



THE ACADEMY OF
ST NICHOLAS

Attendance Policy

Review Period	Annually
Person Responsible for Policy	Headteacher
Governing Committee	LAC
Date of LGB Approval	September 2023
Date for Review	September 2024

Introduction

The Academy of St Nicholas recognises the clear link between the attendance and attainment of pupils. The aim of this policy is to encourage the highest possible levels of attendance and punctuality for pupils within The Academy of St Nicholas to support learning and achievement.

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To gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that all pupils attend regularly and on time. Pupils should attend every day that the school is open. We set a target for all pupils to aim for 100% attendance with the expectation that all pupils achieve at least 97%. **As a school we define regular attendance as 97% or above.**

The Academy of St Nicholas believes Teachers, Parents, Carers, Pupils and all members of the school community have an important contribution in improving attendance and punctuality ensuring students attend to achieve. This policy sets out how we will achieve this together and should be read in conjunction with the Attendance Roles and Responsibilities Guidance attached to this document.

Aims

- Raise the profile of attendance and punctuality amongst the school community
- Maximise the overall percentage of pupil attendance and punctuality.
- Reduce the number of pupils who are persistently absent (90% or below) or severely absent (50% or below)
- Provide support advice and guidance for parents, pupils and staff.
- Develop clear procedures for the maintenance of accurate registration for pupils.
- Ensure a systematic approach to gathering, analysing and acting upon attendance data.
- Ensure there is a proactive whole school approach that embeds a consistency of practice.
- Continue to promote effective partnerships with the Local Authority, Children's Services, School Health and other partner agencies.

Attendance Data & Monitoring

The number of absentees is monitored daily using the school data systems alongside the number of children who would be considered as **Persistently Absent**. The leadership team receive daily absence information, and this is routinely discussed with the Headteacher at a weekly leadership meeting to identify any particular cohorts of pupils who are not attending school and what support might be needed. Special Educational Needs, disadvantaged and Looked After students are monitored rigorously to ensure they receive appropriate support.

The CEO of All Saints Multi Academy Trust and the governing body of the school will receive a half termly report detailing absence by year group and cohort, persistent absence and will also highlight any pupil who has an attendance of 50% or below.

Promoting regular attendance at The Academy of St Nicholas

This is everyone's responsibility, all members of staff, parent/carers and pupils.

To help us all focus on this, The Academy of St Nicholas will ensure:

- there is a designated senior leader for championing and improving attendance.
- effective strategies are in place to deter poor punctuality;
- an engaging curriculum is provided and will be reviewed regularly.
- high quality teaching and learning is delivered throughout the school;
- pupils are provided with appropriate support from school and partner agencies to minimise disaffection from school.
- vulnerable groups are provided with effective support at the earliest opportunity and attendance is monitored rigorously.
- effective partnerships with parent/carers are encouraged through regular contact and support provided.
- parents/carers are kept informed of pupil attendance and punctuality through the school's attendance procedures, termly progress reports, individual letters and meetings when required.
- good attendance and punctuality is rewarded through regular individual pupil incentives;
- attendance and punctuality is regularly discussed with children in assemblies;
- attendance roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and all staff should ensure these are followed.

Attendance Expectations and Absence Procedures

A child not attending school is considered to be a safeguarding matter. This is why information about the cause of any absence from school is required.

Expectations of Parent/Carer

- Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is a parent/carers' legal responsibility (Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act) and permitting absence from school that is not authorised by the school creates an offence in law.
- Ensure your child arrives for school on time.
- Telephone school if your child is to be late.
- For routine non-emergency medical and dental appointments please ensure they are made outside of school hours and confirmation of the appointment is provided.
- Contact school by 8.40am on the first day of absence if your child is unable to attend, giving an indication of the expected duration and return date to school.
- If a text message/phone call is received as a result of your child's absence it is important that you respond to ensure your child is appropriately safeguarded.
- Contact the Pastoral Lead or Manager if the reason for absence requires a more personal contact.
- In case of emergency we need up to date contact numbers at all times so please ensure you inform us of any changes especially to mobile telephone numbers. (As a school we request a minimum of three emergency contact details be provided)
- Requests for exceptional circumstances leave of absence must be in writing to the Headteacher and can only be authorised by the Headteacher. Reasons such as a close family bereavement or taking part in a significant religious event would be acceptable for short absences. Unacceptable reasons for missing school, include general holidays, weddings, shopping, concerts and birthdays.

