

Attendance Policy – appendix

Tuxford Academy

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1 Introduction

At Tuxford Academy we always follow the Trust Attendance Policy which can be found <https://www.diverseacademies.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/25/2020/03/Attendance.pdf>

The agreed aims of this appendix is to:

- Our students attend every day possible so that they access full learning opportunities. The expectation is that students should maintain an attendance of at least 97%
- Our parents comply with the parental duty stated under Section 7 of the [Education Act 1996](#) for making sure their child of compulsory academy age receives full time education.

Poor attendance has been shown to impact on learning and attainment, not just in the current academy, but also throughout a child's education leading to limited life choices. For our students to fulfil their potential, we have a duty to encourage, support and enforce good attendance. Whilst we recognise the difficulties and challenges for some families in taking holidays, and as an academy we will seek creative solutions to work together with parents, there is a duty on parents and academies to ensure students access their full entitlement.

In line with Local Authority guidance, the governors at Tuxford Academy recognise the necessity of issuing penalty notices, where attendance, particularly where absence is unauthorised, fails to meet those standards expected by the academy (i.e. attendance should not fall below 90% in any 6-week period).

The academy year is structured with sufficient holiday breaks across the year, to enable most families to arrange holidays outside of term time.

Our staff and governors commit to:

- Students who are working in a stimulating environment with exciting lessons will want to attend the academy
- Students need to attend the academy regularly if they are to take full advantage of the educational opportunities and make good progress

Where there are concerns about attendance, we address these speedily and rigorously to ensure impact on learning is minimalised.

At Tuxford Academy we define attendance concerns where:

- Students take children out of our academy in term time
- Students are absent on individual days whether explained or unexplained
- There is unexplained absence
- Patterns of absence e.g., regular Mondays / Fridays
- Medical needs or extenuating circumstances impact on attendance

Holidays in term time

In line with government legislation, the Academy Principal, Jon Hardy is unable to authorise leave for holidays during term time, unless there are exceptional circumstances which may be:

- A funeral
- A wedding of an immediate relative
- Holidays which have to be taken in term time due to the circumstances of the child/family (e.g., medical needs) N.B. this does not include parental job leave / flight availability

2 Roles and Responsibilities

Governors Role

Under current government legislation, all absence figures, together with the reasons for absence, must be reported to the governors Local Academy Committee, Local Authority (LA), and the Department for Education (DfE).

Our Tuxford local academy committee's responsibility is to monitor and evaluate the attendance in their academies. The academy's attendance figures are presented to the Local Academy Committee on a termly basis:

- Agree that the academy follows the trust overarching policy adhering to national guidance
- Agreeing the academy appendix, which enables the academy to secure attendance which is at least in line with government and local expectations
- To promote the importance of good attendance throughout the academy and local community
- To support the Academy Principal, where applicable, to make joint decisions

Academy Principal's Role

- Ensuring parents and carers are informed about the academy attendance policy
- Developing strategies to improve attendance
- Outlining the importance of maximum attendance to parents at every opportunity at new parents' meetings, open evenings and newsletters
- Outlining to parents the procedure for notifying the academy about students' absences
- Ensuring letters are sent as stated in the procedure, by the Attendance Officer
- Investigating absence where related to safeguarding or wellbeing concerns
- Liaising with staff to work with families to improve student attendance
- Enforcing attendance procedures rigorously, including requesting for penalty notices to be issued where appropriate
- Analysing attendance for vulnerable groups with the Attendance Lead.

Academy Leadership Team Role

- To attend the attendance network meetings and work with the Academy Principal to develop strategies to improve attendance
- To refer to class teacher, SENDCO or Academy Principal where absence may be due to medical needs or welfare issues
- To report attendance weekly, half termly, termly and annually to the Academy Principal;
- To send letters in response to requests as agreed with the Academy Principal
- To send letters confirming referral for a penalty notice
- To analyse patterns in attendance
- To make referrals to the Local Authority i.e., Enforcement, Children Missing in Education, Family Service, Early Help Unit
- To hold attendance meetings with Parents/Guardians
- To provide termly reports for the governors Local Academy Committee
- To provide attendance information for end of year reports.

