



# Attendance

# Policy

September 2023



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# DOCUMENT CONTROL

## Who is this policy for?

This policy is for:

- Delta Alternative Provision Academy Staff (St Wilfrid's Academy & The Elland Academy)

## Protective marking

Not protectively marked.

## Review date

This policy will next be reviewed before the end of September 2022.

## Revision History

REVISION	DATE	DESCRIPTION	AUTHOR
1	Sept 2021	Policy issued.	JP
2	Feb 2022	Policy reviewed and updated	JP
3	Sept 2022	Policy reviewed and updated	JP
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## 1. ATTENDANCE

- We work in partnership with parents/carers
- 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 outcomes 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 and home academies 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 the EWO (SWA: Gail Wilkinson TEA: Jill Franz) or your child's Personal Learning Advocate (PLA) 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.

## 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, email or using the academy text message service.

<b>St Wilfrid's Academy</b> , Doncaster	Telephone: 01302 562540 <a href="mailto:attendance@stwilfridsacademy.org.uk">attendance@stwilfridsacademy.org.uk</a> Text via your child's PLA EWO: Gail Wilkinson
<b>The Elland Academy</b> , Leeds	Telephone: 01302 212 7010 <a href="mailto:info@ellandacademy.org.uk">info@ellandacademy.org.uk</a> Text via your child's PLA EWO: Jill Franz

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 September 2018 our attendance procedures are changing in line with the Local Authority. Education Penalty Notices (EPN)'s can now be issued for irregular attendance. They can be issued if the child has had a 4 or more sessions of absence in a period of no more than 6 weeks and meets the terms of a prosecution under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996 and the school/Council has previously issued a warning letter giving the opportunity to improve attendance over a 15 day period.

The child has 4 sessions of unauthorised leave of absence in term time and the Head has advised the parent in writing that the leave of absence does not constitute the Head's view of an exceptional circumstance.

The child has taken leave of absence in term time without parents requesting authorisation from the academy.

Exclusion has taken place and the parent has allowed the child to be present in a public place during school hours, without reasonable justification, during the first five days of a fixed or permanent exclusion.

## **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:-

- Contact with you either 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 your son/daughter 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 8.30am and we expect all students to be in the academy at that time. The timetable begins at 8.45am and we expect all students to in class by that time.
- If a pupil arrives into the academy after 8.45 am they MUST report to reception, to sign in.

At 10am the registers will be closed. In accordance with the regulations, if a student arrives after this time they will 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 repeatedly late to the academy will be issued with a consequence,

## 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 Doncaster 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, we will keep you updated regularly about how your child's attendance compares to this target.

Our Inclusion Team consists of the following staff:

<b>St Wilfrid's Academy, Doncaster</b>	<b>The Elland Academy, Leeds</b>
Education Welfare Officer: Gail Wilkinson	Education Welfare Officer: Jill Franz
Personal Learning Advocates:  Mel Bielby Sharon Brown Sally Drury Dan Lodge Janene Rollason	Personal Learning Advocates:  Paige Broadbent Tania Carter Yassmina Dakhla Tracy Gill Aden Lyman

## 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.