



Student Attendance Policy

Document Control

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INTRODUCTION

At Leger Education Trust, we believe excellent attendance and punctuality are vital in helping students achieve their best. Students should be at school, on time and ready to learn, every day the school is open, unless the reason for absence is unavoidable. All research shows that students who attend well achieve well.

The government has laid down guidelines which they expect students at secondary schools to achieve in terms of attendance. It is the aspiration of the Trust that all students will achieve 100% attendance.

We do acknowledge that there are however certain instances where this may not be possible due to illness etc. Whilst some absences may be unavoidable, we ask that parents support us in ensuring each child's attendance meets both the Academy and the Trust's expectations. Any problems with regular attendance, such as concerns over academic support or possible bullying and so on, are best sorted out by the Academy with the students/parents at an early stage.

We will closely monitor all student's attendance and alert parents if we feel there is an issue. Where attendance is an issue, each Academy undertakes a wide range of measures to support students and families. Where we fail to see an improvement in attendance, it may be necessary to make a referral to an appropriate external agency to ensure the student receives the support required to bring about an improvement.

Our Trust target for attendance is 97%+. Absence results in lost learning time and, although students may endeavour to catch up missed work, it cannot replace the teacher-led learning that has taken place. Absentees also miss out on the rich programme of extra-curricular activities and events that make the school experience so enjoyable.

WHY REGULAR ATTENDANCE IS SO IMPORTANT:

Learning: Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence seriously affects their learning. Any students' absence disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning of others in the same class.

Ensuring a child's regular attendance at the Academy is a legal responsibility and permitting absence from the academy without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

Safeguarding: Your child may be at risk of harm if they do not attend the Academy regularly. Safeguarding the interests of each child is everyone's responsibility and within the context of this Trust, promoting the welfare and life opportunities for your child encompasses:

- Attendance
- Behaviour Management
- Health and Safety
- Access to the Curriculum
- Anti-bullying

Failing to attend an Academy on a regular basis may be considered as a safeguarding matter.

TRUST EXPECTATIONS RELATING TO ATTENDANCE

We expect the following from all of our students:

- That they will attend the Academy every day it is open, achieving 100% attendance, unless they have a genuine illness.
- That they will be appropriately prepared for the day.
- That they will inform their Teacher, Form Tutor or appropriate member of staff of any problems which affect attendance or punctuality.

We expect the following from parents in supporting the Home/School agreement with regards to attendance and punctuality:

- To ensure all students attend the Academy regularly, on time and be aware of their legal responsibilities
- To ensure they contact the Academy every day their child is unable to attend, using the dedicated attendance telephone number or email.
- To provide a letter or written note in their child's planner when they return to the school.
- To ensure that their child is appropriately prepared for the day.
- To respond to any letters or messages in their planner regarding attendance.
- To contact the school in confidence whenever they have a problem concerning attendance or punctuality.
- To be fully aware of exam dates and to support attendance during these periods.
- Not to arrange a holiday in term time.
- To respond to the appropriate person regarding letters of concern immediately.
- To make every effort to arrange dental and medical appointments out of the school day.
- That telephone contact numbers are available and if changed, the Academy is informed immediately.

Parents can expect the following from each Academy in the Trust:

- Regular, efficient and accurate recording of attendance.
- Support from the Academy to improve attendance and deal with any underlying issues.
- Early contact from the Academy when a student fails to attend the school without providing good reason or when a student is truanting.
- Response to problems notified to us.
- Celebrate and reward good and improving attendance through competitions, certificates and events.
- Support when there is a problem of long term illness.
- Involvement with Doncaster Children's Services and the Police when appropriate.

These procedures are instigated when:

- a) Attendance drops below the expected level (e.g. 96%)
- b) There are obvious patterns of repeated absence or lateness
- c) When lateness or truancy starts having a negative impact on a child's education

The Law relating to attendance

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that 'the parent' of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him / her to receive efficient full time education suitable: -

(a) To age, ability and aptitude and

(b) To any special educational needs he/ she may have either by regular attendance at school or otherwise'

Furthermore, the Education Act 1996 and subsequent amendments to legislation give schools and local authorities the powers to take legal action against parents to enforce attendance at the school they are registered to attend.