Attendance Officer Role

- To monitor attendance daily for students of concern and record details
- To inform Academy Principal/ Designated Safeguarding Lead where a student with safeguarding issues is absent
- To make referrals to the Local Authority

- To hold attendance meetings with Parents/Guardians
- To process attendance letters
- To prepare the attendance certificates

Head of Year//Form Tutor/Class Teacher Role

- To administer registration efficiently and promptly
- To make it clear to their students that they value maximum attendance
- To encourage punctual arrival at the academy
- To be alert to emerging patterns of authorised absence and speak to parents where there are any concerns
- Investigate where absence may be due to issues affecting student welfare e.g., bullying / anxiety / home circumstances and put support in place
- Refer to SENDCO, Personal Development, Behaviour and Attitudes Lead, Academy Principal of concerns
- To inform the Academy Principal/Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately, if a child on a protection plan is absent or if there are any concerns whatsoever about the whereabouts of a child
- To discuss attendance with parents at parents evening.

Parents' Role

Under Section 7 of the [Education Act 1996](#) parents and carers are responsible for making sure that their child receives efficient full-time education, suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special needs and disabilities they may have, either by regular attendance at the academy or otherwise.

Parents, guardians and carers must ensure that they are fully aware of the academy's Attendance Policy, as any absence will have a huge impact on your child's learning. Regular academy attendance is essential and parents, guardians and carers, together with our academy staff, all have a part to play in ensuring full potential is achieved.

Parents must ensure that they:

- Inform the academy of any absence and keep us updated with regards to any prolonged absence. If we are not informed of a reason for absence, this will be considered as unauthorised
- Make applications for leave in writing on, giving the reason for the request

- Avoid medical and dental appointments during the academy day. Medical appointments do not normally need a full day; therefore, children should only be absent for the length of the appointment. They should attend the academy before the appointment and return to the academy immediately after
- Do not take holidays in academy term time

If parents, guardians or carers are worried about their child's attendance at the academy, they should:

- Talk to their child; it may be something simple that they need help in resolving
- Talk to their child's form tutor in the first instance to gain the academy support
- Talk to either Jess Cook, the Attendance Officer jcook@tuxford-ac.org.uk or Miss Leathem-Pugh, Vice Principal aleathempugh@tuxford-ac.org.uk

Students' Role

- To arrive at the academy on time
- To attend the academy on every possible day

3 Persistent Absence Thresholds

Absence includes holidays, illness, medical appointments and lateness. Students who miss schooling find it will be very difficult for them to keep up and achieve their best potential. We follow the guidance on persistent and severe absence as outlined in [section 5 of Working Together](#).

4 Process for Monitoring Attendance

Sickness expectations

- We expect parents to notify the academy by 9:00am on the first day of any absence of their child. Failure to notify the academy, either by phone or Weduc message, on the first day, will lead to the absence being marked as unauthorised
- We reserve the right to request a doctor's/consultant's letter, regarding recurring and frequent illness
- Please be aware that when a parent telephones the academy with information that their child is unable to attend due to illness, or other circumstances, this may not be automatically authorised, particularly if the child then gives us a contradicting reason for their absence. Your child's current and previous academy attendance will be taken into consideration and as a result, the absence may not be authorised

- Keeping your child off school with minor ailments such as a headache or slight cold is not acceptable at Tuxford Academy and may be unauthorised. Repeated absences will require us to request that you obtain medical evidence from your doctor's surgery. This may be in the form of a date stamped compliment slip, confirming your visit, or prescription.
- The Academy may decide to send a letter requesting medical evidence, when there has been no reason given and/or the absence has been 3.5 days or longer
- Persistent absence due to illness may result in a referral to the School Nursing Team.

Lateness expectations

At Tuxford Academy we believe that punctuality is an important life skill.

- Our students must be on time each day.
- Lateness will be monitored by their Tutor, Head of Year and Attendance Officer.
- If the arrival at the academy is after the registers have closed, the student will receive an 'L'
- More than 6 unauthorised incidents of arriving late with a 'U' code in a 6-week period, could result in a penalty fine.
- If a student is late due to a medical appointment, they will receive an authorised absence coded 'M' if we have seen proof of the appointment.

5 Promoting Good Attendance

We celebrate good attendance throughout our academy by awarding students certificates. The attendance officer is heavily involved in rewarding our students and will often reward students with improved attendance over a period of time.