

Academy Attendance Policy

September 2016 - September 2019

1. Rationale

The governors and staff are committed to providing a full and effective education for all students to ensure that they achieve their potential in all that they do. All students benefit from the education the Academy provides and from regular Academy attendance. Regular Academy attendance is crucial if students are to maximise their potential.

Absence from the Academy, whatever the cause, disrupts learning and will impact negatively on the life chances of all students.

Promoting good attendance is a whole school priority

The Education Act 1996 requires parents or guardians to ensure that their children receive efficient full time education. Academies are responsible for taking pupil attendance registers twice a day; at the start of the morning session and at the start of the afternoon session. An entry code must be made in the attendance register for all pupils of compulsory Academy age who are on the Academy's admission role.

2. Aims – The Whole Academy Attendance Policy Aims

- i. For every student to achieve excellent attendance
- ii. Make attendance and punctuality a priority for all associated with Academy
- iii. Set targets to improve individual and whole attendance levels including statutory targets
- iv. Record and monitor attendance and absenteeism and apply appropriate strategies to minimise its occurrence
- v. Develop a systematic approach to gathering and analysing relevant attendance data
- vi. Provide support and advice and guidance to parents and pupils
- vii. Promote effective partnership with the EWS and other services and agencies. Implement positive recognition for good and improved attendance linked to reward systems

3. Roles

i. ROLE OF THE HEADTEACHER/GOVERNORS

- Ensure that the attendance policy is implemented
- Complete attendance figures for the Local Authority and the DFE

ii. ROLE OF STUDENT SERVICES MANAGER

- Advise on and implement whole Academy strategies for improving attendance
- Monitor attendance data, analyse data in order to identify patterns, set targets, support and inform policy and practice
- Early intervention to support students whose attendance is causing concern
- Hold regular meetings with the EWO
- Monitor whole Academy attendance schemes and rewards
- Present attendance figures for Headteacher and Governors

- Work with form tutors to identify and take action if there is an individual attendance concern; all unexplained absences to be followed up
- Work with admin staff who complete first day calling to ensure all absent students' parents/carers are contacted wherever possible.
- Meet with parents if there are attendance concerns
- Investigate causes of absence and plan strategies with tutors, parents, EWO and outside agencies
- To promote good Academy attendance by setting targets and award 'good/improved attendance' as appropriate
- To ensure that pupils who are absent for an extended period of time will have appropriate work sent home and re-integrated back in to Academy upon their return.
- Ensure that all relevant staff are fully trained in procedures that relate to attendance.

iii ROLE OF DEPUTY HEAD

- Meet with KS Co-ordinators and Student Services Manager weekly (RAM meetings)
- Support with meeting parents when necessary
- Monitor Attendance and support with strategies to improve poor attendance and celebrate good attendance
- To ensure that pupils who are absent for an extended period of time will have appropriate work sent home and re-integrated back in to Academy upon their return.

iv. ROLE OF KS CO-ORDINATOR

- To ensure that all registers are up-to-date
- Investigate causes of absence and plan strategies with tutors, parents, EWO and outside agencies
- To promote good Academy attendance by setting targets and award 'good/improved attendance' as appropriate
- To ensure that pupils who are absent for an extended period of time will have appropriate work sent home and re-integrated back in to Academy upon their return.

v. ROLE OF THE FORM TUTOR

- As the first point of contact with pupils, tutors are crucial in promoting good attendance and punctuality
- Form/class teachers take registers using SIMS LESSON MONITOR
- Watch out for patterns in a pupil's attendance/punctuality, investigate all absences.
- Report any absence concerns to the Student Services Manager.
- All lateness to be monitored and discussed with individual pupils

vi. ROLE OF THE PARENT/CARER

Section 444[1] of the **EDUCATION ACT 1996** states that 'If a child of compulsory school age who is a registered student at a school fails to attend school regularly at the school the parent is guilty of an offence'.

