



Attendance Policy

Date Reviewed: November 2023

Date for Policy review Autumn 2024

INTRODUCTION

The Axis Academy is passionate about achieving the best possible outcomes for our students. We will always endeavour to work in partnership with parents and carers. Our open door policy and various lines of communication ensure parents/carers have immediate access to the support and advice they need to ensure their child is attending school regularly. Regular attendance promotes achievement and progress. Regular attendance also supports safeguarding and reduces risk.

As a Mental Health specialist school we understand that there will be times that students do not feel emotionally or mentally able to attend school, in these circumstances The Axis Academy will support parents and students. The Axis Academy will work alongside parents/carers, students and other agencies to ensure that all students have access to the right support. We will aim to put strategies in place to ensure students feel able to attend school and recognise it as a safe space. Staff at The Axis Academy will encourage regular attendance and ensure that learning and progress can successfully take place.

EXPECTATIONS

The Axis Academy expects students to:

- Attend school regularly
- Arrive on time, appropriately dressed (Dress Code Policy [Policies – The Axis Academy](#)) and prepared for the day (See Home – School Agreement)
- Arrive to lessons on time
- Conduct themselves appropriately
- Respect themselves, each other and all adults, aswell as the school environment

The Axis Academy expects parents/carers to:

- Encourage their children to attend school
- Contact the daily school by ClassDojo or telephone (01270 304074) immediately if your child cannot attend school
- Contact the school **immediately** if they become aware that their child is reluctant to attend school so that the pastoral team can support both you and your child

Students and parents/carers can expect The Axis Academy to:

- Ensure that there is regular, efficient and accurate recording of attendance and time keeping as a statutory and legal requirement
- Contact home on first day of non-attendance
- Establish early contact with the home when a pattern of lateness emerges
- Act immediately on any problem notified to us
- Maintain confidentiality
- Provide positive measures to encourage good attendance
- Provide support for Students - to ensure a broad and balanced curriculum which supports personal, social, emotional, acedemic and moral development
- Provide a welcoming, safe and nurturing environment in which each student valued and supported
- Build and maintain effective partnerships between the school and its parent/carer body, external support agencies and the wider community

HOW WILL THE AXIS ACADEMY DEAL WITH ABSENTEEISM?

The Axis Academy uses a computerised registration system to monitor students' attendance. The Axis Academy will identify students whose attendance is a cause for concern. These students will be targeted to receive additional support from the school and/or relevant external agencies. The following chart shows how The Axis Academy will respond to absence;

FIRST DAY CONTACT

Pastoral staff to contact home on to establish the reason for absence if no contact has been made

SECOND DAY OF ABSENCE

If the Parent/Carer has contacted the school, the Pastoral Team will contact parent/carer where necessary to ensure welfare and offer support at the end of the 2nd day of absence. If no contact has been made, a member of the Pastoral team will conduct a home visit, this welfare check will continue daily until the child has physically been seen.

THREE DAY CONTINUED ABSENCE

The pastoral team will conduct Home Visit or call to offer support for parent and child to expedite return to school.

FIVE DAY CONTINUED ABSENCE

Pastoral Lead to carry out a home visit or call to offer support for parent and child to expedite return to school.

CONTINUED ABSENCE/ 90% ATTENDANCE

STAGE 1: Parents/carers will be sent a letter to inform them that their child's attendance has dropped below 90%.

CONTINUED ABSENCE/85% ATTENDANCE

STAGE 2: An Attendance support plan to be implemented and agreed by the team around the student. Student to be discussed weekly at WISPAS (Welfare, Interventions, Safeguarding, Attendance and SEND) Panel

CONTINUED PERSISTENT ABSENCE/80% ATTENDANCE

STAGE 3: Parents/carers invited by Letter to Attendance Panel Meeting to be arranged with Pastoral Lead, SENDCO/Deputy Head and SEN Keyworker

CONTINUED PERSISTENT ABSENCE/80% ATTENDANCE

ATTENDANCE PLAN TO BE MONITORED AND REVIEWED WITH PARENTS

Support strategies to be offered to parents where appropriate. Support from outside agencies accessed where appropriate

Parents and students to engage with support

COMPLEX NEEDS /PARTNERSHIP PLUS

Targeted Family Help Assessment to be offered, if not already in place.