Understanding types of absence

The Academy of St Nicholas has to legally record every absence. This is why it is important that parents/carers directly inform school regarding the reason for absence, on the first day of absence.

Authorised absence

Authorised absence - the school accepts the explanation offered as satisfactory. If no explanation is received, absences cannot be authorised. It is the Headteacher, not parents who make the decision to authorise absence from school.

Unauthorised absence

Unauthorised absence - when the school has not received a reason for absence or has not approved a child's leave absence following a parental request. This includes but is not exclusive to:

- parents giving their children permission to be off school unnecessarily, such as for shopping, birthdays, to look after siblings.
- truancy before or during the school day.
- absences which have not been explained.
- pupils who arrive after the close of registration.

This type of absence may lead to the use of Penalty Notices or other sanctions from the Local Authority. From September 2018 the Academy of St Nicholas can issue warning letters (in accordance with the Local Authority Code of Conduct) to parents where their child has accrued 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in any one term. The warning period will cover a period of 20 school days. If the child has any unauthorised absence during this time the school will refer the case to the local authority requesting a Penalty Notice, be issued.

Persistent Absence

Pupils are defined as persistent absentees by the Department for Education (DfE) if their attendance falls below 90%. This is for any absence whether authorised or unauthorised. The DfE expects schools to intervene well before pupils reach a level of persistent absence.

Whilst we understand that pupils can be absent from school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend. If a pupil is reluctant to attend or a parent/carer has concerns, it is important that contact is made with the school as soon as possible to gain support and to work together to gain a resolution.

Parent/Carers are asked to contact the Pastoral Lead or Manager in the first instance.

Severe Absence

Pupils who miss 50% or more of school are classified as being severely absent by the Department of Education(DfE). This cohort of pupils are a priority group for The Academy of St Nicholas and additional support may be required from the local authority and partner agencies to support your child improving their attendance. It is essential that parents/carers work in partnership with the school and its partners, to ensure their child receives the support they require to overcome any barriers that are preventing them from attending school.

Why Regular Attendance is very important

Any absence affects education and regular absence will seriously affect pupils' learning. Pupils who have time off often find it difficult to catch up and do well.

90% attendance is equivalent to a pupil missing one half day per week or approximately 118 lessons per year

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting your child to have any absence without a good reason from school is an offence in law (The Education Act 1996) and may result in legal action.

Due to the importance of being a good attender, parents/carers and students will regularly hear attendance messages through form time, assemblies, parent's evenings, termly progress reports and meetings when required.

The Education Welfare Officer (EWO)

The Education Welfare Officer – provides support for parents/carer and advice on problems relating to attendance, and encourages good communications between home and school.

The EWO will always try to resolve the situation by agreement with the family but, if a resolution cannot be achieved to improve the pupil's attendance and where unauthorised absence persists the EWO will be required to consider the instigation of legal proceedings which include Parenting Contracts Penalty Notices, Parental Prosecution and Education Supervision Orders. Details regarding attendance law, penalty fines and legal interventions are available from the local authority.

Leave of absence in Term Time

The Law does not give any entitlement to parents to take their child on holiday during term time. Any application for leave must be in truly exceptional circumstances and the Headteacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave.

Parents/carers can receive a Penalty Notice for taking their child on holiday during term time without prior consent from school. Consent cannot be given retrospectively. The Headteacher will determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

Lateness

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If a pupil misses the start of the day, they can miss work and late arriving pupils disrupt lessons. It can be embarrassing for the pupil arriving late and can encourage future absence.

