



**Cabot**  
Learning  
Federation

Herons'  
Moor  
Academy  
Attendance  
Policy and  
Procedure

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### History of most recent Policy changes

Date	Page	Change	Origin of Change e.g. TU request, Change in legislation
Date	E.g. Whole Document	Detail of change	Reason for change
9/12/2021	Whole document	Implementation	Implementation of Federation wide policy

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## 1 Policy Statement

- 1.1 It is the aim of Herons' Moor Academy that pupils should enjoy learning, experience success and realise their full potential. The Attendance Policy reflects this and recognises that regular attendance has a positive effect on the motivation and attainment of pupils.
- 1.2 As part of the Cabot Learning Federation (CLF), the academy is committed to the shared core purpose, which is at the HEART of all we do:



- 1.3 The academy strives to consistently deliver excellent educational experiences for pupils, improving their life chances and serving the communities of which we are a member.

## 2 Reference to other relevant policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with existing trust-wide and academy policies including (but not limited to) the following policies:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Exclusion & Suspensions Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy

## 3 Legislation or non-statutory guidance

- 3.1 This policy meets the requirements of Department for Education (DfE) guidance and legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance including:
- The Education Act 1996 (as amended)
  - The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended in 2010, 2011, 2013 and 2016)



- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended in 2012 and 2013)

### 3.2 DfE guidance:

- The Equality Act 2010 and schools (DfE May 2014)  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/315587/Equality\\_Act\\_Advice\\_Final.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/315587/Equality_Act_Advice_Final.pdf)
- Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions (DfE December 2015)  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-pupils-at-school-with-medical-conditions--3>
- Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school (DfE January 2013)  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/education-for-children-with-health-needs-who-cannot-attend-school>
- Keeping children safe in education (DfE)  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>
- School Attendance – Main Guidance (DfE)  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-attendance>
- School attendance parental responsibility measures (DfE January 2015)  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/parental-responsibility-measures-for-behaviour-and-attendance>
- School census guidance (DfE)  
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/complete-the-school-census>
- School Exclusion (DfE September 2017)  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-exclusion>
- Home to school travel and transport guidance (DfE July 2014)  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/home-to-school-travel-and-transport-guidance>

## 4 Roles and Responsibilities

See Appendix 2.

## 5 Equalities Impact Assessment

An equality impact assessment has been undertaken for this policy in accordance with the Federation's equality, diversity and inclusion strategy and the Public Sector Equality Duty.



## 6 Data Protection Implications

- 6.1 The personal information the academy uses to help manage attendance and absence is governed by the UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018. Much of this information will be sensitive, to both pupils and their parents/carers, and staff must take care to apply appropriate safeguards to ensure personal information is processed fairly and lawfully, is the minimum amount necessary to achieve our aims, is accurate, and where necessary, kept up to date, is not held for longer than is necessary and remains safe and secure.
- 6.2 Staff must record personal information accurately, being clear whether something is an opinion, reported by someone else, or fact. It is also important to remember that pupils and parents/carers can ask to see copies of the personal information the academy holds about them.

## 7 Aims

- 7.1 The academy aims to meet its obligations with regard to school attendance by promoting good attendance; ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled; and acting early to address patterns of absence.
- 7.2 This policy sets out the academy's position on attendance and details the procedures that all parents<sup>1</sup>/carers must follow to report their child absent from the academy.
- 7.3 It is vital that children develop regular attendance habits at an early age. Therefore, the academy will encourage parents/carers of Nursery children, and Reception children who are not yet compulsory school age, to send their children to every session that is available to them. If the child is unable to attend the academy for any reason, the parent/carer should inform the academy of the reason on the first day of absence. If the academy is concerned about a pupil's attendance for any reason, the academy will contact the parent/carer to discuss the matter, in the first instance.
- 7.4 The academy will also support parents/carers to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory<sup>2</sup> school age attend regularly, and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.
- 7.5 Pupils should attend the academy every day, unless they are really not well enough to. Children who attend regularly are more likely to feel settled in school, maintain friendships, keep up with their learning and gain the greatest benefit from their education. The academy wants all pupils to enjoy school, grow up to become emotionally resilient, confident and competent adults who are able to realise their full potential. Regular attendance and punctuality are essential in the workplace and children who are used to attending school on time, and on every occasion, unless they are too unwell to attend, will be better prepared for the attendance expectations in the workplace.

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<sup>1</sup> Education law defines parents as: all natural parents, whether they are married or not; any person who has parental responsibility for a child or young person; and any person who has care of a child or young person i.e. lives with and looks after the child.

<sup>2</sup> A child becomes of 'compulsory school age' on the 1st January, 1st April or 1st September following their 5th birthday and ceases to be of compulsory school age on the last Friday in June of Year 11.



- 7.6 In April 2017 the Supreme Court clarified the definition of regular attendance to be attendance “in accordance with the rules prescribed by the school”, therefore if an absence is not authorised by the school, the pupil’s attendance is deemed to be irregular.
- 7.7 The academy will do all it can to encourage pupils to attend. The academy will make the best provision it can for any pupil who needs additional support in school or who is prevented from attending school, due to physical or mental health needs or disability. The academy recognises for disabled pupils, ‘reasonable adjustments’ may be needed to the school environment or to policies to support good attendance. Please see DfE guidance documents [‘Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions - December 2015’](#) and [‘Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs- January 2013’](#) – or ask the academy for printed copies.
- 7.8 One of the most important factors in promoting good attendance is the development of positive attitudes towards school. To this end, the academy strives to provide a happy and rewarding experience for all children, and to foster positive and mutually respectful relationships with parents/carers.
- 7.9 By promoting good attendance and punctuality the academy aims to:
- Make good attendance and punctuality a priority for all those involved in the academy community
  - Raise pupils’ awareness of the importance of good attendance and punctuality
  - Provide support, advice and guidance to parents/carers, pupils and staff
  - Work in partnership with parents/carers and, where appropriate, the wider family

**8 Effects of non-attendance**

- 8.1 Any absence affects the pattern of a child’s schooling and regular absence may seriously affect their learning. The Department for Education (DfE) defines a pupil as a ‘persistent absentee’ when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year, for whatever reason.
- 8.2 The table below indicates how what might seem like just a few days of absence can result in children missing a significant number of lessons.