Multi-Agency meeting to be held every 6 – 12 weeks, regular attendance monitoring meetings to be held

CONTRACT FAILURE, DISGUISED COMPLIANCE OR TARGETED FAMILY HELP REFUSAL AND CONTINUED ABSENCE

Fixed Penalty Notice

FPN Unpaid

=

Prosecution

LACK OF ENGAGEMENT

=

Prosecution possible (if there continues to be multiple and/or complex needs, a referral can be made by DSL to CHECS)

Responsive Parental/Student Engagement

=

Educational Supervision Order to monitor consistent attendance

EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Families will NOT be fined and the case will not progress to FPN or the following stages if there are exceptional circumstances resulting in absence, and they are engaging with the school and external agencies. Each case will be assessed and evaluated on a case by case basis and will be at the discretion of the Headteacher.

FURTHER INFORMATION

- **The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003**

Section 23 of the Act gives powers to the local authority to issue Penalty Notices where a parent/carer is failing to ensure their child's attendance at school.

- **What is a Fixed Penalty Notice?**

Under existing legislation, parents/carers commit an offence if a child fails to attend regularly and the absences are classed as unauthorised. A Penalty Notice is an alternative to prosecution, which does not require an appearance in Court to secure an improvement in a student's attendance. Payment of a Penalty Notice enables parents to discharge potential liability for conviction.

- **What Are the Costs?**

Payment within 28 days of receipt of a Notice is £60.00 and £120.00 if paid after this but within 21 days.

- **How Are They Issued?**

By post to the home address or delivered by a member of staff from the Cheshire East Children's' Services Team.

For more information go to:

[Attendance and children out of education \(cheshireeast.gov.uk\)](http://cheshireeast.gov.uk)

PUNCTUALITY AND LATENESS

School starts at 8:30am students are expected to be in Form for this time, school opens its doors from 8:15am and students will be provided with breakfast on arrival. Students must attend school on time for morning registration. The register will be closed at 9.00am.

After 9:00am the registers are completed by the school office. Students who arrive after this time will have to provide a reason for their lateness and this will be recorded on the register. Parents/carers will be notified if a recurring pattern of lateness develops. If lateness persists, further action will be taken and parents/carers invited in for a meeting to discuss the reason for the lateness. Procedures to be followed in the case of persistent lateness may involve external agencies.

Please inform the school office if you are aware that your child is going to be late.

As the majority of students will be transported to school by taxi, lateness caused by a taxi company will not result in the student receiving a late message. Any issues of this kind will be resolved between school and the transport company.

INTERNAL TRUANCY

All students are expected to have a mark in the register for AM and PM sessions and be present for the duration of the lessons, unless they are absent or have other authorised circumstances i.e. a meeting, counselling, mentoring or a medical or dental appointment. Due to the nature of our school we understand that there may be reasons why students cannot manage a full timetable. This will be assessed, evaluated and monitored by staff and SLT to ensure that students needs are fully met and taken into consideration. Any amendments to timetables or the school day will be at our discretion.

Internal and external truancy will be monitored daily by The Axis Academy staff. Where appropriate, concerns are to be raised by class teachers in the first instance for further action.

The school will communicate with parents/carers regarding persistent truants. Meetings will also be organised with the student to discuss their attendance to lessons with our Pastoral Lead or their key workers.

If truancy continues, parents/carers will be invited to a meeting. Depending on the outcome of meetings, an action plan will be drawn up and appropriate strategies implemented to support the student. This may include interventions, time out provisions or revision of timetable.

POSITIVE MEASURES TO IMPROVE GOOD ATTENDANCE

The Axis Academy will seek to encourage good attendance and punctuality with the student through regular updates, celebration, keywork and assemblies. Good attendance will be seen as an achievement in its own right and recognised as such with rewards such as certificates and prizes.