Daily Routine for Students:

8.00am	School opens with free breakfast for all students. Students arrive and are greeted by duty staff.
8.35am	Students make their way to Curriculum for Life. Registers are taken by CfL tutors. Students arriving after this time would receive a late mark and a detention at the end of the day with their CfL tutor. Students who do not attend this will be escalated to a pastoral detention.
8.40am	

9.10am Registers are formally closed. Students would receive a 'U' code to indicate arriving after this and would be classed as absent for the morning session of school. Parents/carers will receive a SMS informing them of this.

Removal from Roll

From the 1st September 2016 changes were introduced to the Pupil Registration Regulations 2016. These amendments affect all non-standard transitions; this is whenever a child of compulsory school age leaves a school before completing the school's final year.

As a school we are now required to: Inform the LA in **every** circumstance when deleting a pupil's name from the admission register. Inform the LA of the pupil's destination school and home address if the pupil is moving to a new school. School must complete an Exit form and submit to the **CME@liverpool.gov.uk** inbox.

- provide information to the LA when registering new pupils, including the pupil's address and previous school
- If your child is leaving our school parents are asked to:
 - provide the attendance officer with comprehensive information about their plans, including: any date of a move; your new address and telephone numbers; your child's new school and the start date when known. This should be submitted to school in writing;
 - if a pupil leaves and we do not have the above information, then your child is considered to be a child missing in education. This requires schools and local authorities to carry out investigations to try and locate your child, which may include liaising with Children's Services, the Police and other agencies. By giving us the above information, these investigations can be avoided.

Reporting the absence of a student:

Parents/carers should call the school by 8.00am on 0151 2302570 and select option 1 to 'Report a Student Absence'. A reason for the absence and expected return date should be given. Pastoral Staff or the Attendance Team may call back to further discuss the reason for absence if a conversation has not taken place.

Non-emergency medical or dental appointments should always be made outside of the academy's hours.

For a personal conversation relating to attendance, the following staff can be contacted:

Pastoral Lead Year 7	Miss Z Sankey	sankeyz@astn.allsaintsmat.org
Pastoral Manager Year 7	Miss M Cummins	cumminsm@astn.allsaintsmat.org
Pastoral Lead Year 8	Miss P Yarwood	yarwoodp@astn.allsaintsmat.org
Pastoral Lead Year 9	Mr T Boyle	boyle@astn.allsaintsmat.org
Pastoral Lead Year 10	Miss L Regan	reganl@astn.allsaintsmat.org
Pastoral Lead Year 11	Mr M Smith	smithm@astn.allsaintsmat.org
Pastoral Manager Year 10/11	Mrs L Earle	earle@astn.allsaintsmat.org
Head of Sixth Form	Mr G Sibbald	sibbaldg@astn.allsaintsmat.org
Assistant Head of Sixth Form	Mrs C Kane	kanec@astn.allsaintsmat.org
Pastoral Manager Year 12-14	Miss S Dooley	dooleys@astn.allsaintsmat.org
Attendance Officer	Mrs E Maddocks	maddockse@astn.allsaintsmat.org
Senior Lead for Attendance	Miss S Riley	rileys@astn.allsaintsmat.org

School Routine for Absence:

8.00am	Home Visits start with targeted students receiving an early morning visit to ensure they are ready for school.
9.10am	Attendance officer and Pastoral Leads and Managers check the registers and start to make calls to parents/carers to check the reason for absence and safety of students. For some students it may be necessary to contact external agencies such as a social worker,
10.10am	Home visits are made to students of concern including pupils with 5 days of absence and families where there is a safeguarding concern. We may make a referral to the Educational Welfare Officer.

Strategies to Support Pupils with Persistent Absence can include:

- Opening an EHAT for early help and support
- Linking the family with a Family Support Worker
- Referrals to targeted services
- Parenting Contract
- Student takes part in 'Project P.A.'
- Assessment by an educational psychologist
- Personalised adjustments for the student

Rewards and Incentives:

We aim to promote and reward good attendance across the trust. Students and parents/carers will be made aware of the latest incentives, which may include a trip at the end of term, a one-off daily treat, prize or certificate. These will be linked to the number of days of absence and are designed to encourage students to improve their own attendance.

