



Darton Academy Attendance Policy

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DOCUMENT CONTROL

Who is this policy for?

This policy is for:

Darton Academy Staff

Protective marking

Not protectively marked.

Review date

This policy will next be reviewed before the end of September 2020.

Revision History

REVISION	DATE	DESCRIPTION	AUTHOR
1	Sept 2019	Policy issued.	GSM/PCA
2	Jan 2020	Revised policy approved. Published after changes	GSM/PCA

1. ATTENDANCE

- We work in partnership with parents
- We have inclusive principles
- We work in an atmosphere of mutual respect and consideration

In our academy there is the right to:

- Learn in an encouraging environment
- Feel safe and cared for in the academy
- Achieve the best qualifications possible
- Enjoy time in the academy
- Know that any adult in the academy can be approached for help, advice or guidance

For students to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they accept our minimal expectations which are:

- Attend the academy regularly
- Punctual: arriving to the academy and lessons on time
- Have the correct equipment and attitude for learning

2. WHY REGULAR ATTENDANCE IS IMPORTANT

Any absence affects the pattern of a child's education and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any student's absence disrupts teaching and learning routines, so may affect the learning of others in the same class.

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

3. PROMOTING REGULAR ATTENDANCE

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is the responsibility of parents, students and all members of staff. All staff have a clear understanding of the links between behaviour, attendance and student progress and attainment.

To help us all focus on this we will:

- Report to parents half-termly on attendance and punctuality
- Celebrate and reward good attendance in a number of ways
- Work and meet with parents to raise attendance levels across the academy
- Support and guide parents with any issues which have a negative impact on attendance

4. 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 any absence is always required, by telephoning the academy on the first day of absence. Please note that the academy does have an answer machine service so that messages can be left out of academy hours.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from the academy for a reason such as illness or medical and dental appointments which unavoidably fall in academy time. Any other unavoidable causes are authorised at the discretion of the academy in line with government legislation. However, wherever possible appointments should be made out of academy hours or towards the end of the academy day in order to prevent loss of learning. The academy can and does request medical evidence to support such appointments or absence if they occur on a frequent basis and will not authorise absence without it.

Illness of over 2 days may not be authorised without medical evidence.

Unauthorised absences are those which the academy does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This type of absence can lead to the Local Authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. This includes: (Please note this list is not exhaustive)

- Parents/Carers keeping children from attending the academy without good reason
- Truancy before or during the academy day
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Students who arrive in the academy too late to get a mark
- Shopping, birthdays, hair appointments or looking after other children or family member
- Day trips and holidays in term time.
- Not having the correct school uniform
- Visits from relatives

If your child is reluctant to attend the academy, or is having any problems which cause irregular attendance then this is best sorted out between the academy, the parents and the child.

We do request that parents do not keep their child off with minor ailments such as a headache or slight cold.

If there are any concerns about your child's attendance, please contact Mrs Marsh our EWO or your child's Learning Manager who will be pleased to help.

5. PERSISTENT ABSENCE (PA)

A student becomes a 'persistent absentee' (PA) when they miss 10% or more of their attendance across the academic year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any young person's educational prospects. As an academy we need parents' fullest support and co-operation to tackle this. Absence is monitored thoroughly. If any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards PA, parents/carers will be immediately informed.

PA students are tracked and monitored carefully through our pastoral system and we also combine this with academic tracking as absence affects progress and attainment. An Action Plan is completed for each student.

All our potential PA students and students with less than 90% attendance are automatically made known to the Local Authority every term

6. ABSENCE PROCEDURES

If your child is absent you must:

- Contact the academy by 8.25 am on the first day of absence and any subsequent days they are absent. This can be either by phone 01226 232306 option 1 (we do have a voicemail), email to attendance@dartonacademy.org.uk or using the academy text message service, School Comms.

If your child is absent and we have not received a reason we will:

- Telephone or text on the first day of absence, we may also make a home visit.
- Make a home visit following a weekend (even if we have a reason)
- After 2 or more days of absence we will make a safe and well check, even if we have a reason for the absence.

7. EDUCATION PENALTY NOTICES

From January 2019 our attendance procedures are changing in line with the Local Authority.

The issuing of a Penalty Notice is considered appropriate in the following circumstances:

- Overt truancy (including pupils caught on truancy sweeps).
- Parentally-condoned absences.
- Unauthorised leave of absence in term-time.
- Unexplained absence i.e. no reason given for absence.
- Persistent late arrival at school (after the register has closed).
- Excluded pupil present in a public place during the school hours of the school where the pupil is on roll.

