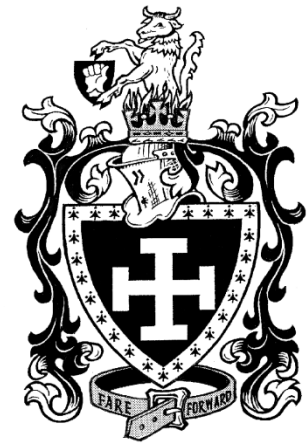


Buckler's Mead Academy



Policy Document

STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY

Currently Under Review (May 2018)

Policy Title:	Student Attendance Policy
Author:	Mark Lawrence
Document Reference:	
Date Produced:	2016
Recommended by (Advisory Group / Committee / SLT):	Behaviour & Safety Advisory Group
Date Adopted:	
Date published on website (if applicable):	
Signed By: Chair of Directors
Review Frequency:	
Review Date:	
<p><i>Please note: The version of this document contained within the 'Policy Documents' Folder on BMStaff (T:\Admin\Policies and Procedures) is the only version that is maintained.</i></p>	

STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY

“Attendance at school must be maximised in order to raise the achievement of all pupils and improve their prospects in adult life.”
Attendance Matters – Somerset Local Authority

Rationale

Good attendance at any school or academy underpins success in all areas of the curriculum. Students who attend regularly will establish good working routines and relationships which lead to personal success and self-esteem. This policy reflects the county policy document ‘Attendance Matters’, and reflects the academy’s agreement with and commitment to the principles outlined within that document:

- Nurturing an ethos built on emotional health and well-being and the belief that everyone is valued.
- Enabling students to feel secure, both in terms of their physical environment and their emotional well-being.
- Ensuring learning is dynamic, interesting and challenging.
- Celebrating attendance, attainment and achievement.
- Building partnerships between schools or academies, students and parents/carers.
- Treating all students fairly and are demonstrating commitment to their education.

A member of the Academy’s Senior Leadership Team will have overall responsibility for the whole academy approach to attendance but this policy demonstrates the importance placed on all within the academy community.

Annual targets are agreed between the Education Attendance Officer and the academy and it is these targets that act as markers for our work to maximise every student’s attendance at the academy. In addition the DfE’s targets for Persistent Absence inform work with our most complex students.

Key actions to ensure high levels of attendance by all students:

- Close liaison with feeder primary schools to ensure early identification of ‘at risk’ students. Attendance issues identified on transfer paperwork and through Learning Mentor and Education Attendance Officer liaison
- Involvement of parents in issues relating to attendance. Attendance practices a key element of primary induction process for parents and regularly revisited in newsletters to all parents
- Attendance data is shared with all staff via SIMs and the importance of good attendance is promoted across the Academy.
- Termly reports to directors include attendance data and issues emerging
- Registration of all students every session within the first 5 minutes of each session
- Early identification of students ‘causing concern’ for close monitoring and agreed intervention
- Personalised Intervention plans and targets set to improve attendance, through work of key staff. (Learning Mentors and Attendance & Welfare Officer)
- Close liaison with the Education Attendance Officer (EWO)
- Regular rewards for excellent attendance

- School attendance is monitored on a 12 week basis and continuously throughout a student's time at Bucklers Mead.
- Referrals are made to the Education Welfare Service, where necessary, for either a Warning Penalty Notice or for Casework. (This is at the discretion of the Academy, or because of previous EWO involvement.)

ACADEMY ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

ROLE OF RECEPTION STAFF

1. Telephone messages about absence are recorded by reception staff. The Reception Staff will record the name of the caller, the student and the reason for absence and pass this to the Attendance and Welfare Office.
2. Ensure up to date student addresses are recorded and maintained, supply the Year Co-ordinators with lists of students' details as requested.
3. Sign in students arriving late from appointments etc. and record the reason for late arrival. Reception staff should only sign in students outside of a.m. and p.m. registrations slots and should use the EntrySign system.
4. Sign students in and out of the Academy if they have permission to leave the site for an appointment during the Academy day, issuing an offsite pass, using the EntrySign system.
5. Collect returned Term Time Leave Requests and pass to Assistant Head - (relevant Key Stage 3 or 4 Coordinator or Inclusion) who will decide whether the request can be granted, in accordance with exceptional circumstance criteria set by the Headteacher. Attendance & Welfare Officer to file and send letter to inform of the academy's decision.
6.
 - * The EntrySign system should not be used to sign out by students without the permission of a member of reception staff.