Attendance during school year	Days lost in a year	Which is approximately
95%	9.5 Days	2 Weeks
90%	19 Days	4 Weeks



## 9 Safeguarding and Attendance

9.1 The academy will monitor trends and patterns of absence for all pupils as a part of its standard procedures. However, it is recognised that sudden or gradual changes in a pupil's attendance may indicate additional or more extreme safeguarding issues. In line with government guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#), Local Procedures and the Academy's Safeguarding Policy, staff will investigate and report any suspected safeguarding cases on to the relevant authorities. As part of the academy's safeguarding duty and standard procedures, staff will inform the Local Authority and/or the Police of the details of any pupil who is absent from school when they cannot establish their whereabouts and is concerned for the pupil's welfare.

9.2 If a pupil is not attending as required, where the academy deems it appropriate, staff may make home visits to see and speak to the pupil and parents/carers as part of the academy's safeguarding and attendance processes. If staff are unable to see and speak to the pupil and parents/carers, they may contact the pupil's emergency contacts and/or other professionals or contacts of the family, who they reasonably expect may be able to provide the academy with relevant information.

## 10 Contents of Attendance Register

The law states that schools must take the attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. On each occasion the school must record whether each pupil is:

- Present;
- Absent;
- Attending an approved educational activity; or
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

## 11 Present at School (and Lateness)

11.1 Pupils are marked present if they are in the academy when the register is taken. If a pupil leaves the academy premises after registration, they are still counted as present for statistical purposes.

11.2 It is the duty of parents/carers to ensure that children attend school on time. This encourages habits of good timekeeping and lessens any possible classroom disruption. However, it is also recognised that pupils are sometimes late due to reasons such as caring for parents/carers or siblings, or transport difficulties.

11.3 If a pupil starts arriving late to the academy on a regular basis, the academy will work with the pupil and family to find out why the pupil is late and whether any support is needed for the pupil or family, in order to support the pupil to attend on time.

11.4 The Attendance officer will meet with parents/carers of pupils who are frequently late, to further investigate reasons for lateness and discuss solutions to enable more punctual attendance.



### 11.5 Morning registration

- Our pupils must arrive by **8.55am** on each school day.
- Pupils arriving after **8.55am** will be marked as late (**L**) – which still counts as present. See DfE Attendance Codes – Appendix One.
- If a pupil arrives after the close of registration (after **9.20am**), they will be marked with the **unauthorised absence** code ‘Late after registers close’ (**U**) for the morning session. (See ‘Unauthorised Absence’ section for more information on unauthorised absences.) If a pupil arrives late after the registers close due to a valid reason, such as an unavoidable medical appointment, their absence will be marked with the appropriate authorised absence code.

### 11.6 Afternoon registration

- The afternoon register is taken at **1:00 pm** and will be kept open until **1.10 pm**.
- If a pupil has been out of school during the morning and/or lunchtime session and arrives at school after **1:00 pm** but before **1.10 pm** they will be marked (**L**) – which counts as present.
- If a pupil arrives after **1.10 pm** they will be marked with the **unauthorised absence** code ‘Late after registers close’ (**U**) for the afternoon session. If a pupil arrives late after the afternoon registers close due to a valid reason, such as an unavoidable medical appointment, their absence will be marked with the appropriate authorised absence code.

## 12 Effects of Late Arrival

12.1 When a pupil arrives late to the academy, they miss important events like assembly, teacher instructions and introductions; this can seriously disadvantage pupils. The table below indicates how frequent lateness can add up to a considerable amount of learning being lost.

Minutes late per Day	Equates to Days of Teaching Lost in one Year
5 mins	3 Days
10 mins	6 Days
15 mins	9 Days

## 13 Authorised Absence

13.1 ‘Authorised absence’ means that the academy has either given approval in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be away from the school or has accepted an explanation



offered afterwards as justification for absence. The following information outlines the main circumstances where absence may be authorised by the academy.

### 13.2 Illness

- In most cases, absences for illness which are reported by following the academy's absence reporting procedures will be authorised. That is unless the academy has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.
- The academy follows the [DfE School Attendance – Main Guidance](#), which states that if the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a prescription, appointment card, or other appropriate form of evidence. The academy will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily. In some instances, the academy may ask the parent/carer to obtain a letter from a GP, or seek parental permission to contact the pupil's GP directly.
- If the academy is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.
- Where a pupil has a high level and/or frequency of absence, the academy may require suitable evidence in order to authorise any future absence where illness has been given as the reason. If this is the case, the academy will make the parent/carer/s aware of this expectation in advance.
- The reporting of absence due to illness remains the responsibility of the parent/carer. Absences due to illness which have **not** been reported to the academy by the parent/carer on the first and any subsequent days of absence may not be authorised.

### 13.3 Pupils taken ill during the academy day

If a pupil needs to be sent home due to illness, this should be by agreement with an appropriately authorised member of academy staff. In such circumstances, the pupil must be collected from the academy office by a parent/carer or another authorised adult (unless otherwise agreed between the school and the parent/carer) and signed out in the 'signing out' book. No pupil will be allowed to leave the academy site without parent/carer confirmation.

