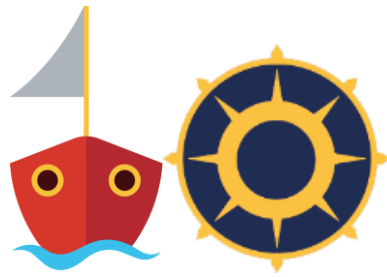


# Attendance Policy

Raleigh Infant & Admirals Academies



**Approved by:** Trace Brookes

**Last reviewed on:** 26<sup>th</sup> June 2024

**Next review due by:** July 2025

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## 1. Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to Academies attendance through our whole-academy culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Promoting good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend the academy

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

## 2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](#) 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:

Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)

Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)

Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)

[The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)

[The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

## 3. Roles and responsibilities

### 3.1 The Academy Council

The Academy Council (governing board) is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the Academies policies and ethos
- Making sure Academy leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring attendance figures for the Academies
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the Executive Principal to account for the implementation of this policy

### 3.2 The Executive Principal

The Executive Principal is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy across the Academies
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to the Academy Council
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

### **3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance**

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the Academies
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having an oversight of data analysis
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Tracey Brookes and can be contacted via mobile 07511 224734, the Academies office: 01842 753993 or email: t.brookes@adm.eastern-mat.co.uk

### **3.4 The attendance officer**

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the Executive Principal
- Working with Attendance and Entitlement Officers (AEO) to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the Attendance Assistant (authorised by the Executive Principal) when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The attendance officer is Tracey Brookes and can be contacted via mobile: 07511 224734, the Academies office: 01842 753993 or email: t.brookes@adm.eastern-mat.co.uk

### **3.5 Class teachers**

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the Academies office via registers on Pupil Asset by 9am.

### **3.6 Academy office staff**

The Academies office staff will:

- Take calls from parents and carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the Academies MiS system
- Transfer calls from parents and carers to the Attendance Officer, Tracey Brookes, in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

### **3.7 Parents/carers**

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Call the Academies office to report their child's absence before 9am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the Academies with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the learning hours of the day

### **3.8 Pupils**

Pupils are expected to:

Attend the Academies every day on time

## 4. Recording attendance

### 4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each day and once during the afternoon session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

Present

Attending an approved off-site educational activity

Absent

Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

The original entry

The amended entry

The reason for the amendment

The date on which the amendment was made

The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

Whether the absence is authorised or not

The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity

The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8.30am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8.30am and will be kept open until 8.50am. The register for the afternoon session will be taken at 1pm and will be kept open until 1.10pm.

### 4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the Academies of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence as soon as practically possible by calling the Academies office staff (see also section 7), or via email to the Academy email address [office@ral.eastern-mat.co.uk](mailto:office@ral.eastern-mat.co.uk) or [office@adm.eastern-mat.co.uk](mailto:office@adm.eastern-mat.co.uk)

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the Academies may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the Academies are not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

### 4.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the Academies can authorise.

#### **4.4 Lateness and punctuality**

A pupil who arrives late:

Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code L.

After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code U.

We will monitor patterns of lateness and poor punctuality, which may lead to requests of meetings with the Attendance Officer to discuss next steps or further intervention.

#### **4.5 Following up unexplained absence**

Where any pupil we expect to attend the Academies does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the Academies will:

Call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the Academies cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, we may contact other emergency contacts, carry out a home visit, contact the Police or Children's Services, depending on the circumstances of each case.

Identify whether the absence is approved or not.

Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session.

Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the Academy will consider involving an Attendance and Entitlement Officer, and/or completing a Fast Track plan.

#### **4.6 Reporting to parents/carers**

The Academies will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels. This will be via half termly written reports and attendance percentages shared at parents evenings. During the weekly monitoring of attendance, if a child's attendance drops below 96%, letters will be sent home to parents/carers to ensure they are informed of possible next steps. This will also encourage parents/carers to work together with the Academies in the aim to support and assist with any barriers that could be leading to the drop in attendance.

### **5. Authorised and unauthorised absence**

#### **5.1 Approval for term-time absence**

The Executive Principal will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the Executive Principal's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

There is no complete definition of 'exceptional circumstances'. Each case is different and must be treated as such. Each application is individual to the pupil and it is for the Executive Principal of the Academies to come to a decision. The law tells us that even though a family may have one set of exceptional circumstances to be considered, the circumstances of each child must also be considered. Examples of exceptional circumstances could include a sudden immediate family bereavement, a parent who is a member of the armed forces and is unable to take leave at other times or a parent is employed by the emergency services and is required to work for a national event leading to leave being cancelled.