ROLE OF THE ATTENDANCE AND WELFARE OFFICER

1. Monitoring, supporting and tracking student attendance using SIMS.
2. Liaison with EWO to manage and plan intervention for students with poor attendance through fortnightly meetings.
3. Report truancy and attendance issues to Year Co-ordinators, Tutors and Parents/Carers.
4. Work towards reducing unauthorised and persistent absence by working closely with those involved with a positive approach.
5. Recording of absence notes/reasons with follow-up meetings, correspondence and phone calls. Including assigning appropriate codes for absence.
6. Send texts using School Comms system to all first day absence, where a telephone call has not been received. The Academy will aim to send this text by 10:15 am, however this cannot be guaranteed.
7. Meet regularly with Year Co-ordinators and Learning Mentors to inform them of attendance concerns and work with them on interventions to improve attendance.
8. Compile clear reports and collate information in a structured manner including information for Board of Directors, Local Authority and for Year Co-ordinators report to SLT.
9. Develop preventative and early intervention strategies in order to build good habits of attendance at the academy, working with other support agencies where necessary. Share/consult with Year Co-ordinators on this work.
10. Send appropriate letters requesting explanation of absences.
11. To track students with Persistent Absence.

12. Liaise with the First Aider to ensure monitored students are dealt with appropriately.
13. To hold regular meetings with EWO.
14. Hold meetings with parents of students causing concern to discuss strategies for dealing with complex cases.
15. Liaise with Assistant Head (KS Co-ordinator/Inclusion) regarding students who are at risk of becoming 'Child Missing From Education'
16. Support LA data collection and analysis procedures as named contact.
17. Liaise with Year Co-ordinators via Pastoral Management Group Meeting to update on matters relating to attendance.
18. Complete referral forms for the Education Attendance Officer in respect of students who need further action/support.
19. Liaise with Year Co-ordinators to send letter to parents praising improved attendance of identified students.
20. Provide attendance data for the Head's report to Directors.
21. Record on Attendance Monitor the participation of students in any trip or visit, plus any other large group activity of whole school scenario affecting registration.
22. Support the EWO following a referral and prepare documents as required.
23. Liaise with the Education Attendance Officer and any other appropriate outside agency to gain further support or action for those students who do not respond to in-academy measures for improving attendance. This might include requesting medical evidence to support alleged medical absence.

AS REQUESTED

Supply the Head, Deputy Head and other senior staff with statistical information on attendance.

ROLE OF THE LEARNING MENTOR

1. Monitoring, supporting and tracking student attendance using SIMS.
2. Report truancy and attendance issues to Year Co-ordinators, Tutors, Attendance and Welfare Officer and Parents/Carers.
3. Work towards reducing unauthorised and persistent absence by working closely with those involved with a positive approach.
4. Develop preventative and early intervention strategies in order to build good habits of attendance at the academy, working with other support agencies where necessary. Share/consult with Year Co-ordinators on this work.
5. Liaise with the First Aider to ensure monitored students are dealt with appropriately.
6. Liaise with Year Co-ordinators to send letter to parents praising improved attendance of identified students.
7. Record on Attendance Monitor the participation of students in any trip or visit, plus any other large group activity of whole school scenario affecting registration.

THE ROLE OF THE FORM TUTOR (also see Appendix 2 Guidance for Tutors)

1. Take an accurate register every morning and afternoon using SIMS.
2. Collect absence notes from students. Pass these to the office, through register folders, who will update SIMS and then file these for the academic year.
3. Be responsible for the collection of absence notes and liaising with Learning Mentor.
4. Raise any concerns regarding student attendance patterns or issues with parents, and inform the Year Co-ordinator, Attendance & Welfare Officer or Learning Mentor.
5. Pass any Term Time Leave requests received to the Attendance & Welfare Officer for processing.
6. Promote excellent attendance by encouraging all students to appreciate the importance of good attendance at the academy.

7. Review student attendance at Academic Mentoring Days.
8. To support the monitoring and intervention plan for individual students.
9. Celebrate excellent attendance or improving patterns with individual students.
10. To challenge and sanction poor punctuality as per Academy B4L Policy.