### 13.4 Medical/Dental Appointments

- Parents/carers should try to make appointments outside of academy hours wherever possible. Where appointments during the academy day are unavoidable, the pupil should only be absent for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment. It is not acceptable for a pupil to miss a whole day for an appointment, unless absolutely necessary, in which case the academy will need an explanation as to why this is. The academy recognises that pupils with a health condition may have a



higher number of medical appointments than other pupils and it is therefore possible that at least some of these appointments may be during the academy day.

- If a pupil must attend a medical appointment during the academy day, they must be collected from the academy office by the parent/carer or another authorised adult and signed out in the 'signing out' book. No pupil will be allowed to leave the academy site without parent/carer confirmation.
- Advance notice is required for medical or dental appointments, unless it is an emergency appointment. Parents/carers should also provide the academy with sight of, or a copy of, the appointment card or letter.

### 13.5 Religious Observance

- The academy acknowledges the multi-faith nature of the academy community and recognises that religious festivals sometimes fall outside of academy holidays or weekends.
- In accordance with the law, the academy will authorise one day's absence for a day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parent/carer belongs – this will be marked with the **R** code. In line with the [DfE school attendance guidance](#), if necessary, the academy will seek advice from the parent/carer's religious body, about whether it has set the day apart for religious observance.
- Parents/carers should notify the academy in advance that their child will be absent for religious observance, so that the academy knows whether to expect the pupil into school or not.
- If a parent/carer would like their child to be absent for an additional day, around a religious observance, they should contact the academy. The academy will consider each application individually taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request. If additional absence is authorised, this would be marked with the **C** code.
- The academy will ensure a pupil is not penalised for absence due to days of Religious Observance, for example if using attendance rewards.

### 13.6 Traveller Absence

- The Education Act 1996 includes specific reference to the school attendance of children "of no fixed abode". This law applies when a child is unable to attend school because they are travelling with their parent/carer "who is engaged in a trade or business of such a nature as to require [the parent/carer] to travel from place to place". This is subject to certain limits, depending on the child's age and number of sessions absent.
- The [DfE school attendance guidance](#) explains that a number of different groups are covered by the generic term Traveller – Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and



Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers.

- The academy will discuss requests for absence individually with parents/carers as necessary. Parents/carers should let the academy know of their plans as far in advance as possible.
- To help ensure continuity of education for children from the above groups, wherever possible the child should attend school elsewhere when their family is travelling for occupational purposes. In which case, the child will be dual registered at the school they are attending and at this academy, which is their 'main school'.
- The **T** code, which is an authorised absence, should be used for pupils when Traveller families are known to be travelling for occupational purposes and have agreed this with the academy but it is not known whether the pupil is attending another educational provision.
- Children from these groups whose families do not travel for occupational purposes are subject to the same rules as other children in terms of the requirement to attend school regularly.

#### 13.7 Suspensions (previously called fixed-term exclusions)

- If the academy decides to send a pupil home for a fixed period due to their behaviour, this will be recorded as a suspension. The academy will follow the current [DfE's statutory guidance on exclusions](#).
- Any suspension must be agreed by the Principal.
- The academy will notify the parents/carers of the suspension. If the pupil is a Child in Care, the academy will notify the pupil's carer, social worker and the Local Authority's Virtual School. In other instances, where a pupil is open to Children's Social Care for any reason, the academy will also inform the pupil's allocated social worker.
- The pupil must be collected from the academy office by the parent/carer or another authorised adult and signed out in the 'signing out' book. No pupil will be allowed to leave the academy site without parent/carer confirmation.



## 14 Absence Reporting and Response

### 14.1 First Day of Absence Reporting

- Parents/carers are expected to notify the academy of the reason for their child's absence on each day of absence.
- If a pupil is absent due to illness which lasts more than one day, the parent/carer should contact the school each day to provide an update, unless otherwise agreed by the academy.
- If a pupil is absent due to illness or any other reason, parents/carers should notify the academy of the absence as early as possible. This should be before **8.30 am** on the day of absence and include the specific reason ('unwell' is not sufficient). This should be done via telephone (answer machine facility available and checked daily).
- If parents/carers leave a voice message they must include the pupil's full name, date of birth and year group. Parents/carers can also notify the academy by email or by a personal visit to the Academy Office (via an adult.)
- The academy may contact parents/carers to discuss a pupil's absence in more detail.
- In some cases, the academy may require parents/carers to report absence in a different way – if this is the case, the academy will contact parents/carers to explain this requirement.

### 14.2 First Day of Absence Response

- If no contact has been made with the academy by **9:20 am** on the first day of absence, the academy office will follow up the absence by phoning the parents/carers. If the parents/carers cannot be contacted by phone, the academy will phone the pupil's emergency contacts, in priority order. Priority will be given where there is additional support in place, or where pupils are considered more vulnerable. e.g. Children in Care; children on Child in Need or Child Protection Plans; children who have previously been reported missing; and children where there are, or have been, concerns regarding attendance.
- If the academy is unable to establish why the pupil is absent and/or is concerned for the welfare of the pupil, staff may request a Welfare Check from the police.

### 14.3 Pre-agreed absence

Parents/carers are not required to contact the academy on the day of an absence if the parent/carer has already formally notified the academy prior to the day of absence and the absence has been agreed in advance. For example, a planned hospital appointment or an



exceptional term time leave of absence which has already been agreed by the Principal in writing.

#### 14.4 Emergency Contacts

Parents/carers will be asked to supply details of at least two other adults who can be contacted in an emergency. It is the responsibility of parents/carers to keep these contact details up to date by communicating with the academy office. The academy will also remind parents/carers about this through parents/carers' evenings/newsletter reminders etc and send out pupil information forms annually.

