



Biddick Academy

<i>Name of Policy</i>	Attendance
<i>Aims of Policy</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To encourage and maintain a good level of attendance in all years• Making clear the attendance procedures as agreed by the board of Trustees, staff, parents / Carers and students• Setting out the framework for rewarding good attendance and the procedures to be followed and sanctions to be applied should attendance fall short of these standards• Enhance achievement levels and external examination results• To carry out efficiently the school's legal responsibilities to report attendance and achievement annually to parents• To identify and implement effective strategies to ensure good attendance
<i>Date Valid</i>	June 2021 – June 2022
<i>Date of Approval</i>	June 2021- Headteacher June 2021– Full Governing Board
<i>Next Review and Approval Date</i>	June 2022
<i>Responsibility for Review</i>	Deputy Headteacher

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1.0 Introduction

The Academy's ethos 'inspiring learning, unlocking potential, achieving success' is the reflection of an uncompromising belief that every child will be equally able to secure outstanding educational outcomes and reach their full potential in a positive learning community which supports and values their achievements.

At Biddick Academy we want everyone to:

- Be part of a safe and respectful community
- Feel happy, valued and empowered so that we all thrive
- Aspire to be the best we can be
- Act with integrity
- Nurture resilience and independence
- Have the attitude and character to excel in life
- Have a desire to learn and work with passion, purpose and pride

It is a primary aim that every member of our community feels valued and respected, and that each person is treated fairly within a climate of mutual trust and respect.

All staff believe that our Academy should provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment that promotes the social, physical and moral development of the individual student.

2.0 Responsibilities

Students should be at school, on time, every day the Academy is open, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

Good attendance is the shared responsibility of the Academy, the parent / carer and the Local Authority. Parents / carers have a responsibility to ensure that their children receive the appropriate education and it is the responsibility of the LA to ensure that this happens. All staff, in their capacity either as subject teachers or as form tutors, should be vigilant concerning students' attendance at the Academy and at lessons in order to ensure they are safe at all times. Students should continually be reminded of the link between attendance and attainment. All staff should maintain registers via the electronic registration system and cross-reference should there be any suspicion concerning an absence or pattern of absence. Truancy from lessons should be reported immediately to the student office.

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

2.1 Pastoral Team (Head of Year / Assistant Head of Year)

- Have high expectations of self and others and expect consistently good practice from the team of Form Tutors
- Promote and praise good attendance and punctuality in assemblies and when communicating with all stakeholders
- Monitor by Tutor Group students weekly attendance and punctuality and discuss in Year Team weekly briefings
- Identify students who raise concerns and act accordingly
- Support the Form Tutor in strategies to encourage good attendance and punctuality
- Interview students who are persistently late or whose attendance is raising concerns and act accordingly e.g. consequences, parental contact, liaising with attendance officer
- Make referrals to other agencies to support students and their families
- Take prompt action once truanting students are identified:

1. Check that the student is not in the building
2. Inform parent / carer
3. Parent / carer may wish to inform the police or the Academy may do so if parent / carer can not be contacted (Decision to inform the police will be made by the DSL or DDSL)
4. Parent / carer will be informed if their child returns to the Academy
5. Request parent / carer inform the Academy if they locate their child

2.2 Attendance Officers

- The Attendance Manager for Biddick Academy is Mr Tom Howe and the Attendance Officer for Biddick Academy is Mrs. K Hughes.

Their Roles are to:

- Check attendance and punctuality records on a daily basis
- Contact parents / carers if a student is absent and no call has been received to explain an absence
- Ensures the appropriate codes are used for students who leave the building e.g. illness, medical appointments, educational visits etc.
- Ensure authorised absence codes are entered once letters or calls are received explaining absence
- Liaise with and support parents/carers to improve their child's attendance and punctuality and ensure the Pastoral Team are aware
- Liaise with the Local Authority and Heads of Year to make referrals if students absence falls below what is acceptable
- Attend meetings with the Pastoral Team and Deputy Headteacher to discuss attendance
- Prepare attendance, punctuality and relevant background reports as required by the Pastoral Team and Senior Leadership Team

2.3 Form Tutors

- Mark registers promptly and accurately
- Ensure correct codes are used
 1. Present = /
 2. Absent = N
 3. Late = L (enter the number of minutes late)
- If name(s) on the register are incorrect then inform the student office
- Leave pre entered codes as they are
- If technical issues arise, complete a paper register and pass to the Attendance Officer
- Promote and praise good attendance and punctuality
- Monitor attendance data weekly and have conversations with students to ensure they are aware of the impact of low attendance. Set targets and contact parents if necessary. Ensure the HOY is aware of any important information by recording conversations on CPOMS

2.4 Subject Teachers

We are legally required to educate students who are absent from lessons whether it be as a result of an illness, exclusions or in an alternative provision ~~such as Steps or The Bridge~~ and it is the responsibility of the subject teacher to provide relevant work, mark it and provide feedback where appropriate.