THE ROLE OF THE YEAR CO-ORDINATOR

1. Monitor the accuracy of registration procedures in the year group.
2. Liaise with the Attendance & Welfare Officer to ensure identification of students with attendance problems.
3. Agree the appropriate intervention mechanisms for students identified.
4. Meet regularly with Attendance & Welfare Officer and, where appropriate, Education Welfare Officers to discuss attendance concerns, including scrutiny of authorised absence if this puts a student at risk of PA, and work with them on interventions to improve attendance. Provide minutes of these meetings for SLT.
5. Meet and discuss student attendance and the actions taken with the appropriate Assistant Head, through the Line Management structure.
6. Attend meetings with Attendance & Welfare Officer/Learning Mentor (and EWO, where appropriate) to discuss intervention plans for complex cases.
7. Attend attendance related case conferences as they are called by Social Services if required.
8. Make attendance a focus of assemblies throughout the year.
9. Promote excellent attendance through the celebration of students with 100% attendance at half termly points throughout the academic year.
10. Present a half termly review of attendance for individual Year group (including groups of learners).

THE ROLE OF THE SENCO

1. Emphasise excellent attendance with the LSB/PSB.
2. Be aware of students who are attendance concerns with SEN need.
3. Liaise with Learning Mentors over contact home.
4. Be involved in attendance meetings with SEN students.
5. To ensure Learning Mentors are aware of issues affecting each student.
6. To ensure accurate records are kept of students who are educated within the LSB.

THE ROLE OF THE INCLUSION DEPARTMENT

1. To inform reception and the Attendance & Welfare Officer of students who are internally excluded each day.
2. To maintain a lesson by lesson register for any student who is placed in the IEC during the day.
3. If a student leaves the IEC without permission, to inform parents/carers and to inform the Attendance and Welfare Officer.

THE ROLE OF THE ASSISTANT HEAD TEACHER (KEY STAGE CO-ORDINATORS/ INCLUSION)

1. Review the Attendance Policy annually, working with the Education Attendance Officer and Year Co-ordinators to ensure the document accurately reflects current practice and that procedures are effective and well managed.
2. Include attendance as a standing item on the Pastoral Management Group meetings.
3. Liaise with the Education Attendance Officer and any other appropriate outside agency to gain further support or action for those students who do not respond to in-academy measures for improving attendance. This might include requesting medical evidence to support alleged medical absence.

4. Ensure attendance has a high profile across the academy.
5. Oversee the preparation of attendance related materials for Year 6 parents.
6. To liaise directly with the Link Director Attendance on attendance issues.
7. Prepare regular reports for the Board of Directors on attendance issues in the academy.
8. Authorise requests for holiday during term time or communicate why these requests have been declined.
9. Line Management Responsibility for Learning Mentors.
10. To report back Attendance Overview for each key stage at SLT.

THE ROLE OF THE HEADTEACHER

1. Maintain an overview of attendance issues and support staff and procedures as appropriate.
2. Authorise requests for holiday during term time or communicate why these requests have been declined.
3. Refer students with attendance concerns to the Education Welfare Service, where appropriate.

THE ROLE OF STUDENTS

1. To make every effort to maintain a good attendance and punctuality record so they can achieve their potential within the Academy.
2. Encourage parents to follow the expectations regarding attendance contacts.

THE ROLE OF PARENTS/CARERS

1. To contact the academy on the first day a student is ill or to authorise any known absence - it is a parent's responsibility to inform the Academy should a student not be able to attend.
2. To provide written confirmation of the reason for the student's absence on their return to the academy. In some cases evidence, such as medical, may need to be provided.
3. To maintain regular contact with the Tutor, Attendance & Welfare Officer or Year Co-ordinator in the case of a student's extended absence from the academy.

Term Time Leave

On 1 September 2013, regulations came into force changing the rules about term-time leave.

Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless they consider there to be "exceptional circumstances" for doing so.

The headteacher decides what constitutes 'exceptional circumstances'. Each request will be considered individually taking into account the circumstances, such as: the reason for which leave is sought, the frequency of the request; whether the parent gave advance notice; and the student's attainment, attendance and ability to catch up on missed schooling.

If leave is granted, headteachers should determine the number of days a child can be away from school.

