

## **JOHN WHITGIFT ACADEMY ATTENDANCE POLICY**

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

*“Together We Are Stronger.”*

At John Whitgift Academy we believe education is important. Missing school means missing out. Parents have a legal duty under the Education Act 1996 to make sure that their children of compulsory school age attend on a regular and full-time basis.

### **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### **Key Staff**

Principal – Mr R Spendlow

Vice Principal – Miss C Glaves

Education Welfare Officer – Miss S Dobson

Home Academy Liaison Officer – Mrs J Chard

Learning and Consequence Manager Year 7 & 8 – Miss A Winn

Learning and consequence Manager Year 9, 10 & 11- Mr P Tuffnell

Tutors

All staff at John Whitgift Academy are responsible for maintaining and promoting good attendance in accordance with the aims and objectives within this policy.

## **AIMS**

1. To improve student attendance and achieve whole school target of 95% or more.
2. To ensure that regular attendance assists students to be successful learners.
3. To reduce the number of students defined as 'Persistent Absence'.
4. To make attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with the academy including students, parents/carers, teachers, support staff and governors.
5. To ensure parents/carers are aware of their responsibilities under the above statutes and to seek their co-operation in their implementation.
6. To provide advice, support and guidance to students and parents/carers.
7. To further develop positive and consistent communications between home and the academy.
8. To promote effective partnerships with the Education Welfare Service and other support networks, services and agencies.
9. To recognise the needs of the individual student when planning reintegration following significant periods of absence.

## **OBJECTIVES**

### **AIM 1 - To improve student attendance and achieve whole academy target of 95% or more**

- To implement the attendance policy consistently
- To maintain a high profile for attendance and punctuality
- Work with the Education Welfare Service and other support networks and agencies to address and advise on attendance issues
- Early intervention for persistent absent students and students of concern. To be implemented by holding attendance clinics with students and parental meetings.

### **AIM 2 – To ensure that regular attendance assists students to be successful learners.**

- To ensure that students and parent/carers are aware of the link between attendance and attainment.
- Academy and parent/carers to work together to ensure the best possible attendance for every student

### **AIM 3 - To reduce the number of students defined as 'Persistent Absence'.**

- To monitor students to identify patterns and reasons for absence
- To target PA and potential PA students (PA student = 10% absence or more by end of Spring Term)
- To issue Penalty Notices for persistent absence and unauthorised leave of absence during term time

**AIM 4 - To make attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with the academy including students, parents/carers, teachers, support staff and governors**

- Display attendance data and information at key focal points around the academy
- Including attendance as a standard agenda item for Governor and Senior Leadership Team Meetings
- Key staff to attend meetings on attendance
- To give rewards for good attendance using Achievement points and half termly attendance draw
- To penalise lateness by use of detention
- To help parents understand the importance of attendance by promoting the links between attendance and attainment

**AIM 5 - To ensure parents/carers are aware of their responsibilities under the above statutes and to seek their co-operation in their implementation**

- Highlighting attendance and where support can be sought in mentor groups and assemblies
- Seeking good communication with parents with appropriate challenges for absence
- Holding correct contact information for parents/ carers
- Involving parent/carer at earliest stage
- Support is available for students and parents via Teaching staff, Pastoral staff, Home Academy Liaison Officer, Education Welfare Officer, School Nurse

**AIM 6 - To provide advice, support and guidance to students and parents/carers**

- Ensure parent/carers are aware of their legal duty in terms of attendance and reporting absences and supplying correct contact details for parents/ carers with parental responsibility.
- Ensure students are aware of the importance of good attendance
- Parent/carers and students aware that academy uniform needs to be available to wear prior to the start of the academy day
- Absences for purchasing uniform will not be authorised and will be challenged
- Issue Penalty Notices for unauthorised leave of absence during term time and persistent absence

**AIM 7 - To further develop positive and consistent communications between home and academy**

- Continue First Day Contact policy using phone, letter or home visits together with Sims texting facility
- Home Academy Liaison Officer to be available to discuss issues with attendance with students, parent/carers
- Academy Education Welfare Officer available to support both academy and parent/carers with attendance issues
- Use appropriate communication methods
- Encourage parent/carers to engage with the academy and attend meetings
- Provide parent/carers with attendance information

**AIM 8 - To promote effective partnerships with the Education Welfare Service and other support networks, services and agencies**

- Liaise regularly with Education Welfare Service, School Nurse, Social Workers, Alternative Package providers, and other agencies to establish good relations, involvement and update personnel
- Arrange multi agency meetings as appropriate
- Establish and maintain a list of services and agencies and contact details

**AIM 9 - To recognise the needs of the individual student when planning reintegration following significant periods of absence**

- Being sensitive to the individual needs and circumstances of returning students
- Appropriate information for all staff of reintegration process
- Provide opportunity for counselling
- Set timetable for an individual reintegration programme if appropriate
- Involve parent/carers as much as possible for smooth transition

**PROCEDURES**

**Parental Expectations**

- Parents/carers are required to provide the academy with the names and contact details of all individuals who have Parental Responsibility for the student.
- Parents/carers are required to provide telephone numbers and addresses for three named contacts
- Parents/carers are required to contact the academy to update any changes regarding student contact details

**Illness and other unacceptable reasons**

If a child is unfit to attend the academy, parents/carers should contact the academy on the FIRST day of absence to provide a reason and confirm that they are aware of their child's non-attendance. The academy may request written medical confirmation to enable absences to be authorised. Examples of written medical confirmation include GP and dentist cards, hospital letters and prescribed medications. Parents/carers are asked, where possible and appropriate, to send their child to the academy with minor illnesses

In instances where the academy receives no communication from parents/carers, the academy will contact parents/carers by text message, via Sims text facility, and telephone. Academy staff may make home visits to ascertain reasons for absence. The academy is unable to authorise absences without communication from parents/carers.

