sessions	4 Weeks	114 Lessons
85%	29 Days	58 Sessions	6 Weeks	174 Lessons
80%	38 Days	72 Sessions	8 Weeks	228 Lessons
75%	48 Days	96 Sessions	10 Weeks	288 Lessons
70%	57 Days	114 Sessions	11.5 Weeks	342 Lessons
65%	67 Days	134 Sessions	13.5 Weeks	402 Lessons

If your child misses school on a regular basis during their time at Dixons City Academy they are damaging their future life choices.

The biggest determinant of underachievement is poor attendance. 19 days absent from school a year could mean a drop in a GCSE grade in all subjects!

Procedures:

The Academy has in place a coherent system of rigorously monitoring student attendance. Form Tutors, Heads of Year, the Assistant Principal, Ethos and Aspiration, the Home Link Officer and the Education Welfare Officer play key roles in this system and SIMS is used to manage this information.

Dealing with Absence

Parents/carers are expected to ring the Academy each morning of the student's absence before 8.30am, this can be done by calling 01274 776777 and selecting option 4 for the absence line. If the Home Link Officer is unavailable to take your call please leave a voicemail with the student's name, tutor group, reason for absence and a contact telephone number. If your child is ill for more than one day you will need to call the Academy each day before 8.30am.

If parents/carers do not contact the Academy the Home Link Officer will ring and send a text message to the contacts with parental responsibility.

The Academy takes seriously its duty to safeguard the welfare of all its students.

Unexplained absences and a lack of contact from parents/carers may cause us concern and lead to us involving other agencies such as Social Services.

If a telephone call from parents/carers is not forthcoming then the absence will be treated as unauthorised. If no contact has been made by the parents/carers by day 3 of the absence, the Home Link Officer, the Education Welfare Officer or the Head of Year will visit the home of the student. This will be an opportunity to explain the possible consequences of a fine if attendance does not improve. If there is a history of poor attendance, the visit may be earlier.

Social Services will be contacted by a member of the Safeguarding team on the first day of unexplained absence for any child with a Child Protection Plan.

If a student is absent for three consecutive days (and contact has been made from home) the Head of Year or the Home Link Officer will contact home to gauge when the student will be returning to the Academy and to arrange for missed work to be sent home if appropriate.

At the end of the week an unauthorised absence report is generated and a letter asking for an explanation is sent home. The list of students with unauthorised absences is also printed and passed to the Head of Year.

If the Head of Year suspects there may be a pattern developing in the absences of a particular student, or groups of students, then a registration certificate can be printed from SIMS. This is a record of attendance for the whole year and it is sent home periodically in the student's annual report for parents' information. It is a confidential document and therefore should be kept carefully and only shown to the student and/or their parents/carers.

Medical and Dental Appointments

These should be made outside Academy hours. Any urgent medical and dental appointments must be authorised by the Head of Year and the Home Link Officer by completing the 'Request for Medical Leave of Absence' form which is available from the Home Link Officer. If the absence is authorised, parents/carers must ensure they collect the student from visitors' reception as no student will be allowed out of the Academy unaccompanied. Parents/carers must also ensure that the student is aware of the appointment and is ready waiting at the authorised time. It is not the responsibility of the Academy to inform students' of appointments. In emergency situations we will ensure the student is aware of the appointment. In any other circumstances the student has to make their own way to reception at the authorised time.

Leave of Absence during Term Time

Leave of absence during term time is no longer permitted. Any extended absence from the Academy will be counted as unauthorised and can lead to a fixed penalty notice from the Local Authority. In order to avoid personal opinion and to ensure complete fairness for all, we refer all planned leave of absence to the authority.

Students who are Late

Late to school is defined as students not being in registration when the Academy music

finishes at 8.30am. If students arrive after this time an 'L' mark is applied to the register. If a student arrives after 9.30am then an unauthorised absence code of 'U' will be applied to the register. We ask that all students are in the school building no later than 8.20am so they can get prepared and organised for the learning of that day.

The Home Link Officer will send a text message to parents/carers informing them when their child is late. In Years 7-11, if a student is late to school they will receive a P2 detention at lunchtime for 25 minutes.

100% attendance is recognised in celebration assemblies and 100% attendance overall is rewarded by a certificate at the end of each academic year. PRIDE points are awarded to all students who achieve 100% attendance for the week.

Persistent Absence (PA)

Any student who has an overall attendance of **below 90%** is considered to be in the persistent absence category.

In Years 7-11, the Heads of Year have 'persistent absentees' brought to their attention by the Home Link Officer or Form Tutor. This information is used by the Form Tutor, Head of Year, Individual Needs, Home Link Officer or the Education Welfare Officer to counsel the student and/or the parents/carers about the damage to the student's education which can be done by frequent absences.

The Education Welfare Officer will meet with students and families whose attendance cause concern. Students in Years 7-11 are monitored and visits made if the Education Welfare Officer and the Home Link Officer feel there are any grounds for concern. In situations of persistent truanting, a parent/carer may be fined.

Religious Leave of Absence

For a day set aside exclusively for religious observance, students will be granted one day for each occasion of religious observance, with a maximum of 3 days over one academic year. These absences, if granted, will be recorded as authorised using the 'R' code on SIMS. These are the codes as stipulated by the Department for Education and whilst absence is authorised, it does count against the child's attendance. This is the national policy.

Registers

The Register is a legal document which must be completed fully and on time at AM and PM registration. And then for every lesson throughout the day. Should a student not be in registration they should be marked absent, however, if Form Tutors are aware of any appointments elsewhere, in or out of Academy, these should be recorded using the relevant code.

There is very little post-registration truancy but all staff must take a register in every lesson. If a member of staff suspects that a student is missing from the lesson, then they should notify the Home Link Officer immediately. The absence register is emailed to all Heads of Year, Form Tutors, and key members of SLT staff.