'Exceptional circumstances' are unlikely to include family holidays. Therefore should any student be absent from school for a family holiday that is not agreed, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

If a student reaches more than 10 sessions (5 days) of unauthorised absence then a Warning Penalty Notice will be served, which may result in a fine.

ATTENDANCE DATA ANALYSIS

Promotion of good attendance is the responsibility of all staff across the academy. To enable key staff to promote excellent attendance, identify areas of poor attendance and intervene where necessary it will be the responsibility of the Attendance and Welfare Officer to provide accurate attendance data of:

Whole School Attendance

Persistent Absence (10%)

Persistent Absence (15%)

Each Year Group

Cohorts within each Year group

Unexplained absences

Free School Meals and Pupil Premium (Disadvantaged Students)

Child Looked After

Gifted and Talented

Vulnerable students

Boys/Girls

English as an additional language

APPENDIX 1: ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY

LETTERS SENT REGARDING ATTENDANCE

- 1. Letter 1: Attendance concerns raised.**
- 2. Letter 2: Meeting 1- Parent Agreement (Medical Evidence needed)**
- 3. Parent Meeting follow up.**
- 4. Letter informing of EWO initial involvement.**
- 5. Letter informing of EWO referral.**
- 6. Lates: Concerns over late marks.**
- 7. Approval or refusal of term time absence.**
- 8. Praise Letter.**

APPENDIX 2: ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY

GUIDANCE FOR TUTORS

REGISTERS

Please ensure students register promptly at 8.30 a.m. and 1.35 p.m. A student not present by the end of the registration period should be marked absent.

An 'L' mark should be recorded for any student late to registration.

A 'U' mark will be recorded, by the Education & Welfare Officer if a student has not signed in at reception, or been registered by their tutor by 9:05.

REGISTRATION

Addresses, contact telephone numbers and Parents'/Carers' surnames must be regularly checked and updated. The academy office and the relevant Pastoral Manager **MUST** be notified of any changes. Absence notes should be signed and dated by the tutor and passed to the Learning Mentor with the name of the student clearly written. If a tutor notices any issue or has a concern they should discuss this with the Learning Mentor or appropriate Year Co-ordinator.

ABSENCE

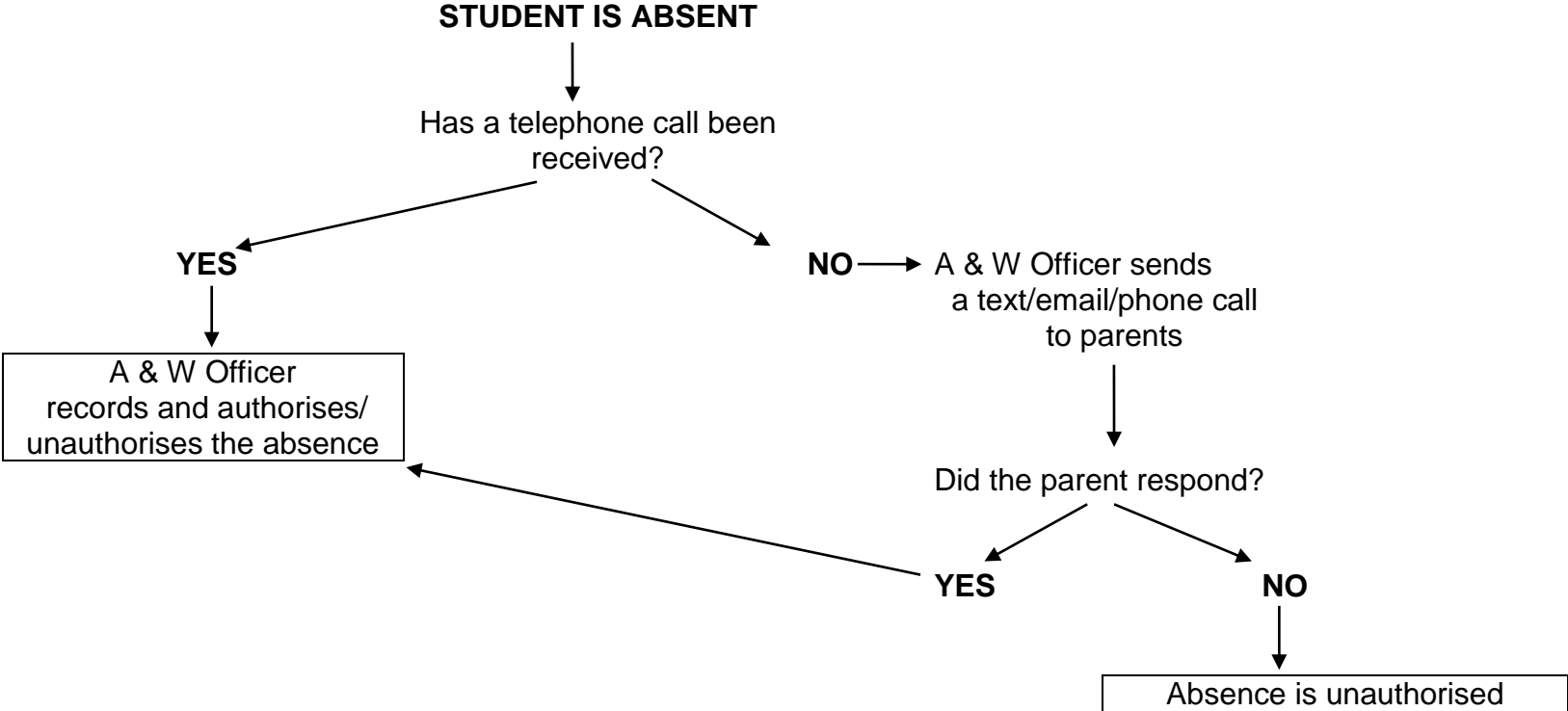
Since the key legal responsibility for attendance rests with parents/carers, it is important that attempts are made to encourage their involvement in all levels of academy activity and particularly in relation to attendance.

