



## **STAR ACADEMY ATTENDANCE POLICY**

### **Introduction:**

This is a successful Academy and your child plays their part in making it so. We aim for an environment which enables and encourages all members of the community to reach out for excellence. For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and your child should be at the Academy, on time, every day the Academy is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

It is very important therefore that you make sure that your child attends regularly and this Policy sets out how together we will achieve this.

### **Why attendance is so important:**

#### **Learning:-**

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

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

#### **Safeguarding:-**

Safeguarding the interests of each child is everyone's responsibility and within the context of this Academy, 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 this Academy on a regular basis will be considered as a safeguarding matter.

#### **Promoting regular attendance:**

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility – parents, pupils and all members of Academy staff.

## **To help us all to focus on this we will:**

- Give you details on attendance in our regular newsletter;
- Report to you at least half-termly on how your child is performing in the Academy, what their attendance and punctuality rate is and how this relates to their attainments;
- Celebrate good attendance;
- Reward good or improving attendance.

### **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 education needs he/she may have*

*Either by regular attendance at school or otherwise'.*

### **The law relating to safeguarding**

*Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 places a duty on local authorities and governing bodies to have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State with regard to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and students under the age of 18.*

### **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, preferably in writing.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from the Academy for a good reason like medical/dental appointments (with evidence of an appointment card) which unavoidably fall in Academy time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause. Absences relating to ill health will be unauthorised unless evidence is provided.

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 sanctions and/or legal proceedings. This includes:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily;
- Truancy before or during the Academy day;
- Absences which have never been properly explained;
- Children who arrive at the Academy too late to get a mark;
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays;
- Day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed.

Whilst any child may be absent from the Academy because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the Academy, the parents and the child. If your child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and usually makes things worse.

### **Persistent absenteeism (PA):**

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the academic year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's education prospects and we need parents' full support and co-operation to tackle this. We monitor all absence thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and you will be informed of this immediately.

PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully through our pastoral system and we also combine this with academic mentoring where absence affects attainment.

All our PA pupils and their parents are subject to an action plan and the plan may include: allocation of additional support through use of circle time and individual incentive programmes. All PA cases are also automatically made known to the Education Welfare Officer.

### **Absence procedures:**

#### **If your child is absent you must:**

- Contact us as soon as possible on the first day of absence.

#### **If your child is absent we will:**

- Telephone or text you on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you;
- Invite you in to discuss the situation with our Attendance Officer if absences persist;
- Refer the matter to the Education Welfare Officer if attendance falls to 90%.

### **Telephone numbers:**

There are times when we need to contact parents about lots of things, including absence, so we need to have your contact numbers at all times. So help us to help you and your child by making sure we always have an up-to-date number – if we do not then something important may be missed. There will be regular checks on telephone numbers throughout the year.

### **The Education Welfare Officer:**

Parents are expected to contact the Academy at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the Academy may refer the child to the Education Welfare Officer. He/she will also try to resolve the situation by agreement but, if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed and unauthorised absences persist, these Officers can use sanctions such as penalty notices or prosecutions in the Magistrates' Court. Full details of the options open to enforce attendance at the Academy are available from the Academy.

Alternatively, parents or children may wish to contact the Education Welfare Officer themselves to ask for help or information. They are independent of the Academy and will give impartial advice.

### **Lateness:**

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If your child misses the start of the day they can miss work and do not spend time with their class teacher getting vital information and news for the day. Late arriving pupils also disrupt lessons, can be embarrassing for the child and can also encourage absence.

### **How we manage lateness:**

The school day starts at **9:00 am** and we expect your child to be in class at that time.

Registers are marked by **9:10 am** and your child will receive a late mark if they are not in by that time.

At **9:20 am** the registers will be closed. In accordance with the Regulations, if your child arrives after that time they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site, but this will **not** count as a present mark and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence. This may mean that you could face the possibility of a penalty notice if the problem persists.

If your child has a persistent late record you will be asked to meet with the Attendance Officer to resolve the problem, but you can approach us at any time if you are having problems getting your child to the Academy on time.

### **Holidays in term time:**

Taking holidays in term time will affect your child's schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents to help us by not taking children away in Academy time.

Remember that any savings you think you may make by taking a holiday in Academy time are offset by the cost to your child's education.

There is **no** automatic entitlement in law to time off in Academy time to go on holiday.

All applications for leave must be made in advance. However, no holidays will be authorised.

**Academy targets:**

The Academy has targets to improve attendance and your child has an important part to play in meeting these targets.

The minimum level of attendance for this Academy is **96%** attendance and we will keep you updated regularly about progress to this level and how your child's attendance compares.

Our target is to achieve better than this. However, because we know that good attendance is the key to successful schooling we believe our pupils can be amongst the best in the city.

Through the Academy year we monitor absences and punctuality to show where improvements need to be made.

**Those people responsible for attendance matters in this Academy are:**

Mrs J. Brammer – Academy Attendance Officer.

Mrs V. Davies – Education Welfare Officer.

**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 staff are committed to working with parents and pupils as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible and that every child's welfare and life opportunities are promoted.

**Date of Policy/Review: 15 January 2018**

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I have read and understood the terms and conditions of the Attendance Policy at Star Academy.

Signed :

Child's name :

Class :

Sponsored by



# Child Friendly Attendance Policy

## Why you need to come to the Academy ....

- It's the law.
- To learn and to be educated.
- You learn to get along, socialize and make friends with others.
- If you come to the Academy you can take part in clubs and teams.
- You can also go on trips and visits.

## What happens if you don't come to the Academy ....

- Your mum and dad might get into trouble.
- The Academy will ring home and send letters.
- Miss out on learning and tests.
- Miss out on activities, trips and clubs.
- Miss out on friends and socializing.

## What is good attendance ....

- **96% and above.**
- If you have 96% or above attendance for the half term you will be entered into the Academy's prize draw.

## What to do if you don't come to the Academy ....

- If you are really ill and can't come into the Academy remind your mum, dad or carer to ring the Academy.
- When you come back to the Academy get your mum, dad or carer to write in your planner the reason why you have been away from the Academy.