### 15 Following up Unexplained Absences

15.1 The academy will follow up any absences where the parent/carer has not made contact to explain the reason. Following up on unexplained absences can take up a considerable amount of academy resources, therefore, the academy expects parents/carers to report all absences. If a parent/carer does not contact the academy on the morning of each absence, the absence may not be authorised, unless the academy is satisfied there is a good reason why the pupil is unable to attend and why the parent/carer was not able to contact the academy by the required time on the day of absence.

15.2 When the academy establishes the reason for the absence, it will be marked as authorised or unauthorised depending on the reason. If the academy is unable to establish the reason for absence, having followed the academy's attendance procedures, the absence will be marked as unauthorised, using the **O** code.

15.3 If a pupil is not attending and the academy is unable to establish the reason why and/or confirm the pupil's whereabouts, the academy will take appropriate action which will depend on the circumstances of each case. This could include, but is not limited to: contacting the pupil's emergency contacts, or other contacts of the family who the academy reasonably expect may be able to advise of the pupil's whereabouts; contacting other professionals; contacting siblings' schools; home visits to the family address; making enquiries with neighbours; requesting a Welfare Check from the police; and making referrals to Children's Social Care.

### 16 Rewarding Good and Improved Attendance

16.1 The academy recognises that rewarding good and improved attendance should be carefully considered in order to ensure it does not make pupils who have poor attendance, feel marginalised, worried or guilty about their low attendance rate; its impact on the pupil's own learning or the learning or rewards for the class as a whole.

16.2 The academy will regularly review any reward systems to ensure they are not negatively impacting on individual pupils or groups of pupils.



## 17 Support for School Attendance

### 17.1 Communicating with parents/carers where attendance is a concern

When the academy has concerns about the attendance of a pupil, staff will do their best to make the parents/carers aware of the concerns about their child's attendance in the most accessible way possible, communications will be provided in accessible formats and can be offered in different languages if requested.

### 17.2 Pupils who are reluctant to attend

- Sometimes pupils can be reluctant to attend. The academy encourages parents/carers and pupils to be open and honest about the reason for the pupil's absence. If a child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or for a parent/carer to give in to pressure to let the child stay at home. This can give the impression to the child that attendance does not matter and can make things worse. The academy needs to understand the reasons why a pupil is reluctant to attend, in order to be able to support pupils and parents/carers in the best way.
- The academy's aim is to work in partnership with parents and carers to remove barriers to good school attendance. Staff strive to establish good working relationships with the families of our pupils through good communication and regular meetings to address on-going attendance concerns. If necessary, staff signpost our families to specialist support services who can work with the family and academy in a multi-agency approach.

### 17.3 Peer on Peer Abuse

- All pupils have an absolute right to be educated in a safe and secure environment and to be protected from others who may wish to harm, degrade or abuse them physically, verbally, and emotionally both in person and online. There is no justification whatsoever for bullying behaviour and it should not be tolerated in any form. Differences including race, religion, gender, sexual orientation and ability are absolutely repudiated as reasons for bullying.
- The academy recognises that a pupil may be reluctant to attend if they are experiencing any kind of peer on peer abuse. The academy constantly strives to promote a positive and inclusive culture where all pupils feel valued, have a strong sense of 'belonging' and are fully supported if things go wrong.



- The academy takes all reports of peer on peer abuse extremely seriously. All incidents will be investigated, appropriate measures will be taken for all pupils involved, including working with and making referrals to external agencies where appropriate.
- The academy recognises that peer on peer abuse is a rarely-witnessed event, and that the most likely source of information will be through hearsay (either direct from the victim, or indirectly through witnesses or parents).
- If a parent/carer thinks their child is experiencing peer on peer abuse, or is concerned their child may be involved in peer on peer abuse in any way, they are encouraged to report this to the academy as quickly as possible, so that appropriate measures can be taken.
- Please see the academy's Anti-Bullying and Safeguarding and Child Protection Policies for more information on how peer on peer abuse is addressed.

#### 17.4 Children in Care

- Foster Carers do not have parental responsibility for the children in their care, although they are responsible for ensuring their regular school attendance.
- If a Child in Care is not attending the academy, or there are concerns about their attendance, the academy will seek advice from the Local Authority's Virtual School and the child's social worker, as well as communicating with the pupil and foster carer.

#### 17.5 Disability Related Absence

- The academy will ensure 'reasonable adjustments' are made for disabled pupils (defined as those with a 'physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day to day activities'). This may include changes to the physical environment, curriculum or the way information is provided, as well as providing auxiliary aids and equipment, or tailored services.
- The academy recognises that some disabled pupils may need additional support to attend regularly and that, for some pupils, they may have more absence due to their disability, for example due to attending medical appointments. The academy will ensure disabled pupils are not penalised for absence related to their disability and will support the pupil and family to access support from external agencies where appropriate.

#### 17.6 Young Carers

The academy recognises that pupils who are Young Carers may have caring responsibilities that impact on their punctuality and/or attendance. Where this is the case the academy will work with the pupil and family to encourage them to access appropriate support, including



direct support from Young Carers and any other support the pupil and family may need; the academy will also provide support in school where appropriate.

#### 17.7 Parents who live separately

Where appropriate, the academy will involve all parents/carers in order to ensure each are aware of their child's attendance pattern and are able to support the child's attendance to improve. Where a child lives with different parents/carers on different days the academy will take this into consideration when working with the parents/carers.

#### 17.8 Complex Family Circumstances

- The academy will not usually request legal sanctions from the Local Authority in cases where poor attendance is symptomatic of complex family circumstances. In such circumstances the academy will take a holistic approach to the issue and involve other agencies as necessary. The exception to this will be where parents/carers fail to accept or engage with support offered by the academy and/or other agencies, or fail to implement the suggested changes. When referring for legal sanctions, the academy will show that the parent/carer has been warned they are at risk of receiving a Penalty Notice or other legal sanction.
- If the academy has safeguarding concerns about a pupil who is absent, staff will share information with other agencies as deemed necessary.