**Please be aware the academy may request a Police welfare check for unexplained absences of 2 or more consecutive school days.**

### **Unauthorised absences**

Unauthorised absences are absences that the academy does not consider reasonable and for which no permission has been given. They include parents/carers keeping children off school for no reason; truancy; absences that have never been properly explained; and children who arrive too late to get a mark.

Every half-day absence from the academy has to be classified by the Academy (not by the parents) as AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of each absence is always required.

Parents/carers have a legal duty to ensure that children registered at John Whitgift Academy attend the academy regularly. The academy has a duty to inform the Education Welfare Service of unauthorised absences.

The academy may adopt the following procedures to address unauthorised absences and problems with regular attendance:

- **School Attendance Panels**

Parents/carers may be invited to formal School Attendance Panel (SAP) meetings to address attendance concerns. Students will be given attendance targets and offered the appropriate support from the academy to address barriers to securing regular attendance.

- **Principal Attendance Panels**

Parents/carers of students who do not meet their SAP targets may be invited to attend a Principal Attendance Panel (PAP) meeting in order to extend the opportunity and support to secure their child's regular attendance. Should there be no further significant improvement in attendance the academy may make a referral to the Education Welfare Service for prosecution.

- **Penalty Notices**

In instances of low attendance, the academy may issue parents/carers with a written warning to secure the regular attendance of their child. Should there be no significant improvement, the academy may then request that the Education Welfare Service issue parents/carers with a penalty notice. The penalty is £60 (per parent for each child) if paid within 21 days of receipt rising to £120 (per parent for each child) if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. Parents may be prosecuted if the 28 day payment period has expired and full payment has not been made.

The academy is committed to working with parents/carers as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible and avoiding formal legal action where possible.

### **Leave of Absence during Term-Time**

Should parents/carers wish to request leave of absence, for their child, a Leave of Absence Request Form must be submitted at least twenty days in advance to the Principal. Within this form, parents need to explain the exceptional reason for requesting leave of absence during term-time. Evidence will be requested for all exceptional circumstances. Leave will not be authorised for the purposes of a family holiday as a norm.

Where the academy believes that students have been absent due to an unauthorised holiday during term-time, the academy may request that parents/carers provide evidence (e.g. written medical confirmation) to prove otherwise in order to enable absences to be authorised and avoid legal action.

The Government states that parents can be fined for taking their child on holiday during term-time without consent from the school. Consequently, the academy has a duty to inform the Education Welfare Service of unauthorised absences relating to requests for leave of absence. In such instances, the Education Welfare Service may issue a penalty notice. The penalty is £60 (per parent for each child) if paid within 21 days of receipt rising to £120 (per parent for each child) if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. Parents may be prosecuted if the 28 day payment period has expired and full payment has not been made.

Academy term dates are printed in students' planners; parents are asked to check these and confirm with the academy before booking holidays.

### **Lateness**

Parents are expected to ensure children are at the academy for 08.20 a.m.; period 1 starts at 08.25 a.m. Students who arrive at the Academy after 08.20 a.m. will be issued a 1 hour detention for each instance of lateness. Late arrivals will be recorded on the academy register. Regular lateness means missing out on valuable learning. Children arriving late can cause the whole class to be unnecessarily disrupted.

Students who arrive late at the academy after the morning register has closed will not be given a present mark for the morning session. These incidents of lateness will be recorded as unauthorised absences on the academy register and count as an offence by the parent.

### **Registration Codes**

<b>Key to Codes</b>	
/	Present (AM)
\	Present (PM)
B	Educated off site (not Dual reg.)
C	Other authorised circumstances
D	Dual registration
E	Excluded
G	Family holiday (not agreed)
H	Family holiday (agreed)
I	Illness
J	Interview
L	Late (before registers closed)
M	Medical/Dental appointments
N	No reason yet provided for absence
O	Unauthorised Abs
P	Approved sporting activity
R	Religious observance

<b>Key to Codes</b>	
S	Study leave
T	Traveller absence
U	Late (after registers closed)
V	Educational visit or trip
W	Work Experience
#	Planned whole or partial school closure
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances
X	Non-compulsory school age absence
Z	Pupil not on roll
-	All should attend / No mark recorded

### **STATUTORY DUTIES**

The Academy operates within the following statutory requirements in its approach to recording, reporting and improving pupil attendance.

These requirements are contained in:

- The Education Act 1996 - sections 434(1)(3)(4)&(6) and 458(4)&(5)
- 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 Act 2002
- The Education (School Day and School Year) (England) Regulations 1999
- The Changing of School Session Times (England) (Revocation) Regulations 2011
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- The Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003
- The Education Act 2005
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Education (Parenting Contracts and Parenting Orders) (England) Regulations 2007
- Magistrates' Courts (Parenting Orders) (Amendment) Rules 2007
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007 as amended
- The Education and Skills Act 2008



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