The procedure outlined below should be followed as appropriate:-

PLEASE SEE FLOW DIAGRAM FOR ABSENCE PROCEDURES

ATTENDANCE ~ FOR ALL STUDENTS WHO ARE ABSENT

DAY 1



**DID THE STUDENT
RETURN TO SCHOOL ON
DAY 2?**

DAYS 2, 3, 4 and 5

YES

NO

Did the student bring a note
to explain absence?

Learning Mentors phone home
and discuss absence.
Learning Mentors record in SIMs.
Discretion of Learning Mentors used
regarding phone calls on Days 3 – 5.

If no answer, a message is left or text
message/email sent

YES

NO

Form tutor collects note
and passes to Learning
Mentors

A & W Officer
records and authorises/
unauthorises the
absence

Form Tutor makes a note on
SIMs and requests note

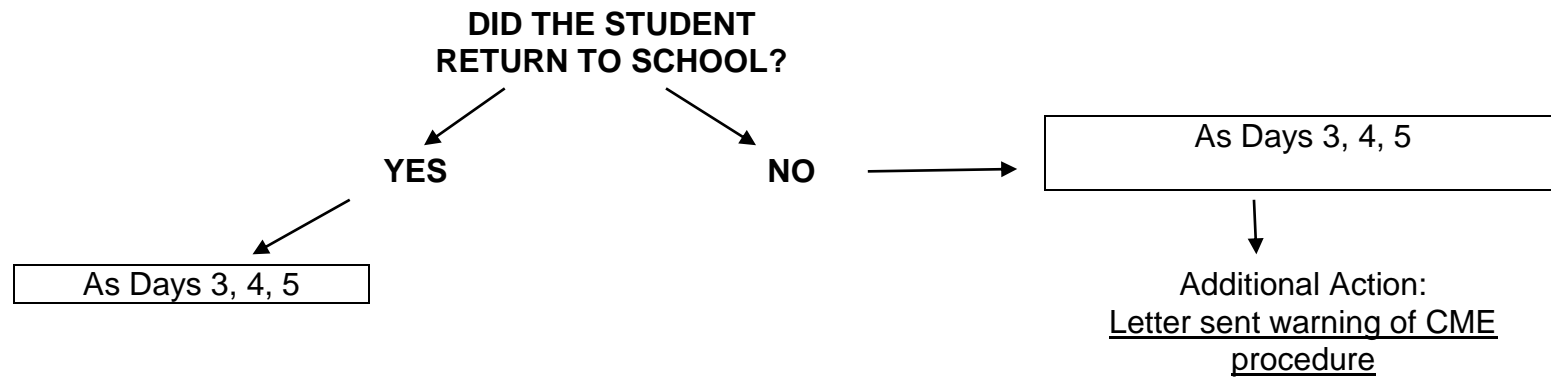
YES

Is note received following
day (Day 3, 4, 5)?