#### 17.9 Formal non-attendance process

Where there are continued concerns about a pupil's attendance which are not resolved informally, parents/carers may be asked to meet with the academy to discuss the matter more formally. In some cases, this may result in a formal action plan being produced. The academy may also invite other involved professionals, where relevant.

### **18 Leave of Absence – leave requests and sanctions for unauthorised absence**

18.1 The law does not grant parents/carers the automatic right to take their child out of school during term time for holidays or other absence such as trips and visits.

18.2 The academy will not authorise any leave of absence in term-time unless satisfied the reason for absence is exceptional. The academy will consider each application individually.

18.3 Parents/carers are asked not to make plans to take their child out of school without making a request first. The request should be made by the parent/carer with whom the child normally lives.

18.4 Parents/carers wishing to request leave for their child should complete a Leave of Absence Request form which is available from the academy. The request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated; and, wherever possible, at least four weeks before the absence.

18.5 Parents may be required to provide the academy with additional evidence in order to support a leave of absence request.



- 18.6 The academy will consider the individual facts and circumstances of the case; following consultation with other staff as required, including the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).
- 18.7 A leave of absence is granted entirely at the academy's discretion.
- 18.8 The absence should be for the shortest time possible – if an absence is agreed, the Principal will decide how many days of absence will be authorised. If the pupil is absent for more days than were authorised by the academy, the remaining days absent will be recorded as unauthorised absence.
- 18.9 Any holidays and other absence such as trips and visits which have not been agreed by the academy will be recorded as unauthorised.
- 18.10 Parents/carers should be aware unauthorised absence may result in a Penalty Notice or Prosecution. See 'Unauthorised Absence' section for more information.
- 18.11 If the academy has any concerns about possible safeguarding risks, staff will follow the necessary protocols. (See the academy's Safeguarding Policy for more information.)

## **19 Unauthorised Absence**

- 19.1 Unauthorised absence is where the academy is not satisfied with the reason given for the absence, or where no reason has been provided.
- 19.2 Unauthorised absences may result in Legal Sanctions, usually Penalty Notices or Prosecutions. See 'Penalty Notices and Prosecutions' section for more information.
- 19.3 Unauthorised absence includes (but is not limited to) absences due to:
- Reasons which have never been properly explained to the academy
  - Arriving at the academy after the register has closed. (Although late arrival for a reason such as a medical appointment will usually be an authorised absence – see 'Medical / Dental Appointments' section for more information.)
  - Shopping
  - Having a hair-cut
  - Birthdays
  - Waiting at home for something to be fixed, or a parcel to be delivered
  - Parent/carer's or sibling's illness (unless very exceptional circumstances apply and have been agreed in writing by the academy)
  - Day trips
  - Holidays in term time (unless exceptional circumstances are agreed in writing, in advance, by the academy – see 'Leave of Absence' section).
- 19.4 Where the academy has cause for concern about the actual reason for a pupil's absence, staff may seek additional information or evidence from parents/carers regarding the absence, and/or make a home visit in order to verify the reason. If the reason cannot be verified and the academy has cause to believe the reason given for absence may not be genuine, parents/carers may be asked to provide satisfactory proof of the reason before the



academy authorises the absence. If satisfactory proof is not provided, the school may record the absence as unauthorised.

## **20 Penalty Notices and Prosecutions**

- 20.1 Under section 444 of the Education Act 1996, if a child of compulsory school age, who is a registered pupil at a school, fails to attend regularly at the school his/her parent(s) are guilty of an offence. This applies to both resident and non-resident parents who may both be subject to legal sanctions if their child fails to attend school regularly. It also applies to others who may not be the parent but may have day to day care of the child. If an absence is not authorised by the school, the pupil's attendance is deemed to be irregular.
- 20.2 Penalty Notices and prosecution proceedings are issued to each parent/carer with responsibility for the child and are issued for each child with unauthorised absence. For example, in the case of Penalty Notices, if two siblings have unauthorised absence, and there are two parents/carers with responsibility for the children, four Penalty Notices would be issued.
- 20.3 The academy will refer cases of unauthorised absence that meet the threshold for a Penalty Notice to the Local Authority for legal action, unless there are reasonable grounds for not doing so. This will include unauthorised absence due to term time holiday or other trips/visits, and other types of unauthorised absence. When referring for legal sanctions, the academy will show that the parent/carer has been warned they are at risk of a Penalty Notice or other legal sanction. The outcome of a referral to the Local Authority may be a Penalty Notice or Prosecution.
- 20.4 See table below and DfE statutory guidance on [School attendance parental responsibility measures](#) for more information, and the Local Authority's Penalty Notice Code of Conduct, including thresholds, which is available from North Somerset Council.

## 20.5 Legal Sanctions for Unauthorised Absence

Sanction	Potential Outcome	When Used
Penalty Notice	<p>The penalty is £60 (per parent/carer, per child) payable within 21 days, rising to £120 if paid between 22 and 28 days. (Failure to pay may result in prosecution.)</p> <p>Penalty Notices cannot be paid in instalments.</p>	<p>For low level offences, as a tool to support improved attendance. They are an alternative to prosecution and may not be issued if prosecution is considered to be a more appropriate response to a pupil's unauthorised absence.</p> <p>If a pupil has an extended period or repeated periods of unauthorised absence, a prosecution may be considered instead of a Penalty Notice.</p>
Prosecution under section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996	<p>If found guilty, parents/carers may be fined up to £1000 and ordered to pay court costs.</p> <p>The court may also impose a Parenting Order.</p>	<p>It is for the Local Authority to determine whether a section 444(1) or section 444(1A) prosecution is most appropriate.</p> <p>First prosecutions are usually under s444(1).</p>
Prosecution under section 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996	<p>If found guilty, parents/carers may be fined up to £2500 and ordered to pay court costs.</p> <p>Other court outcomes include community sentences, such as Curfew Orders, Unpaid Work (Community Payback) or a prison sentence of up to three months.</p> <p>The court may also impose a Parenting Order.</p>	<p>If a parent/carer is prosecuted more than once, or in extreme cases of non-attendance, the Local Authority may decide to prosecute under s444(1A).</p>
Education Supervision Order (ESO) under section 36 of the Children Act 1989	<p>The order is placed on the child and a supervisor from the Local Authority is appointed by the court, to give directions to the child and its parents, with a view to securing that the child is properly educated.</p> <p>Parents can be prosecuted if they persistently fail to comply with a direction.</p>	<p>The Local Authority must consider applying for an ESO before prosecuting under s444 Education Act 1996. A local authority may apply for an ESO instead of, or as well as, proceeding with a prosecution.</p>

