



**ASPIRATIONS**

# **Atlantic Academy Attendance Policy**

<b>Version control</b>	
<b>July 2024</b>	Amendment to lateness and 'The Law' paragraphs
<b>July 2023</b>	No changes

Date of next review:	September 2025	Owner:	Vice/ Assistant Principal
Type of policy:	Academy	Approval level:	Principals

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## **Introduction**

Atlantic Academy places a high priority on achieving excellent levels of attendance and punctuality enabling all students to achieve their maximum potential by taking full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. There is a proven link between high Academy attendance and academic success; therefore, it is essential that Atlantic Academy, parents/carers and students consistently work together in order to achieve this. Atlantic has an aspirational **attendance target of at least 97% for Primary and 95% for Secondary** to support outstanding progress for all of our students.

School attendance is a legal requirement and this information about Atlantic Academy's Attendance Policy is in line with the 2013 Department for Education expectations and addendums as well as subject to the requirements contained in The Education Act 1996.

## **Why regular attendance is so important**

Regular attendance is vital for academic success, positive well being, promotes good mental health and encourages good habits. There is a proven link between poor Academy attendance and low achievement. Government figures show the following:

- A student with an absence level of 10% will, on average, achieve 1 grade lower across all GCSE subjects.
- Of students in the 80%-90% range, only 35% will achieve 5 9-4 grades at GCSE (including Maths and English)

If you have any concerns or issues with your child's attendance, please do not hesitate to contact Atlantic Academy on 01305 820262 and ask for the Attendance Coordinator.

## **Aim**

- To emphasise the importance of and ensure students have a high level of attendance and excellent punctuality at the Academy to enable them to take full advantage of their educational opportunities.
- To make explicit to all relevant parties the Academy's expectations over attendance and punctuality expectations.
- To promote a consistent approach across the Academy to all matters relating to attendance.
- To clarify the roles and responsibilities of all parties with respect to attendance.

- To communicate to all relevant parties (staff, governors, parents, students) the legal position with respect to attendance and the categories of absence which are deemed “authorised”.
- To stress the importance for home and Academy to work in close partnership to achieve high attendance.

***As a parent/carer it is your responsibility to ensure the following:***

- That your child attends Atlantic Academy daily and is punctual
- Contact Atlantic Academy on each day of unavoidable absence by 9am, earlier where possible
- Arrange medical or dental appointments outside of Academy hours
- Inform Atlantic Academy of any future appointments in advance
- Provide medical evidence by way of appointment cards, appointment letters or prescription
- Attend meetings if requested with regards to attendance or lateness as appropriate.

***It is the academy’s responsibility to ensure that:***

- Accurate records for Attendance & Punctuality are maintained.
- Parents/Carers are contacted by text messaging and/or telephone calls to establish reason and eliminate the possibility of truancy when a student is absent.
- Absence letters or home visits are carried out when there are absences of more than 3 days without engagement
- Monitor students that are persistently absent or late and refer to the local authority inclusion team when necessary.
- To provide daily updates on attendance to the local authority inclusion team for vulnerable students.
- Good attendance is recognised and celebrated
- While it is primarily parents’ responsibility to ensure their children attend the academy, Efforts are made to support students and families who are struggling to attend

**Punctuality and Lateness**

### **Poor punctuality is not acceptable.**

- Students who arrive after the gates have shut must sign in at the main reception and will receive a late mark in the register (L).

in the Primary phase:

- The Primary gate opens at 8:30 and students from Years 1-6 are expected to arrive and be in classrooms by 8:40.

In the secondary phase:

- Students need to be in the Academy by 8.27am when the Secondary phase gate shuts.
- Registration is taken at 8.30am. Students who arrive after this will be marked as late.
- The academy opens to Secondary phase students from 7.45am and students may use the Dining Hall from 7.45am until morning tutor lineups begin at 8.27am.
- Students who arrive after 9.30am must sign in at the main reception and will be given an unauthorised late (U) which is counted as an absence by law.

Persistent unauthorised lateness will result in a Penalty Notice being issued by the local authority.

### **Absence**

We are required by law to provide reasons for student absences so that our register accurately reflects students' attendance. As a parent/carer it is your responsibility to contact the academy through our online [Absence reporting contact form](#) or by phone on 01305 820262 by 9am **on each day of absence** providing a reason for absence so that we are aware of the absence. Please note that this does not mean the absence is authorised.

If you do not contact Atlantic Academy, we will either phone you to find out why your child is not in the Academy or a text will be generated to your registered mobile phone contact number informing you that your child has failed to attend the Academy. This is a safeguarding procedure to ensure that no harm has come to your child if they have left home and not arrived at Atlantic Academy.