Children missing from education

We recognise that when a child goes missing from an Academy it is a potential indicator of a safeguarding concern; therefore, we follow the Doncaster Safeguarding Board procedures. The full version can be found at: <http://www.doncaster.gov.uk/services/schools/children-missing-education>

Each Academy will investigate instances of unauthorised absences and will report students with irregular attendance, or who have been continuously absent for 10 days or more, to Doncaster Council. Each Academy reserves the right to contact relevant agencies to seek advice (Children's Social Care, Police, YOS, Housing, Doncaster Council etc.) if any child is absent from school for more than five days without confirmation from parents.

Pupils who have gone missing from a Trust Academy

- From the 1st day of absence and up to the 10th school day of absence the Academy must make initial enquiries to locate the pupil.
- If the Academy have not been able to confirm the location of the pupil by the 11th school day of absence they must complete the 'Moved Out of Doncaster/Whereabouts unknown' form completing the checklist and send to welfare.service@doncaster.gov.uk.
- If the Academy and the Local Authority have failed, after jointly making reasonable enquiries, to ascertain the whereabouts of the student and the student has been absent for a minimum of 20 school days, the Academy can remove the student's name from its admission register from the first day of absence.
- If a child continues to be absent with no evidence of an imminent return after more than 20 days but the whereabouts are known, the Trust will convene a Trust Attendance Panel and consider removing the student from the Academy roll.

There are many circumstances where a child may become missing from education. In such cases, as those listed below, school will take a pro-active approach:

- Students at risk of harm / neglect (Academy will follow standard Child Protection procedures for referrals to social care / police);
- Children of Gypsy, Roma or Traveller families (school will inform local authority when a GRT student leaves the Academy without identifying a new destination school);
- Families of Armed Forces (school will contact MOD Children's Education Advisory Service for advice on making arrangements for continuity of education);
- Missing children / runaways (direct referral to Children's Services and Police); and,
- Children who cease to attend a school (referral to Doncaster Council).

(It is important to note that any Safeguarding concerns regarding the immediate safety or well-being of a child need to be referred immediately to Social Care and the police if appropriate). When school suspect they have a missing pupil the above procedures must take place.

Medical Illness

If a child feels ill in the morning, parents should provide them with appropriate pain relief/medication and send them to school. Any medication should be handed in to the main reception who will administer it when required. Your child should be in school if they have a minor illness such as a headache, cold, sore throat or period-pains.

If a child is ill i.e. to the extent that they cannot get out of bed, then please ring or email the Academy to notify the attendance team of their absence. Please ensure that your child returns to the Academy as soon as possible, even if they are not 100%.

If your child is absent from the Academy for 5 days or longer parents must provide medical evidence, i.e. an appointment card, indicating the reason for absence.

Medical Appointments

A full day's absence will not be authorised for a medical appointment. Parents should arrange all appointments outside the school day. If the appointment is unavoidable, a child must come to school before and after the appointment. Any full day's absence will be marked as unauthorised.

The Trust does appreciate that it is often difficult for parents to obtain written confirmation of medical appointments.

Absence Requests

Requests for absence during term-time

Due to Government legislation each Academy in the Trust is no longer able to authorise any holiday during school time. This absence will therefore be recorded as unauthorised absence on your child's attendance record unless this is deemed to be an exceptional circumstance which would need to be agreed by the Principal/Headteacher. A Penalty Notice may be issued by the Local Authority following a child's absence. Penalty notices are issued at £60 per parent (if paid within 21 days) and £120 (if paid within 28 days) for each child. A leave of absence form is available from each Academy. If parents do not notify the Academy but there is evidence that your child has been on holiday, a fixed penalty fine may still be issued. Sixth Form students will follow the same protocols regarding holiday requests.

Celebrating and rewarding good attendance

Good and improved attendance is rewarded by each Academy with various incentives for individual students, class groups, form groups and whole school. These include prize draws, rewards and celebration assemblies.