## 21 Mental Health, Wellbeing, Special Educational Needs and Disability

Under the Equality Act 2010, schools are required to make ‘reasonable adjustments’ for disabled pupils (defined as those with a ‘physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person’s ability to carry out normal day to day activities.’ Some specified medical conditions, HIV, multiple sclerosis and cancer are all considered as disabilities, regardless of their effect.) This may include changes to the physical environment, curriculum or the way information is provided, as well as providing auxiliary aids and equipment, or tailored services. Failure to make appropriate adjustments may impact on a pupil’s attendance.

Need	Action	Contact Information
Mental health and wellbeing	Parents/carers who have concerns about their child’s mental health and wellbeing can contact the academy’s Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).	<a href="mailto:julie.fox@clf.uk">julie.fox@clf.uk</a>
Identified special educational needs or disability (SEND)	Parents/carers are encouraged to contact the academy’s Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) should they have any concerns about their child. Any pupils with SEND should have attendance issues considered as part of their individual support plans or Education Health and Care Plans; attendance should be part of any subsequent reviews.	<a href="mailto:donna.harris@clf.uk">donna.harris@clf.uk</a>
Unidentified SEND	Parents/carers who think their child may have unidentified special educational needs are also encouraged to contact the academy’s SENCO.	<a href="mailto:donna.harris@clf.uk">donna.harris@clf.uk</a>
Urgent health concerns	Parents/carers should contact their GP or the NHS Helpline by phoning telephone number 111 for advice if they are concerned about their child’s mental or physical health and wellbeing. In case of emergency parents/carers should dial 999.  After seeking emergency advice and support, parents should also let the academy know as soon as is practicable.	Phone GP/111/999 <a href="mailto:donna.harris@clf.uk">donna.harris@clf.uk</a>
Health needs impacting on attendance	If a pupil is frequently absent from the academy due to particular health need/s the academy may ask to meet with parents/carers (and other professionals where appropriate) to draw up an Individual Healthcare Plan to support the pupil’s attendance.  See the academy’s Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy for more information.  Also see DfE guidance <a href="#">Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions - December 2015 for more information.</a>	<a href="mailto:donna.harris@clf.uk">donna.harris@clf.uk</a>



## **22 Phased Return to Full-Time Education**

- 22.1 In line with the expectations of the Department for Education, all pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education, suitable to their age, ability and aptitude, and any special educational needs or disabilities that they may have.
- 22.2 In very exceptional circumstances there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet a pupil's individual needs. For example, where a medical condition prevents a pupil from attending full-time education and a part-time timetable is considered as part of a re-integration package.
- 22.3 If, for any reason, the academy is unable to provide a pupil with a full-time education due to the pupil's needs, staff will work with the pupil, parents/carers and other agencies where appropriate, to come to an arrangement that is deemed to be in the best interests of the child wherever possible.
- 22.4 Any part-time timetable should be in place for the shortest amount of time possible, it must not be treated as a long-term solution. It should be reviewed at least every two weeks, whilst arrangements are made to support the pupil's return to full-time education at the academy or, where appropriate, at alternative provision.
- 22.5 A decision to place a pupil on a part-time timetable should be approved by the Principal and must be agreed by the parents/carers. The SENCO and DSL, as well as any other relevant members of staff, should also be aware of such arrangements and involved with decision making where appropriate. Discussions and agreements should be clearly documented in writing and relevant information should be recorded in SIMS and CPOMS. The academy will be mindful of any additional safeguarding risks to the pupil when they are not timetabled to attend school and will therefore consider carefully whether a part-time timetable is an appropriate measure.
- 22.6 If the pupil's part-time timetable means the pupil is expected to arrive at the academy after the register closes in the morning and/or be absent for the academy's afternoon registration period, any such am and/or pm registrations must be recorded with the C code 'Leave of absence authorised by the school'.

## **23 Approved Educational Activity (AEA)**

- 23.1 When pupils are attending educational activities off the academy site, that have been approved by the academy, the register will be marked to show this is the case. (See [DfE School Attendance – Main Guidance](#) for more information.)
- 23.2 **Approved Sporting Activity**
- If a pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity off the academy site, which is of an educational nature, approved by the academy and supervised by someone authorised by the Principal, such activity should be marked using the **P** code 'Approved Sporting Activity'.
- 23.3 **Alternative Education Provision**



- Attendance staff in the academy will be notified of Alternative Provision (AP) arrangements and updated about any changes in arrangements, so they can ensure the academy's registers are marked accordingly. Attendance staff and other relevant colleagues will communicate closely with the AP setting.
- The academy will follow up with pupils and parents/carers on any attendance concerns, in conjunction with the AP.
- If a pupil is only being offered part-time AP, the academy will ensure the pupil is offered additional educational provision, which together with the AP equates to a full timetable, unless there are exceptional reasons why not. Pupils will only be offered part-time educational provision for the shortest time possible and this will be regularly reviewed with the pupil and parents/carers with the aim of the pupil accessing full-time education as quickly as possible.