The need for high quality teaching and learning throughout the trust is recognised as being essential to the promotion of attendance and curriculum links will be highlighted regularly.

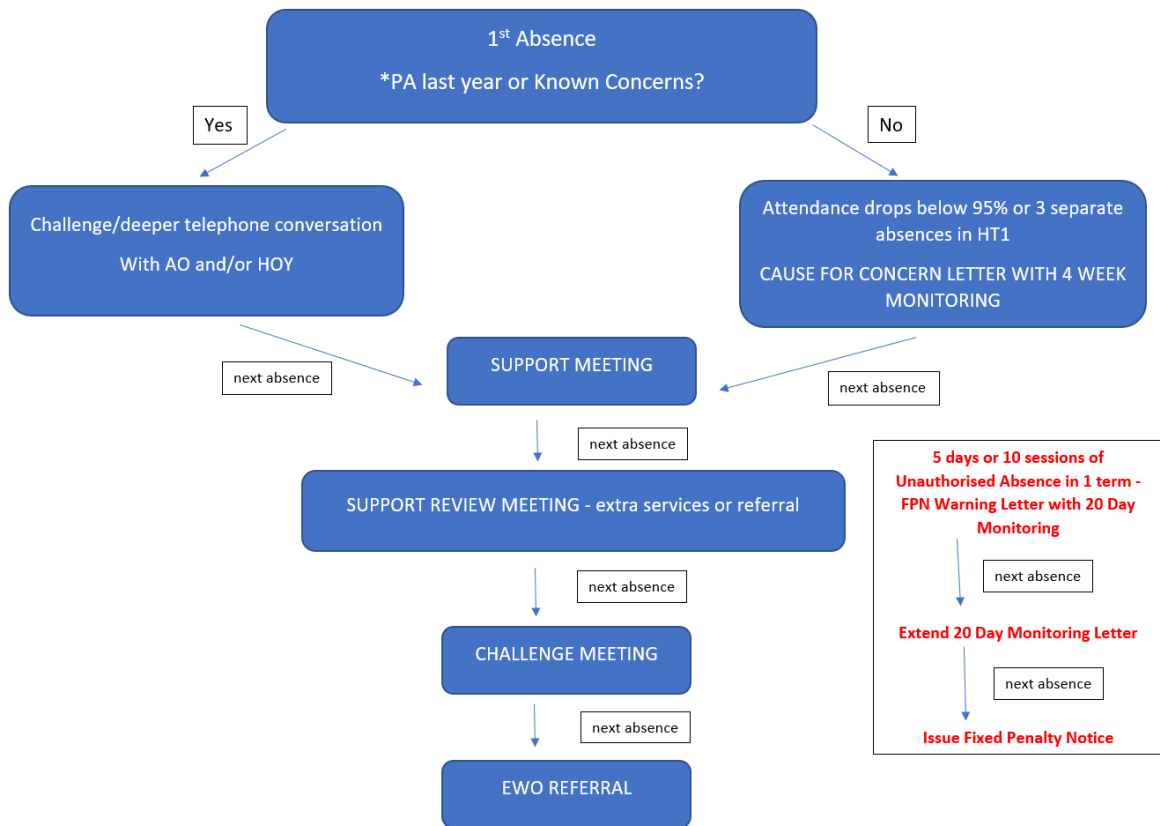
Communication to Parents/Carers:

Effective partnerships with parents/carers are encouraged through regular contact and support. Parents/carers can expect regular communication relating to their child's attendance including termly letters, parent's evening conversations and meetings. The table below shows the relationship between the number of days a child is absent, the number of hours of lessons they will miss and their percentage attendance at the end of the school year.