- Mark registers promptly and accurately
- Ensure correct codes are used
 1. Present = /
 2. Absent = N
 3. Late = L (enter the number of minutes late)
- Set a good example by being punctual
- Where it is suspected a student has truanted a lesson then Faculty Leaders and the Pastoral Team should be informed immediately

- Students who miss lessons are expected to catch up with any work missed
- Staff who take students out of classes to participate in educational visits must register the student before the event begins and let staff know in advance which students are out

2.5 Parents / Carers

- Ensure their child attends the Academy and is punctual
- If their child is ill or absent for other reason they must inform the Attendance Team on the first day of absence and keep the Academy informed
- If their child is refusing to come to school the parent/ carer should also contact the Head of Year or Assistant Head of Year, who will support the parent / carer with any concerns they may have
- Make medical appointments outside of Academy hours where possible, if this is not possible then provide a note / copy of appointment to the Attendance Team
- It is the responsibility of the parent / carer to hand any supporting evidence that has been requested to the attendance manager or officer in person and not the responsibility of the student
- If there are a series of appointments to vary the time and day to avoid missing the same lesson
- The student should return to the Academy immediately after the appointment
- Support their child in catching up on any missed work
- Take their child on holiday during Academy holiday periods only

2.6 Students

- Aim to achieve 100% attendance and punctuality and actively work towards this target by arriving at registration and lessons on time
- Catch up on any missed work
- Remain on Academy premises during Academy hours and not to truant lessons
- Sign out at the student office if leaving the Academy for any reason and signing in when returning

2.7 Electronic Registration

The register is a document which must be kept up to date both for legal reasons and so that Form Tutors, Heads of Year and The Academy Attendance Team can monitor attendance and deal effectively with truants. The school is also obliged to submit accurate figures on attendance and types of absence both to the LA and DFE on a termly basis.

- Students' names will be presented on the electronic system in one alphabetical list. The student office should be notified of any errors on form lists or teaching sets
- Registers should be completed in line with the symbols on the computerised system. Whilst an absence remains unexplained the symbol is an 'N'. This symbol will remain until such times as the Academy Attendance Team become satisfied that the absence is authorised at which time (two weeks) the appropriate symbol should be entered
- Every effort should be made to ascertain reasons for absence. Where such efforts, whether by note or by telephone, have not succeeded in obtaining authorisation for any absence within seven days of the student's return to school, the Academy Attendance Team will take appropriate action such as the absence remaining unauthorised
- Parents / carers have been requested to inform school on the 'First Day' of a student's absence. If the parent / carer does not notify the Academy then the Academy Attendance Officers will telephone the home
- Any student who is absent, regardless of whether an explanation has been provided may receive a home visit from the Academy Attendance Officer or the Pastoral Team
- Electronic registers should be completed as soon as is practicable at the beginning of every lesson
- Registration for the Academy is 8.30am for am registration and 1pm, for pm registration

- The registers will close 30 minutes after opening and any student arriving to the Academy after this time will be classed as having an unauthorised absence

Absences

3.1 Authorised Absences

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from the Academy for a good reason, such as illness or other unavoidable cause.

3.2 Unauthorised Absences

Unauthorised absences are those, which the Academy does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given.

This includes:

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Students who arrive at the Academy after the registers have closed

3.3 Holidays

Currently Headteachers' may in exceptional circumstances grant leave of absence of up to ten days for the purpose of family holidays during term time. The application must be made in advance and the Headteacher must be satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances which warrant the leave. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the Headteacher's discretion and is not a parental right.

The fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional' are rare, significant, unavoidable and short. And by 'unavoidable' we mean an event that could not reasonably be scheduled at another time. Parents / carers who are part of the emergency services or armed forces will usually be classed in the exceptional category.

These guidelines are clear that few holidays taken during term time will be authorised, however the Academy will support students in ensuring their education is not compromised as far as practicably possible.

Any parent / carer wishing to apply for a leave of absence must complete an application, which is available from the Attendance Officer, who will discuss the circumstances with the Head teacher.

A parent / carer who takes their child on holiday for a period of 10 days or more may be issued with a fixed penalty notice from the Local Authority.

3.4 Truancy

All staff, in their capacity either as Subject Teachers, Form Tutors or Intervention Tutors are vigilant concerning students' attendance at the Academy and at lessons.