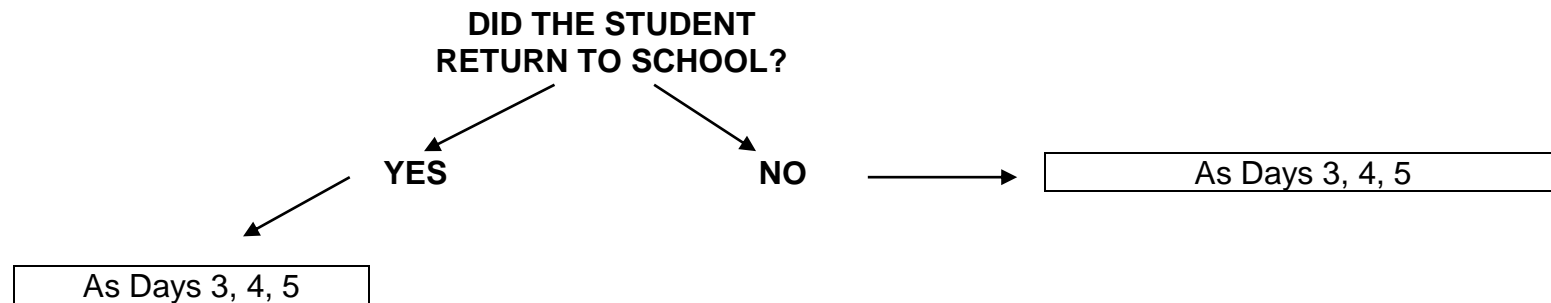
NO

Form tutor phones home
Note of phone call recorded in SIMS

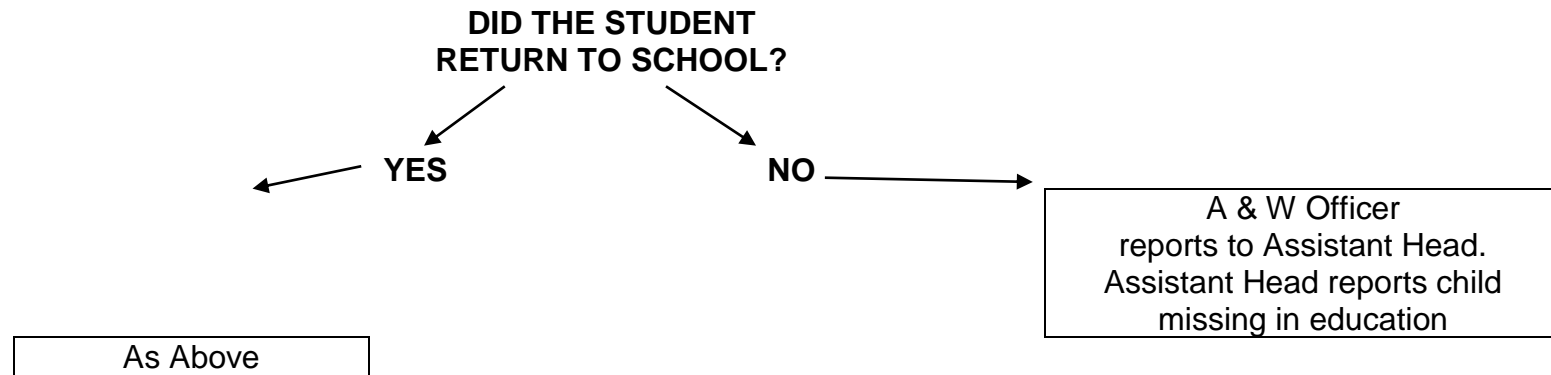
DAY 6



DAYS 7 - 10



DAY 11



AUTHORISED ABSENCE

Authorised absence can be summarised as including:

- Illness
- Medical or dental appointment
- Family bereavement
- Work experience
- Students taking part in a public performance
- Exclusion
- Religious observance
- Dual registration
- Provision for transport not made by LA for a student who does not live within the statutory walking distance
- Travellers when travelling
- Approved sporting activity
- Alternative provision off-site, organised by the academy
- Link courses with college
- Interviews for Year 11 students
- Student pregnancy

(Evidence may be required for the above absences to be authorised, for example a medical note from a doctor, or appointment)

UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

- Should a student reach more than 10 sessions (5 days) of unauthorised absence then a Warning Penalty Notice will be served.