The Academies considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least two weeks prior to the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the Academies office. The Executive Principal may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

Illness and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)

Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the Academies will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart

Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the Academies, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision.

## 5.2 Legal sanctions

The Academies or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from the Academies, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by the Executive Principal, Attendance Officer, local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year

One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission

Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

## 6. Strategies for promoting attendance

The Academies staff will promote punctuality and attendance by celebrating in assemblies, and within individual classes. Share successes of high attendance on newsletters, displays around the Academies and with parents/carers via our website and other Academy correspondence. End of term, and end of year certificates will also be awarded to pupils with 100% attendance.

## 7. Attendance monitoring

The Academies will carry out daily attendance checks which feed into our weekly monitoring. Daily checks include first calls home, and where required, home visits to ensure pupils safety and location is of paramount importance. These are carried out on occasions where the Academies are not notified of a pupil's absence.

Weekly attendance checks are carried out across both Academies. Reports of all pupils under 96% is compiled on a Friday afternoon and checked against the previous week to determine if the attendance figure has increased or decreased. Checks are also made against the reasons for absence obtained from parents/carers. If persistent absence has occurred, or if attendance figure has decreased, a letter will be sent to parents/carers advising them of the low attendance figure with offer of support from the Academies to improve attendance. If attendance percentages for individual pupils continue to decrease, an letter of invitation to a meeting in the Academies will be sent to parents/carers where attendance will be discussed.

### 7.1 Monitoring attendance

The Academies will:

Monitor attendance and absence data half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level

Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The Academy will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing board.

## **7.2 Analysing attendance**

The Academies will:

Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families

Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

## **7.3 Using data to improve attendance**

The Academies will:

Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families

Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

## **7.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence**

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The Academies will:

Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence

Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the Academies (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement

Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance

engage with local authority attendance teams and/or independent attendance organisations

sending letters to parents and carers

using fixed penalty notices

engaging with children's social care staff, including social workers where appropriate

attend or lead on attendance reviews and clinics in line with escalation procedures

establish clear and effective service level agreements with external partners to support pupils with persistent absence

establish good relationships with a network of organisations and professionals to support vulnerable pupils including those with persistent absence, such as school nursing or GP practices

## **7.5 Children Missing Education**

Children missing education are children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school.

The Academies follows the procedures set out in Appendix 2, if children are missing education as outlined in Children Missing Education: statutory guidance for local authorities (DfE 2013).

## **8. Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum of one year by Tracey Brookes, Family Support Worker/Attendance Officer. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Academy Council.

## **9. Links with other policies**

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy

- Behaviour policy

## Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
<b>Authorised absence</b>		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Suspension	Pupil has been suspended but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances

<b>I</b>	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
<b>M</b>	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
<b>R</b>	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
<b>S</b>	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
<b>T</b>	Gypsy, Roma and traveller absence	Pupil from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
<b>Unauthorised absence</b>		
<b>G</b>	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
<b>N</b>	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
<b>O</b>	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
<b>U</b>	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Scenario</b>
<b>X</b>	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
<b>Y</b>	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
<b>Z</b>	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
<b>#</b>	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-

		term/bank holiday/INSET day
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## Appendix 2: CME Process

### CME Process (1)



Parent informs X Academy of a change of school or a change of address (out of area)



The new address or school is confirmed by Admin Staff to the Principal on the phone and then via email



Admin/Attendance Officer completes CME form



CME form is passed to the Principal for approval



Admin/Attendance Officer sends CTE file to new school



CME form is submitted to CME team at NCC and student is removed from X Academy roll

## **CME Process (2)**

**Pupil stops attending X Academy**



### **Class Teacher/Attendance Lead investigate absence**

*Evidence gained of change of school or address*



*The new address or school is confirmed by the Admin/Attendance Lead on the phone and then via email*



*Admin/Attendance Lead completes CME form*



*CME form is passed to the Principal for approval*



*Admin/Attendance Lead sends CTE to new school*



*CME form is submitted to CME Team at NCC and the pupil is removed from the Academy roll*

*No evidence gained of change of school or address, despite home visit*



*Admin/Attendance Lead to phone CME for support*



*CME Team carry out further investigations*



*CME Team confirm that everything has been done to find the student and they can be removed from roll*



*Admin/Attendance Lead completes CME form*



*CME form is passed to the Principal for approval*



*CME form is submitted to CME Team at NCC and the pupil is removed from the Academy roll*