If reasons for absence are not in line with Academy policy, absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Please avoid arranging appointments for your child during the Academy day. If this is unavoidable, please advise Atlantic Academy at the earliest opportunity giving details of the appointment. A copy of the appointment card or hospital appointment letter should be provided either when collecting or returning your child.

## **Absence requests during term time**

All schools are expected to restrict leaves of absence to the specific circumstances set out in regulation 11 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 and will be considered on a case by case basis.

- **The Principal may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.** The DfE does not consider the need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance.
- Only the parent/carer the child resides with can make an application for a Leave of Absence. Requesting Leave of Absence must be made in writing to the Principal, by completing an absence request form, obtained from the Academy Reception.
- Absence will only be considered under exceptional circumstances and the Principal will ask for specific and appropriate evidence. Cheaper holiday dates, visiting relatives here or abroad and limitations on parental leave entitlement are not deemed exceptional circumstances.
- If Leave of Absence is taken without authorisation, it will be recorded as an unauthorised absence. In this event, parents are likely to be subject to a Penalty Notice which is issued under the Local Authority Code of Conduct and is payable to the local authority.
- A Penalty Notice can also be issued when a parent / carer provides the academy a reason for absence, but there is reason to believe or evidence is suggesting the absence is due to a holiday taken during term time.

## **The Law**

Where absence escalates and pupils miss 10% or more of school (equivalent to 1 day or more a fortnight across a full school year or 10 days over 10 weeks), schools and local authorities are expected to work together to put additional targeted support in place to remove any barriers to attendance and re-engage these pupils.

When necessary, the academy, Trust and local authority will use a range of legal interventions to support improvement in attendance. These will be determined by the academy and local authority on a case by case basis after considering the individual circumstances of a family.

These interventions are:

- Attendance contracts (formerly known as parenting contracts)
- Education supervision orders
- Attendance prosecution
- Parenting orders
- Penalty notices

It is an offence under the 1996 Education Act if a child of compulsory Academy age fails to attend regularly the Academy/School where they are registered and parents are at risk of prosecution under the Act unless those absences have been authorised.

As an alternative to prosecution, parents may be placed on the Attendance Panel Process or issued with a Penalty Notice payable to the local authority. Following recent amendments to the Education (Student Registration) (England) 2006 regulations which came into effect on 01/09/2013, each parent may be fined for each child if the parents allow the child to take unauthorised leave within term time.

From autumn term 2024, only 2 penalty notices can be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within a 3 year rolling period. This includes if a student has moved school or local area during that period. In the case that a second notice is issued within that period it will be charged at a higher rate. The first penalty notice issued to a parent in respect of a particular pupil will be charged at £160 if paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days. A second penalty notice issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil is charged at a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days.

A third penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of issue of the first. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time (or subsequent times) within those 3 years, alternative action will be taken instead. This will often include considering prosecution.

There is no right of appeal by parents against a penalty notice.

Local authorities have the power to prosecute where parents who fail to secure their child's regular attendance at a school. There are 2 separate offences: section 444(1) where a parent fails to secure the child's regular attendance; and section 444(1A) where a parent knows that the child is failing to attend school regularly and fails to ensure the child does so. The section 444(1) offence may result in a fine of up to level 3 (£1,000) and the section 444(1A) offence may result in a fine of up to level 4 (£2,500), and/or a community order or imprisonment of up to 3 months.

The regulations make it clear that the Principal may only grant leave for holidays in term time under 'exceptional circumstances.' In the case of excluded students who remain on roll at Atlantic Academy, a Penalty Notice may be issued where a student is found by the Academy, Police or Local Authority service in a public place in Academy hours without reasonable justification during the first 5 days of a fixed term or permanent exclusion.

#### **Categories of Authorised Absence**

- Treatment for illness supported by medical evidence.
- If your child is unwell and sent home from the Academy.
- Hospital, CAMHS or Orthodontic Appointments **supported by appointment letters or cards.**
- Unavoidable GP or dental appointments **supported by cards or slips.**
- Advance notice of days of religious observance.
- A student excluded for a fixed period while remaining on roll with Atlantic Academy.

#### **Categories of Unauthorised Absence include but are not limited to:**

- Truancy through the Academy day
- Parents or carers keeping children off Academy unnecessarily, including collection during the Academy day
- No reason for absence given.
- Students who arrive at Atlantic Academy after 9.30 am when registration has closed.
- Holidays and day trips in term time.