- Parents/Person with parental responsibility has a legal responsibility for ensuring that their child attends the Academy regularly and on time
- Parents should support the Academy by avoiding, if possible non-emergency medical/dental appointments for their child during Academy time
- Parents **DO NOT** have an automatic right to take their child out of the Academy for a holiday during term time
- Contact Academy on the first day of absence and if possible indicate day of return
- Only the Academy within the context of the law can authorise absence. The fact that a parent has offered a reason in relation to the particular absence does not oblige the Academy to accept the reason for the absence
- All unexplained absences will be investigated and parents will be kept informed about any attendance concerns
- Attend meetings about their child's attendance; support Academy in responding to concerns regarding attendance
- Parents who fail to fulfil their responsibility can expect legal action; this may include: Penalty Notices/Fast Track to Prosecution/Parenting Orders.

vii. STUDENTS

- All students are expected to be on the Academy site by 8.45am appropriately prepared for the day
- At 8.50am students should be in their registration room.
- Students are expected to remain in the Academy all day and will not be allowed to leave the Academy site without permission
- Poor punctuality is not acceptable; Students who consistently arrive late for the Academy day disrupt lessons and miss out on valuable teaching time.
- Internal truancy is not acceptable and students found out of lessons will be given a lunch time detention.

viii. ROLE OF THE ATTENDANCE CLERK

- Telephone parents of pupils on the first day of absence
- Liaise daily with Student Services Manager to communicate absences
- Contact members of staff who fail to have taken their registers
- Record authorised and agreed absences in registers
- Amend registers as required

ix. ROLE OF THE EDUCATION WELFARE OFFICER

- To provide advice and guidance on policies and government initiatives regarding student attendance
- To work with the Attendance Clerk/ Student Services Manager/Headteacher to follow up poor Academy attendance
- To meet regularly with Student Services Manager; monitor registers regularly for individuals causing concern
- To meet with Student Services Manager and parents of pupils identified as needing support to improve attendance
- To make home visits and maintain contact between parents, Academy and other external agencies
- To Liaise with Student Services Manager to pursue prosecution of parents for their child's poor Academy attendance.

x. LEAVE OF ABSENCE REQUESTS

Unless there are exceptional circumstances Riverbank Academy will not authorise 'Leave of absence' during term time. All leave of absence applications must be made prior to the leave of absence. If a parent takes their child on leave of absence in term time for 5 days or more, the academy will pursue the issuing of a fixed penalty notice in line with the amendment to Education (Pupil Registration England) regulations 2013). If a child fails to return from a term time holiday within ten academy days of the expected agreed date of return, the Headteacher has the right to remove the pupil off the Academy roll.

xi. PERSISTANT ABSENTEESIM [PA]

A student becomes a '**persistent absentee**' when their attendance falls below **90%** at any time during their Academy life. Absence at this level is detrimental to a child's education
All students whose attendance have fallen to **85%** or are at risk of moving towards the PA will be monitored rigorously through the Academy 'tracking procedure'. PA pupils will be placed on a 'First Day Alert' whereby the Academy will telephone parents if pupils fail to arrive at Academy for morning registration.

All PA students are automatically dealt with by the EWO/Student Services Manager

4. Penalty Notices

The Academy will pursue the issuing of 'Penalty Notices' in respect of unauthorised absence in accordance with the local code of conduct. A Penalty Notice will be issued

- i) if a child has 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence in any 5-week period
- ii) if a pupil is absent from the academy for 5 days or more due to unauthorised term time holiday.

5. Working with other agencies

Poor Academy attendance can be the result of difficulties faced by a child or family, and a cause of other problems such as exclusion; pupils with low levels of attendance tend to have other complex issues therefore a co-ordinated approach by a number of agencies can assist these pupils and their families.

Regular referral meetings will be held to support the co-ordination of service provision and to build on good practice.

Review Date: September 2019