#### 23.4 Alternative Education Provision: Dual Registration and use of the D code

- If a pupil from the academy is attending another state-funded DfE registered school, Pupil Referral Unit<sup>3</sup> or Alternative Provision Academy, for part or all of their education, the pupil will be dual registered at this academy (Dual - Main) and the other setting (Dual - Subsidiary).
- If a pupil is attending an AP which is not a state-funded DfE registered school, Pupil Referral Unit, or Alternative Provision Academy, the pupil cannot be dual-registered; examples are Impact Mentoring and Education 1st. See 'Off-site educational activity (B code)' section, for more information.
- When a pupil from the academy is dual registered with another setting, the academy will ensure the pupil and parents/carers are clear about the pupil's timetable; i.e. when the pupil is expected to attend the academy or the other setting, and what the arrangements are for register marking, including the use of the D code. The academy will also be clear which setting will be following up any absences. Where pupils are dual-registered, the AP should provide the academy with attendance updates weekly, unless otherwise agreed with the alternative setting. However, if attendance and/or safeguarding concerns are identified at any point, the AP is expected to raise these with the academy immediately and a course of action will be agreed in writing between the academy and the AP.
- A dual registered pupil must not be removed from either setting's roll without the agreement of the other setting.

#### 23.5 Alternative Education Provision: Off-site educational activity (B code)

- If a pupil is attending an AP setting which is not another school, Pupil Referral Unit or Alternative Provision Academy, for part or all of their education, the academy will mark the sessions which the pupil attends the alternative setting as code **B** (off-site educational activity). The academy will mark any sessions attended at the academy with the relevant present code, and any absences with the relevant absent code. Such

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<sup>3</sup> This includes Bristol Hospital Education Service, Voyage Learning Campus and Pathways Learning Centre.



APs should provide attendance updates daily, unless otherwise agreed, so the academy can mark the register accordingly.

- Some AP settings are registered as Independent Schools and, as such, are able to offer full-time provision where required. However, some AP settings are not registered schools and are therefore only legally allowed to offer part-time education to pupils.
- Unless otherwise agreed with the AP, the AP is expected to notify the academy by 9.30 am on the morning of any individual pupil absences, to ensure the academy is made aware of any attendance concerns as soon as possible and takes follow up action as necessary.
- If attendance and/or safeguarding concerns are identified at any point, the AP is expected to raise these with the academy immediately and a course of action will be agreed in writing between the academy and the AP.

### 23.6 Managed Moves

- Any pupil on a Managed Move (MM) must be dual registered at their main school (the 'sending school') and their subsidiary school (the 'receiving school').
- If a pupil from this academy is attending another school on a MM, the pupil will be dual registered at the other school. This academy will mark the pupil with the registration code **D** during the time they are expected to attend the other school. The school the pupil is attending for the MM trial (the receiving school) will mark the pupil present or absent, according to their attendance pattern. The receiving school will be expected to follow up any pupil absences in the same way they would for their other pupils, in conjunction with this academy where appropriate. They will also communicate the pupil's attendance with this academy on a regular basis, in line with the MM review process.
- If a pupil from another school is attending this academy on a MM, the pupil will be dual registered at this academy. This academy will mark the pupil present or absent, according to their attendance pattern, whilst the sending school will mark them with the registration code **D**. This academy will follow up any absences in the same way as for all other academy pupils, in conjunction with the other school where appropriate. This academy will also communicate the pupil's attendance to the sending school on a regular basis, in line with the MM review process.
- At the end of the agreed MM period (or sooner in some circumstances) a decision will be made as to whether the MM will be made permanent or not. At this stage the pupil will either: (a) go permanently on the roll of the receiving (subsidiary) school – single registration (in which case the pupil will come off roll at the 'main' school); or (b) be expected to return to the main school (in which case the pupil will come off roll at the 'subsidiary' school).
- A Dual Registered pupil must not be removed from either school's roll without the agreement of the other school.



## **24 Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances (as set out in DfE guidance)**

In accordance with the [DfE School Attendance – Main Guidance](#), the academy will record pupils as code Y 'Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances' in the following circumstances (such circumstances are not recorded as absences):

- The academy site, or part of it, is closed due to an unavoidable cause
- The transport provided by the academy or the Local Authority is not available and the pupil's home is not within statutory walking distance. (See the DfE's '[Home to school travel and transport](#)' guidance document or ask the academy for a printed copy.)
- A local or national emergency has resulted in widespread disruption to travel which has prevented the pupil from attending the academy.
- The pupil is in custody, but still on the academy's roll. (If the academy has evidence that the pupil is attending educational activities, those sessions can be as 'present at approved educational activity').

## **25 Children Missing Education (CME) and removing pupils from roll**

25.1 If the academy has reason to believe the pupil may no longer be living at the address held on record and staff are unable to confirm the whereabouts of the pupil through the academy's usual processes, staff will follow the [CLF CME and Pupil Tracking guidance](#), along with [North Somerset Council's CME guidance](#) and make CME referrals as appropriate.

25.2 If a parent/carer notifies the academy in writing that the pupil and family are moving out of the area and the pupil no longer requires a place, the academy will remove the pupil from roll from the date of moving and will, at the same time, notify the Local Authority (LA) using the CME referral form.

25.3 The academy will add and delete pupils from roll in line with the law and make any additional CME referrals as appropriate, in accordance with North Somerset Council's guidance and the CLF CME and Pupil Tracking guidance.

25.4 The academy will seek advice from the LA if unsure about any individual cases: [SomersetEducationSafeguarding@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:SomersetEducationSafeguarding@somerset.gov.uk)

25.5 When removing a pupil from roll due to Elective Home Education (EHE) or Permanent Exclusion the academy will also follow the relevant LA EHE and Exclusion notification processes.