Students are continually reminded of the link between attendance and attainment, during Form Tutor time and Tutorial lessons.

All staff maintain registers via the electronic registration system, and if there are concerns regarding truancy the School Attendance Officers inform the relevant Head of Year and parents / carers. These absences will be classed as *unauthorised* and will affect the overall attendance of a student. Spot checks are carried out periodically in order to make students aware that attendance is being closely monitored

Good Attendance

The closer to 100% a student's attendance, the greater the probability that they will achieve their potential.

Good attendance is encouraged in the following ways (individually, Form Groups, Year Groups):

- Reward points
- Certificates
- Post Cards
- Notes in planners

Support Systems

Biddick Academy believes that all students have a right to a good education and has a number of support systems in place to support students and their families.

- Each Year group has a Head of Year and Assistant Head of Year to support students and their families
- Pastoral Team work closely with other agencies such as Together for Children and the Local Authority Attendance Team to support families
- Support 21 can support students through a variety of strategies and interventions depending on the need of the student

Procedures

4.1 Parent / Carer Procedures

- Parents are requested to contact school on the first day of a child's absence and to provide a note on their return to school.
- If supporting evidence has been requested from a parent / carer for their child's absence, then it is the responsibility of the parent / Carer to attend the Academy and hand the evidence to the Attendance officer in person

4.2 Academy Procedures

- The Academy Attendance Officer will contact home if no reason for absence is provided
- The Academy Attendance Officer identifies absent students who have not contacted the Academy on their first day of absence and will contact parent / carer either via telephone, text, e-mail or in person
- When the Academy is satisfied with the reason for absence then this will be authorised with the correct symbol. If the Academy believe that a valid reason has not been provided then the absence will remain unauthorised
- The Attendance Officers will meet with the Heads of Year on a regular basis to monitor the attendance of any student where there is a cause for concern
- If a student continues with poor attendance, absence will not be authorised regardless of reason unless supporting evidence is received to support the absence (e.g medical appointment card)

- The Academy will do all it can to support students whose attendance is poor and doesn't improve
- Students whose attendance falls below 90% are classed as Persistent Absentees (PA).
- The Academy will refer students and their parents / carers to the Local Authority attendance team if attendance is poor and does not improve.

4.3 Local Authority Procedures

Please see Sunderland Local Authority Attendance Procedures for full information.

The Local Authority Attendance Team can issue a Fixed Penalty Notice if “a pupil of compulsory school age has been absent, and the absence has not been authorised by the school, or where the pupil has persistently arrived late after the register has been closed (after the register has closed - U code) and where it is believed that the issue of the notice will be effective in helping to get the child back into school”.

1. The level of absence that is necessary before a Penalty Notice can be issued is 20 or more half day sessions (equivalent to ten school days) of unauthorised absence during any ten week period.
2. In the case of unauthorised absence due to holiday, a Penalty Notice can be issued if there are 20 or more half day sessions of unauthorised absence in 10 school days. It would have to be clearly demonstrated that the parent understood and had been warned that permission for the holiday had not or would not be given. The school must be able to demonstrate that the parent had full knowledge of the schools procedures and the possible consequences.
3. As a result of attendance sweeps, where there is a repeated unjustified reason for the child being absent from school and they are found accompanied by their parent.
4. Where a child who has been excluded is present in a public place during the first five days. A penalty notice will be issued on the first occasion if appropriate after considering the parents action or inaction which led to the child being in a public place at a proscribed time, the parent's justification if any, and the parent's attitude to having failed to meet their statutory responsibility.
5. The liable parent or carer has received a formal warning from the LA of the possibility of a Penalty Notice being issued, and shall be given a maximum of 15 school days to effect an improvement. A warning notice is not necessary with regards to point 2 as the schools decline letter will be used as the formal warning. A warning notice is not required in for cases that meet the criteria in point 4.
6. There will be no restriction on the number of times a parent or carer may receive a warning on the possible issue of a Penalty Notice, but no more than two penalty notices per child will be issued during any academic year. Where families have more than one child who fits the criteria, multiple issuing of Penalty Notices may occur.

Should a parent fail or refuse to pay a penalty notice then the evidence provided by the school registration certificate (or that of alternative education provider) will be the primary information laid before the court.

Payment of a Penalty Notice within 21 days is £60 and payment after this time but within 28 days is £120.

If the penalty is not paid in full by the end of the 28 day period the Attendance Team must either prosecute for the offence to which the notice applies or withdraw the notice. The prosecution is not for non-payment of the notice but is a prosecution for irregular school attendance - Education Act 1996 Section 444(1).

There is no statutory right of appeal against the issuing of a penalty notice.