TRUANCY

Students will be encouraged to consider absence without good reason as a serious breach of the academy rules. Parents will be informed of truancy by the Learning Mentors, or Year Coordinators as soon as possible.

Truancy will be sanctioned through the Behaviour 4 Learning Policy, and students will make up the time and work missed.

The Year Co-ordinators will involve the appropriate member of the Senior Leadership Team when dealing with persistent truants.

In all cases of unjustified absence, careful consideration should be given to individual student's circumstances and discretion used when deciding upon action to be taken. However, the difference between a student coping with a domestic difficulty and parentally condoned absence or lateness cannot be over-emphasised. Whilst we need to be aware of the domestic disadvantage in which some of our young people are placed, we are not helping them in the long term if we simply 'turn a blind eye'. Good attendance at the academy is the expectation for all.

ALL our students will need to be aware of the importance of punctuality and reliability when they leave the academy.

LATENESS FOR LESSONS

Subject teachers must take a register at the start of each lesson using SIMS. Any student late on 3+ occasions should be given a punishment agreed within the department. Persistent offenders should be referred to the Head of Department. (Form tutors and Year Co-ordinators should also be notified). Students who have a

reason to be absent for lessons will usually have a message attached to their name on the class register.

PLEASE NOTE

If subject teachers have a concern about a student's absence from lessons, they should report this to the Learning Mentor who will confirm the student's absence. The subject teacher should then take action as defined by the Behaviour for Learning policy.

REWARDS FOR GOOD OR IMPROVED ATTENDANCE

1. A half termly draw will take place in which all students with 100% attendance will be included, with prizes for the winners.
2. Attendance records will be included in reports.
3. Students will be referred to the Year Co-ordinators and the Learning Mentors for improved attendance and the Learning Mentors or Pastoral Manager will send appropriate letters of commendation to the parents.
4. Comments on improved attendance will be entered on the report by the tutor.
5. Students may be referred to senior staff for commendation of efforts made towards improved attendance as well as for full attendance.

ADDITIONALLY

- a) Attendance and related matters are included in the induction programme for all new staff.
- b) Liaison with the SENCO and Inclusion Department to devise flexible and innovative responses to those who find it difficult to attend regularly for whatever reason will take place.
- c) Specific measures will be taken to ease children back into the academy after protracted illness.
- d) Attainment goals for individuals or tutor groups may be set if appropriate to motivate and encourage.
- e) Children will be welcomed back after illness in an appropriate manner.

It is important that we all share the responsibility of attendance and not see it just as a task for 'pastoral' staff or an additional chore.

APPENDIX 3 - ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY

Procedures for Attendance
(See separate procedures in Attendance Policy for Medical Reasons or CME)

	Academy Action	Date	Outcome
Initial Absence	First Day Texting/E mail Service		
Attendance below 95% or at risk PA. (No of sessions)	Letter 1 – sent at 6 sessions of absence. Situation explained to student. Phone call to parents. Tutor or Learning Mentors to monitor. If no improvement move to Letter 2. (This stage may be bypassed if a concern arises more quickly)		
No improvement	Letter 2, including requests for medical evidence of absence and Parent Agreement meeting, with A&W Officer. Learning Mentor/Year Head meeting with Parents. Monitor Absence will be unauthorised if sufficient evidence is not provided.		
No improvement	Parent Agreement		
No improvement	Letter 3 sent. Refer to EWO. Consideration of WPN depending on nature of absence. This could lead to Court Proceedings.		
EWO works with the Academy and the family to ensure rapid return to regular attendance. This may, however, result in court proceedings. (See Appendix 'The Education Attendance Officer'.			

PLEASE NOTE: A referral can be made at any time to the EWO at the discretion of the EWO/ SLT member responsible.

APPENDIX 4: ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY

PROCEDURES FOR A CHILD MISSING FROM EDUCATION CHILDREN MISSING FROM SUITABLE EDUCATION (CME)

SCHOOL PROCESS FLOWCHART