Students will be rewarded with certificates termly and annually for achieving 100%, 95% and 90% attendance. There is a display of students who achieve 100% attendance for a half term. The Axis Academy uses a points based system as one of the methods used to reward students. Students who achieve high levels of attendance will be awarded through the points system in the form of rewards

ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY INTERVENTIONS

The Axis Academy will use a variety of interventions to address issues of attendance and punctuality. The Axis Academy will work both independently and with Cheshire East Local Authority in establishing the correct intervention to be applied. Interventions will include:

- Various academic and emotional wellbeing and mental health interventions in house
- Support from outside agencies, such as CAMHS, Youth Service and NHS
- Pastoral Support

- Parental Support
- Targeted Family Help Assessments and action plans
- Fixed Penalty Notices
- Engagement of the Cheshire East Education Welfare Service

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

All Staff

- Communicate any concerns they have with regards to attendance and punctuality at the earliest opportunity for the Pastoral team to follow up
- Remain vigilant of the fact that registers are legal documents and that false or inaccurate recordings may lead to prosecutions in some instances
- Communicate any concerns they have with regards to attendance and punctuality at the earliest opportunity to the Pastoral team, Deputy Headteacher or Headteacher.

School Pastoral Administrator

- Ensure that morning and afternoon registers are completed
- Initial point of contact to parents/carers
- Ensure that truancy calls are completed by the Pastoral Administrator daily to parents/carers of non-attendees
- Ensure that the attendance registers are up to date and being completed correctly and on time in cooperation with teaching staff
- Will inform The Axis Academy staff of reason for non-attendance, if any, via register note and/or email
- Update registers where necessary
- Ensure that the late messages and absences are recorded
- To contact the relevant Local Authority services where necessary
- Support Form Tutors with the monitoring of attendance, punctuality and truancy
- Ensure that periods of non-attendance are shared with relevant staff members
- Communicate regularly with parents/carers of non-attendees and follow up concerns of staff
- Monitor the attendance of offsite provisions and ensure that registers are received

Pastoral Lead

- Take a strategic lead on raising levels of attendance
- Be responsible for overseeing all issues regarding attendance and will meet regularly with the relevant Local Authority Services (SEN Team) to review and implement strategies for raising attendance
- Authorise absences and referrals where appropriate
- Communicate regularly with The Axis Academy staff and the Senior Leadership Team regarding all issues of attendance and punctuality
- Prepare formal reports for the Headteacher and The Axis LSB (Local Support Board)

- Will oversee a service which enhances existing provision in order to support learning, participation and encourage social inclusion
- Will attend meetings with parents/carers and students
- Work with young people and their families who are referred for attendance reasons to identify strategies and support systems to ensure reintegration and improved attendance
- Work alongside and support other key staff to implement targeted support strategies to address issues of non-attendance and truancy
- Complete home visits to students and their families to ascertain reasons for poor/non attendance
- Work alongside other key professionals in order to support improved and regular attendance
- Maintain and monitor Student Profile, documenting trends in absenteeism, lateness or truancy

Pastoral Support Officer

- Will oversee a service which enhances existing provision in order to support learning, participation and encourage social inclusion
- Will attend meetings with parents/carers and students
- Work with young people and their families who are referred for attendance reasons to identify strategies and support systems to ensure reintegration and improved attendance
- Work alongside and support other key staff to implement targeted support strategies to address issues of non-attendance and truancy
- Complete home visits to students and their families to ascertain reasons for poor/non-attendance
- Work alongside other key professionals in order to support improved and regular attendance
- Maintain and monitor Student Profile, documenting trends in absenteeism, lateness or truancy
- Work with Form Tutors to address issues of non-attendance and truancy, implement appropriate strategies to support the students and improve attendance and/or punctuality
- Coordinate and implement any reward scheme that is linked to attendance and punctuality

Form Tutors

- Will provide a service which enhances existing provision in order to support learning, participation and encourage social inclusion
- Share any noted trends in absenteeism, lateness or truancy and report to the Pastoral Lead.
- Will attend meetings with parents/carers where necessary
- Will contact parents/carers when advised by the Pastoral Lead to offer support and ensure welfare or where there has been a parental request

- visit has been conducted.
- Work with students and their families who are referred for attendance reasons
- Work alongside other key staff to implement targeted support strategies to address issues of non-attendance and truancy

Family Support Services, Cheshire East Services and Education Welfare Officers (EWOs)

- Work with The Axis Academy at a strategic level when appropriate e.g. fines/prosecution

Leave in Exceptional Circumstances is at the discretion of the Headteacher, and will be considered on a case by case basis. Any parent/carer taking their child out of the school during term, for any reason, without the permission of the Headteacher will result in an unauthorised absence and possible referral to the Localities Services.