0 - 2 Days off	0 – 10 Lessons missed	99 - 100%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent Attendance – student is accessing all learning opportunities • Qualify for rewards including trips • Praise communications & certificates
3 - 6 Days off	15 – 30 Lessons missed	97 - 98%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good – very few learning opportunities missed • Likely to qualify for rewards including trips • Praise communications & certificates
7 - 10 Days off	35 – 50 Lessons missed	95 - 96%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk of underachievement • Attendance monitoring • Home visits • Data is closely monitored & patterns investigated
11 - 18 Days off	55 – 90 Lessons missed	91 - 94 %	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Severe risk of underachievement • At risk of being classed as having Persistent Absence • Attendance panel with parents/carers • Referral to Educational Welfare Service • Pastoral Team involvement to develop a plan to improve attendance •
19 or more Days off	95 or more Lessons missed	90% or less	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extreme risk of underachievement • Persistent Absence • Formal support from Educational Welfare Service • Parenting Contract may be needed • Family Support Services referral for identified issues • Senior Leadership involvement to develop plan to address absence

3/ Escalation Procedures

The flowchart below shows our graduated response system to a child's absence:



4/ Roles & Responsibilities

Attendance is everyone's responsibility; students, parents/carers, all school staff and agencies linked to the individual student. Our aim is to foster a culture of positive attendance where systems are consistently applied to support the student in achieving their full potential.

Students will:

- arrive on time to be registered at 8.40am
- arrive at lessons on time
- never leave site without permission
- complete any missed work that is provided
- make their Head of Year aware of any issues that may affect their attendance

Parents/Carers will:

- ensure your child leaves on time in the morning
- telephone the school before 8.00 am if your child is going to be late or absent
- respond to any messages sent to ensure your child is safeguarded
- contact the Pastoral Team if there are any issues that may affect attendance
- ensure the school has up to date contact numbers for a minimum of 2 emergency contacts
- arrange non-urgent medical or dental appointments for outside of academy hours
- avoid term time holidays
- work with us to improve your child's attendance and access any support agreed

Ensuring your child's regular attendance is a parent/carer's legal responsibility.

Curriculum for Life Tutors & Teaching Staff will:

- take registers accurately and promptly within 10 minutes of the lesson starting using the correct register code
- ensure students are aware of how many absence days they may have had
- support the culture of positive attendance by promoting this and punctuality within the school community
- welcome students returning after an absence
- praise and reward students in line with school incentives
- communicate good news or improvement to students and parents/carers relating to whole school life
- challenge students whose attendance or punctuality is a concern
- contribute to support for individual students
- raise serious concerns with an appropriate member of staff
- promote curriculum links

Pastoral Leads and Managers and the Attendance Officer will:

- conduct first day response calls to parents/carers
- conduct home visits
- meet students and parents/carers where attendance and punctuality concerns arise and devise appropriate support
- challenge lateness with students and implement sanctions according to the school systems
- promote good attendance and punctuality daily in CfL and assemblies
- maintain the accuracy of attendance coding, including ensuring registers are checked by the end of each day and 'N' codes (no reason for absence given) are converted within 5 days of the absence
- provide data for, and attend, weekly attendance/PA meetings
- complete referral forms and penalty notices

The Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team will:

- work with all members of the school community to promote and enforce high expectations of attendance and punctuality at all times including the implementation of the policy and development strategy
- consult the school community about the principles of the Attendance & Punctuality Policy
- contact families where concerns are raised including meetings to devise a plan of support
- ensure staff model good attendance and punctuality to lessons
- take all reasonable measures to protect the safety and wellbeing of students and staff
- work with external agencies to promote attendance and punctuality
- respond to trends in attendance data and apply intervention strategies to support identified cohorts
- support parents/carers to meet their parental responsibilities regarding attendance and punctuality
- support, praise and reward students
- ensure the whole school staff are clear about the strategies for promoting excellent attendance and punctuality
- apply an escalated system for lateness
- promote regular attendance as part of school assemblies
- apply sanctions fairly, consistently, proportionately and reasonably, offering support where appropriate
- ensure the Attendance & Punctuality Policy does not discriminate against any pupil on the grounds of race, disability, sexual orientation or gender assignment
- make alternative provision for students who are unable to regularly attend the academy in order to minimise disruption to their education

8/ Legislation & Guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [school attendance guidance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- [The Education Act 1996](#)
- [The Education Act 2002](#)
- [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2010](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2011](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2016](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)