25.6 If a pupil on roll lives in a different LA area, the academy will follow the other LA's processes where appropriate.

## **26 Reporting to Parents/Carers**

26.1 The academy will include each pupil's attendance information in their report and provide parents/carers with a copy of their attendance summary for the year in Term 6. If



parents/carers wish to see a copy of their child's attendance summary at any other time during the year, they can ask for a printed copy at the academy office.

Where a pupil's attendance drops below 97%, the academy may contact parents/carers to highlight this, unless there is a good reason not to.

## **27 Recording Information on Attendance and Reasons for Absence**

27.1 All absences are recorded in the academy's attendance register in the Management Information System, SIMS. Information about the reason for the absence, how it was reported and by whom, and any additional information pertinent to the absence may also be recorded.

## **28 Policy Monitoring Arrangements**

28.1 This policy will be reviewed annually by the Principal, or more frequently if there are changes to legislation and guidance. At every review, the policy will be shared with the Academy Council.

## Appendix 1 – Department for Education (DfE) Attendance Codes

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
<b>B</b>	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity
<b>C</b>	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
<b>D</b>	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending another school or PRU)	Not counted in possible attendances
<b>E</b>	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
<b>G</b>	Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
<b>H</b>	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
<b>I</b>	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
<b>J</b>	Interview	Approved Education Activity
<b>L</b>	Late (before registers closed)	Present
<b>M</b>	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
<b>N</b>	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
<b>O</b>	Other unauthorised absence (not covered by other codes or descriptions)	Unauthorised absence
<b>P</b>	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
<b>R</b>	Day set aside exclusively for religious observance	Authorised absence



<b>CODE</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>MEANING</b>
<b>S</b>	Study leave	Authorised absence
<b>T</b>	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
<b>U</b>	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence
<b>V</b>	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
<b>W</b>	Work experience (not work based training)	Approved Education Activity
<b>X</b>	Un-timetabled sessions for non-compulsory school age pupils	Not counted in possible attendances
<b>Y</b>	Where the school site, or part of it, is closed due to unavoidable cause; or the transport provided by the school or local authority for pupils (who do not live with walking distance) is not available; or where a local or national emergency has resulted in widespread disruption to travel which has prevented the pupil from attending school; or a pupil is detained in custody for less than four months.	Not counted in possible attendances
<b>Z</b>	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
<b>#</b>	School closed to all pupils	Not counted in possible attendances

## Appendix 2 – Roles and Responsibilities

### The CLF Board

The Board is responsible for approving the CLF template policy.

### The Academy Council

The Academy Council is responsible for approving local adaptations to the CLF template policy and monitoring its implementation and effectiveness.

The Academy Council is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole academy at least 6 times a year. It also holds the Principal to account for the implementation of the attendance policy.

### The Principal

The Principal is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the academy, and for monitoring academy-level absence data and reporting it to academy council.

The Principal also supports other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils and makes requests for penalty notices or other legal action to the Local Authority where necessary.

### Inclusion Team

The inclusion Team consists of the Assistant Principal (SENCO), two Learning Mentors (one of whom is also Attendance Officer) and a Learning Mentor Assistant. They will regularly meet as a team to monitor and review attendance across the academy – for individual pupils, vulnerable groups and the whole academy. During their meetings, the Inclusion Team will identify pupils whose attendance is a cause for concern and put attendance interventions in place as necessary. Depending on the level of concern, the Inclusion Team will involve class teachers and other relevant staff, including the Administration Team, and co-ordinate meetings with parents/carers. Where considered necessary a formal action plan will be produced.

Responsible for: -

- Tracking pupils' attendance
- Devising and implementing action-plans for pupils with low attendance
- Sharing of relevant information between attendance and safeguarding staff
- Timely liaison with home

- Referral to and liaising with outside agencies
- Children Missing Education referrals
- Removing pupils from roll in line with legislation and guidance

### **Attendance Officer**

The Attendance Officer:

- Monitors attendance data at the academy and individual pupil level.
- Reports concerns about attendance to the Principal and Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) as appropriate.
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents/carers to discuss attendance issues.
- Co-ordinates requests for Term-time Leave of Absence, liaising with the Principal as necessary. (This also includes liaison with the DSL and Safeguarding Team.)
- Makes Children Missing Education referrals to the Local Authority where appropriate (this includes liaison with the DSL and Safeguarding Team).
- Removing pupils from roll in line with legislation and guidance, in consultation with the Principal.

### **Attendance Administrator & Reception Staff**

The Attendance Administrator & Reception staff are responsible for ensuring that the daily registers are completed accurately and on time, recording the reasons for absences and reporting any concerns or patterns of absence to the Attendance Team.

### **Office Staff**

Academy office staff are expected to take calls from parents/carers about absence and record the information on the academy (school) information management system (SIMS).

### **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**

Providing safeguarding support and advice to attendance colleagues as appropriate, including in response to term-time leave requests and CME cases; taking safeguarding action where necessary.

Meeting with the Academy Attendance Officer/Inclusion Team to review the attendance of the pupils on the academy's Vulnerable List and agreeing any action needed.

### **Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO)**

Meeting with the Academy Attendance Officer to review the attendance of the pupils on the academy's Vulnerable List and agreeing any action needed.

## **Class Teachers**

Class teachers are responsible for recording their pupils' attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the academy office.

Where there are attendance concerns, either raised by the class teachers themselves or by the Attendance Officer, they will 'check-in' with the pupil to find out about any reasons for absence as part of their responsibilities under the academy's Safeguarding Policy.

Class teachers may also be asked to meet with parents/carers whose child has a falling level of attendance and is flagged as a concern by the Attendance Officer