To ensure consistent delivery of the process and the issuing of Penalty Notices, there will be at least 10 sessions (5 school days in total) lost by the pupil due to unauthorised absence during the current term. In which case, the following criteria will apply;

- If due to sporadic absences, then, other than in specific circumstances, the liable parent/carer will receive a formal warning of the possibility of a Penalty Notice being issued and given a maximum of 15 school days to effect an improvement. If there are further absences within the 15 day monitoring period then a penalty notice may be issued.
- If a parent continues to fail to secure a child's regular attendance following the above mentioned 15 day monitoring period, then consideration will be given to issuing a Penalty Notice without further warning, having already received a warning previously.

8. TELEPHONE NUMBERS

There are times when we need to contact parents/carers about lots of things, for example if your child is unwell or we need to make contact if your child has an unexplained absence, so we need to have your up to date contact numbers at all times.

Please note no student is sent home unwell without making contact with a parent or carer. We expect all students to be collected by an adult when they are unwell,

9. CONCERN WITH ATTENDANCE

If we have a concern regarding your child's attendance, we will make contact with you:-

- via phone
- Send out a letter
- Make a home visit

If attendance continues to decline, we will invite you into the Academy to complete an Attendance Support Plan. This will be monitored on a weekly basis by one of the attendance team. Following any further unauthorised absences, the academy will send out an education warning letter. If following this letter your child has any further time off from the academy which is unauthorised, a referral will be made to the Local Authority for statutory intervention. This could mean either an Education Penalty Notice or prosecution.

10. LATENESS

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If a student misses the start of the day they can miss work and vital information and news for the day. Students who arrive late also disrupt the learning in lessons. It can be embarrassing for the child and can encourage absence.

How we manage lateness:

- The academy day starts at 8.25am. We expect all students to be in by 8.20am in order to be in class on time.
- If a pupil arrives into the academy after 8.25 am they MUST sign in and report to the attendance office.

At 9.00am the registers will be closed. In accordance with the regulations, if a student arrives after this time they may receive a mark that shows them to be on site, but this will not count as a present mark and will mean they have an unauthorised absence, this code is a U. This may mean that you could be issued with an Education Penalty Notice if the problem persists.

Students who are late to the academy after 8.25 am may be issued with a one hour detention. A detention sticker will be given to the student to put in their planner, If the student already has a detention for that particular day, then it will be rearranged for the next available day depending on whether they have detentions already.

11. HOLIDAYS IN TERM TIME

In line with the Government's new legislation effective from 1st September 2013 no requests for holidays can be authorised except in exceptional circumstances.

For the academy to consider exceptional circumstances a leave of absence form must be submitted at least four weeks before the proposed start of the holiday and before booking the holiday. For the academy to consider exceptional circumstances the request must be put in writing together with any supporting evidence. A meeting or phone call will then take place to discuss the request.

All holidays will be classed as unauthorised, unless you receive confirmation in writing from the academy that the holiday has been authorised. There are no exceptions.

All holidays that are unauthorised will be referred to the Local Authority to issue an Education Penalty Notice.

When an Education Penalty Notice is issued, the penalty is £60 per child, per parent/carer when the payment is made within 21 days, after 28 days it will increase to £120. Failure to pay within 28 days will result in a summons to appear before the Magistrates Court on the grounds that the parent/carer has failed to secure their child's regular attendance at the academy. Please note that a separate Education Penalty Notice will be issued to each parent for each child and all monies are payable to the Local Authority.

Please also be aware that any subsequent unauthorised leave of absence may not be subject to a penalty notice as it would be classed as an aggravated offence and Barnsley Council may use a caution of prosecution for a repeat offence.

12. ACADEMY TARGETS

The academy aims to improve attendance and reduce persistent absence and you have a vital part to play in meeting these targets.

Whilst we strive for every student to achieve 100% attendance, the minimum level of attendance for this academy is 97% and we will keep you updated regularly about how your child's attendance compares to this target.

Our Attendance Team consists of the following staff:

Attendance officer:	Mrs Watson (first point of call)
Attendance officer:	Mr Storer
Education Welfare Officer:	Mrs Marsh
Year 7 Learning Manager	Mrs Simmons
Year 8 Learning Manager	Mr Royston
Year 9 Learning Manager	Mrs Bridger
Year 10 Learning Manager	Mrs Hillier
Year 11 Learning Manager	Mrs Woodhouse
Associate Assistant Principal:	Mr Carmody
Vice Principal	Mr Smith

13. SUMMARY

The academy has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend.

All academy staff are committed to working with parents and students as the best way to ensure as high level of attendance as possible.