Responding to non-attendance

Where a pupil is absent and the Academy have had no contact from a parent/carer the school will respond in the following manner

- First day contact through phone call or text/email will be implemented for all students after 9.30am, further attempts at communication may also be made. Members of the attendance team and /or a member of the Academy may visit any child who is absent from school.
- Persistent non-attendance will be brought to the attention of the Education and Welfare Service. Further action may include participation in attendance improvement initiatives, home visits and/or meetings between the Academy, parents/carers and students and, if appropriate, other agencies in an attempt to identify and solve the problems which are preventing the student from attending school.
- In cases where attendance does not improve, appropriate action will be taken by the Education and Welfare Service in liaison with Academy staff.

UNDERSTANDING TYPES OF ABSENCE:

Every half-day absence from the Academy has to be classified by the Academy (not by the parents), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of an absence is always required, preferably in writing. Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from the Academy for a good reason like genuine illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause. Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This type of absence can lead to the Trust and or the Local authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings.

This includes:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily.
- Truancy before or during the school day.
- Absences which have never been properly explained.
- Holidays in term time.

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular non-attendance are best sorted out between the Academy, the parents and the child. If a child is reluctant to attend, excusing them from attending makes the situation worse as it gives the impression that attendance does not matter.

Persistent absence:

A student becomes a 'persistent absentee' (PA) when they miss **10%** or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level damages a child's educational prospects. PA students are

tracked and monitored carefully through our Trust and we also combine this with academic mentoring where absence affects attainment.

PUNCTUALITY TO SCHOOL

Students should be in school by the time directed by each Academy. If they are not, they will be classed as late. The Academy will contact home should their child be late. Three or more late marks to school in a half-term will result in the student being targeted for intervention. Parents of students who are deemed to be persistently late will be expected to meet with a member of the Attendance Team, or member of Academy team to discuss any issues.

Late Arrivals

A student will be marked late if not in registration area when the register is taken. Registers will be kept open for 90 minutes after the start of the school day, after this time a mark of U or other appropriate code will be used.

ABSENCE PROCEDURES FOR PARENTS

If a child is absent a parent must follow the Academy specific directions on the 'What to do if your child is absent' document (APPENDIX 2)

COVID-19 RELATED ABSENCE

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-attendance/addendum-recording-attendance-in-relation-to-coronavirus-covid-19-during-the-2021-to-2022-academic-year>

PERSONAL DETAILS

It is vital that parental details are correct. There are times when an Academy may need to contact parents to discuss absence or more importantly to contact a parent in the event of an emergency. Data checks occur at the start of the year and it is the expectation that parents notify the Academy of any changes in personal contact details.

MOVING TO A DIFFERENT SCHOOL OR ACADEMY

It is important that if families decide to send the child/children in their care to a different School/Academy they must inform the current Academy as soon as possible. Your child/children must continue their education with the Academy until their start date at the new school. Schools/academies may be reluctant to take a child onto roll where attendance is low and so it is imperative that they continue to attend. A student will not be removed from the Academy roll until we have received confirmation that they have started at the new school/Academy and the following information has been received and verified.

- The date the student is leaving this Academy and starting a new School/Academy.
- The address of the new School/Academy, and confirmation from that School/Academy that the student has been admitted.
- The new home address.

The students' School/Academy record will then be sent on to the new school/academy as soon as possible. In the case of movement abroad, records will be provided for the student to take with them. In the event that the Academy has not been informed of the above information, the family will be referred to the Local Authority as a 'Child Missing Education'. The Academy will complete a 'Common Transfer File' (CTF) for all students leaving the academy for another school/academy.

NEW STUDENTS

Any parent wishing to apply for a place at one of our Academies may do so following the Academy admissions policy.

APPENDIX 1 – Leger Education Trust Attendance Codes



The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance (July 2019)

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

Authorised Absence:

CODE	DEFINITION	NARRATIVE
C	Authorised leave of absence	Student has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Student has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Student has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Student is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Student is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 student is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Student from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the Academy

Unauthorised Absence:

CODE	DEFINITION	NARRATIVE
G	Unauthorised holiday	Student is on holiday that was not approved by the Academy
N	Reason not provided	Student 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)
O	Unauthorised absence	Academy is not satisfied with reason for student's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Student arrived at Academy after the register closed

CODE	DEFINITION	NARRATIVE
X	Not required to be in school	Students of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	Academy site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Student not on admission register	Register set up but student has not yet joined the Academy
#	Planned Academy closure	Whole or partial Academy closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

APPENDIX 2

What to do if your child is absent from school

Campsmount Academy



If a student is absent, parents/carers should contact the Academy by 08.30am on the first day of absence on the telephone number below – this number includes a 24-hour answer phone facility for your convenience.