Appendix Parent/Carer Letter

Dear Parent/Carer of {Student Name}

We need your help, please.

{Student Name} attendance is {#}% over the school year this would equate to {#} missed days of school and {#} missed lessons. We understand that our students face many barriers to their emotional wellbeing and this can impact on their ability to attend. However, when your child is absent, they are not fully able to access the support and resources we have here at school. If you or your child is struggling, we are always available to support and, we will work with you and your child to breakdown these barriers to their attendance.

We understand that sometimes our students cannot come to school because they are really unwell - and that is the right thing to do for them and other students. Medical advice is clear however that children with a mild illness will often be well enough to attend - for example if they have a cough, or cold, without a temperature. The NHS guidance [is my child too ill for school? - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk/health-a-z/illnesses-and-conditions/child-illnesses/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/) is designed to support parents in their decision making about mild illness.

We also know that students can fall behind socially and academically when they miss school and this can significantly increase anxiety for some. At The Axis Academy we want the amount of education missed to be minimal. We believe that our community is stronger together with all of our students in school. We are building life skills, life-long friendships and preparing your child for future success.

Further information regarding attendance is attached overleaf.

If you require any support please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Kind regards,

The Pastoral Team

ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCE ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Why it is important to attend school regularly?

- To provide your child the best possible start in life
- To achieve consistent academic progress
- To maximise your child's potential
- To encourage the development of friendships and social skills

School attendance is key to raising standards in education and ensuring all students can maximise their potential. The government has set a target of 95% attendance for all students. This rate allows for periods of illness or particular circumstances when absence from school is unavoidable.

We want your child to attend school regularly as this supports their learning. If your child is not well or if you have a planned reason why your child cannot attend school, please inform the school at the earliest opportunity.

The Law

Children of compulsory school age must, by law, receive a full-time education. Each person with day-to-day parental responsibility could be taken to court and fined for each child who is not attending school regularly or who is persistently late.

How close is your child to 100% attendance?

Number of days off school a year	Percentage attendance	Number of lessons missed	Level of concern
0 days	100%	0	Perfection
2 days	99%	10 lessons	Excellent
5 days	97%	25 lessons	Good
10 days	95%	50 lessons	Slight concern
20 days	90%	100 lessons	Concern
30 days	85%	150 lessons	Significant concern

Unplanned absences

- Please inform the school office before 9.00am on the morning of the first day of absence.
- Keep the school informed if the absence is to continue.
- A written explanation of your child's absence may be required on return to school.

Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

The school can only authorise any absences in the following circumstances:

- Genuine illness (please note that on the third and subsequent illness of an academic year we will require a Doctor's note)
- Dental/medical appointments. All appointments should be made out of school hours where possible. If the appointment cannot be made outside school hours please provide a copy of the appointment confirmation
- Close family bereavement
- Recognised religious observance
- Examination

Exceptional Circumstances

The Axis Academy understands there may be exceptional circumstances resulting in a child's absence. Circumstances such as a mental health need would always be supported by school staff and students and families would be expected to engage with support offered.

Planned absences

Where possible, organise authorised absences well in advance.

Please try to arrange medical appointments during holiday times or out of school hours.

If you cannot make doctor or dentist appointments out of school hours, wherever possible, the child should come to school before the appointment and return to school afterwards.

Religious Observance

If you wish to take your child out of school for a religious observance, please inform the school.

Family Holidays

Family holidays must not be taken during the school term. The guidelines from the DfE states that schools should not authorise absence for holidays or other circumstances on the grounds of cost.

If you take your child on holiday without authorisation, the Local Education Authority has the power to issue a Fixed Penalty Notice of £60.00 per parent per child, rising to £120.00 if not paid within 28 days.

You must complete a Holiday Request form if you intend to take your child out of school during term time. This can be accessed by clicking on the link on the main school website.

Lateness

Every Minute of Learning Counts!

Persistent lateness can:

- Cause embarrassment to the child
- Make it harder for the child to settle
- Cause disruption to the rest of the class
- Affect learning

The school operates a First Day Response and will contact families where children have failed to attend school in time for morning registration.