A telephone call or Parent Mail is expected each day a student is absent.

For absences that extend to a week (5 school days or more), some form of medical evidence is required; this can be in the form of a Doctor's/walk-in centre note, copy of prescription or sight of prescribed medication.

Absence Telephone Number: 01302 700002 – Option 1

Text messages will be sent home for non-attenders if parents have not contacted the Academy. This will be followed by a telephone call and further attempts at communication will also be made, including a home visit if the Academy are unable to confirm the whereabouts of a student.

Spa Academy Askern



If a student is absent, parents/carers should contact the Academy by 9.00am on the first day of absence on the telephone number below – this number includes a 24-hour answer phone facility for your convenience. Alternatively, please email the address below to report the absence.

A telephone call or email is expected each day a student is absent.

For absences that extend to a week (5 school days or more), some form of medical evidence is required; this can be in the form of a Doctor's/walk-in centre note, copy of prescription or sight of prescribed medication.

Absence Telephone Number: 01302 700332 – Option 1

Absence Email Address: admin@spaacademyaskern.com

Phone calls will be made for non-attenders if parents have not contacted the Academy. This will be followed by a text message and further attempts at communication will also be made, including a home visit if the Academy are unable to confirm the whereabouts of a student.

APPENDIX 2 (Continued)

What to do if your child is absent from school



Askern Littlemoor Infant Academy

If a child is absent, parent/carers should contact School by 9.00am on the first day of absence on the telephone number below – this number includes a 24-hour answer phone facility for your convenience.

A telephone call is expected each day a child is absent.

For absences that extend to a week (5 school days or more), some form of medical evidence is required; this can be in the form of a Doctor's/walk-in centre note, copy of prescription or sight of prescribed medication.

Absence Telephone Number: 01302 701353 – Option 1

School will contact the parents/carers of non-attenders if a notification has not been received. Further attempts at communication will also be made including a home visit if School is unable to confirm the whereabouts of a child.



Askern Moss Road Infant Academy

If a child is absent, parent/carers should contact School by 9.00am on the first day of absence on the telephone number below – this number includes a 24-hour answer phone facility for your convenience.

A telephone call is expected each day a child is absent.

For absences that extend to a week (5 school days or more), some form of medical evidence is required; this can be in the form of a Doctor's/walk-in centre note, copy of prescription or sight of prescribed medication.

Absence Telephone Number: 01302 700287 – Option 1

School will contact the parents/carers of non-attenders if a notification has not been received. Further attempts at communication will also be made including a home visit if School is unable to confirm the whereabouts of a child.

Castle Hills Primary Academy



If a student is absent, parents/carers should contact the Academy by 9.00am on the first day of absence on the telephone number below – this number includes a 24-hour answer phone facility for your convenience.

A telephone call is expected each day a student is absent.

For absences that extend to a week (5 school days or more), some form of medical evidence is required; this can be in the form of a Doctor's/walk-in centre note, copy of prescription or sight of prescribed medication.

Absence Telephone Number: 01302 780246 Option 1.

Text messages will be sent home for non-attenders if parents have not contacted the Academy. This will be followed by a telephone call and further attempts at communication will also be made including a home visit if the Academy are unable to confirm the whereabouts of a student.

Vega College



If a student is absent, parents/carers should contact the College by 9.00am on the first day of absence on the telephone number below – this number includes a 24-hour answer phone facility for your convenience. Alternatively, you can text or email using the details below.

A telephone call or message is expected each day a student is absent.

For absences that extend to a week (5 school days or more), some form of medical evidence is required; this can be in the form of a Doctor's/walk-in centre note, copy of prescription or sight of prescribed medication.

Absence Telephone Number: 01302 493447

Text Messages to: 07749 468451

Absence Email Address: office@vegacollege.com

Text messages will be sent home for non-attenders if parents have not contacted the College. This will be followed by a telephone call and further attempts at communication will also be made if we are unable to confirm the whereabouts of a student.