



ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY

This Policy was originally created in March 2007 and this issue was released in:	June 2011
It was ratified by the Governing Body on :	4 July 2011
This policy will be reviewed in:	The Summer Term 2014
This policy will be reviewed by:	Curriculum, Student Affairs and Parental Engagement Committee

ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY

Introduction

This policy seeks to support the Academy's vision and core values.

The Gateway Academy recognises that all students have the right to full access to the taught curriculum and to participate in the Academy's broader curriculum. Regular attendance is essential to enable students to take part in all the opportunities available and to develop their full potential. Studies show that students with 90% attendance and above are more likely to achieve 5 A*-C GCSE grades. Students, teachers, parents/carers and governors all have some part to play in securing these aims by implementing this Policy.

AIMS

- To ensure that students attend the Academy and stay throughout the day.
- To raise the standards achieved by individual students by improving attendance and punctuality.

POSSIBLE REASONS FOR NON-ATTENDANCE

- attitudes and pressures from home
- failure to achieve at the Academy
- personality factors
- history of truancy in earlier years
- long periods of illness
- low expectations for employment
- no friends/bullying in the Academy
- influence of other students/adults
- family history of poor attendance
- students who have recently changed schools
- an inaccessible curriculum

The DfES report, "Truancy in English Secondary Schools", suggests that students reject particular facets of the school (particularly subjects in the curriculum, or the homework or coursework which goes with them, or the people who teach them) rather than the institution as a whole.

STUDENT RIGHTS

All students at The Gateway Academy have the right:

- to interesting, relevant, motivational lessons with high quality teaching
- to be able to fully participate in all the Academy's activities, both inside and outside the curriculum;
- where problems of attendance exist, to be listened to and assisted in identifying the causes and helped to remedy them through setting targets and action-planning;
- to be monitored and supported in their attempts to attend;
- to receive praise for their efforts and improvements made;
- to be helped to catch up with work missed through illness or non-attendance;

- in cases of exclusion, to have full access to the curriculum, and to have work provided for them during the exclusion period.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

- To report on time to registration and each lesson throughout the day.
- If late, to sign in at reception and then proceed to their lesson.
- If absent or late, to bring a note from home or arrange for a parent to phone the Attendance Office staff

ADVICE TO STAFF ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ATTENDANCE POLICY

Academy attendance should be the concern of all teachers and not just a task for form tutors and the attendance team.

1 REGISTRATION

Scrupulous maintenance of registers using the Management Information System (MIS), careful monitoring of the attendance of individual students and swift follow-up action are essential in continuing regular attendance.

Registration should be a formal process. Its importance should be regularly emphasised and good attendance praised and rewarded.

NB: If the system fails, a paper register **must** be taken.

2 REGISTRATION IN LESSONS

A register must be taken (using the MIS system) for every lesson throughout the day using the following codes:

- Present
- Absent
- Office Duty
- Other learning activity (eg music, sport etc, Student Support Centre etc)

3 ACTION IN LIGHT OF ABSENCE

- To be effective, any action taken by the Academy must be quick, to determine both the reason for absence and what has to be done to get a student back to the Academy.
- Attendance Officers will collate registers for absent students and email/fax details to Call Divert.
- Call Divert will call/text all contacts to ascertain what students are absent
- Call Divert then fax back all students for that day with any response from contact with details why student is absent
- Attendance Officers will then enter those details onto the Academy's system (E-Portal)
- A telephone call will be made to the parent/carer of any first-day absences
- The attendance staff will take action as necessary and will maintain a detailed log.

- After 3 days of absence, a member of the attendance team will call the parent/carer to discuss a planned return to the Academy and any support that is necessary.
- When students do return to Academy after a long period of absence:
 - the attendance team should consider making a referral to the Inclusion Leader who will hold a discussion with the student to identify possible Academy-based causes for absence, eg. bullying, difficulties with learning, difficulties in particular lessons;
 - a member of the attendance team should meet with a student to negotiate a target for improved attendance.
 - improvement should be acknowledged and praised;
 - a member of the attendance team should liaise with the student's teachers to attempt a non-confrontational supportive return to the Academy, including assistance with work that has been missed;
 - a monitoring card may be issued to check attendance and punctuality;
 - where the attendance team consider that the student will struggle in the main-stream classroom a referral to the Inclusion Panel should be made;

4 INVOLVEMENT OF PARENTS

Establishing good links and a working partnership with parents/carers is an important pre-requisite to good attendance.

- The Home/Academy Agreement should be signed each year and will emphasis the responsibilities of all parties to promote good attendance.
- The Academy will make it clear to parents/carers why children need to attend regularly, what action will be taken by the Academy when children are absent, how parents/carers are expected to notify the Academy of their child's absence and, in particular, what are to count as valid reasons for absence.
- The Academy will arrange for parents/carers of students with unsatisfactory attendance to be fully involved in the setting of attendance goals (possibly involving the attendance team or the Behaviour Improvement Programme).
- Parents/carers will be kept fully informed of improvements made by their children (or failure to improve).
- For key targeted students, monthly letters to be sent to inform parents/carers of their child's attendance and punctuality.
- For students where attendance is a serious concern, targets will be set within the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP), if appropriate, or a Personal Support Programme (PSP) will be written where there is a need for one.

5 INVOLVEMENT OF THE ATTENDANCE TEAM

- The attendance team exists to help parents and the Academy meet the obligations placed on them by the Education Acts. The team is empowered to approach a child's family to make enquiries where it is thought a child is absent without good reason.

- The work of the team plays a supportive role between home and the Academy and provides a useful liaison with other support agencies including medical, Social Services, the police, and the Magistrates' Court.
- Close communication between the Inclusion Manager and the team is essential. Heads of College should also be aware of any attendance related issues.
- The Attendance Team will prepare a half-termly report for the Principal and reports as necessary for the Governing Body.
- The Academy acknowledges its own responsibility for attendance. The teams task is to support the Academy's efforts and, where necessary, to enforce the law.

6 LIAISON WITH PRIMARY SCHOOLS

The Inclusion Team, through discussion with primary staff, will identify children "at risk" before they transfer to The Gateway Academy and plan ways in which to support them.

7 KEY STAGE PASTORAL TEAMS

The issues of non-attendance/truancy/lateness should be regularly discussed in the College meetings and during Advocacy Days. Students should be aware of the Academy's Attendance Policy and of their rights and responsibilities.

Each Head of College is responsible for ensuring that good attendance is achieved and should therefore ensure that a range of activities are implemented and that good attendance is celebrated at every opportunity.

STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

1 TEACHERS

- Teachers should keep accurate registers using the MIS system and interpret attendance and punctuality patterns which emerge.
- Academy registers are public records and may be called in evidence in court. **STUDENTS MUST NEVER BE ALLOWED TO USE THE MIS ATTENDANCE SYSTEM.**
- Learning Facilitators should not remove any pupil from a register until instructed to do so by the Admissions staff.
- Form Tutors should establish firm procedures with their group for the collection of explanations for absence.
- All absence notes should be dated, signed by Form Tutor and given to the Attendance Team. Messages (verbal or telephone) should be recorded and filed.
- The Attendance Team should be informed of any student who has been absent for 3 days (without satisfactory explanation).
- Form Tutors should monitor attendance of students new to the Academy who have a history of poor attendance - pass details to attendance manager.
- The annual attendance figures should be reported to parents/carers through end of term reports.

2 ATTENDANCE TEAM

- Identify targets for each year in Academy Development Plan.
- Establish clear routines amongst staff and students relating to attendance.
- Support tutors in follow-up action, setting goals for students, praising successes.
- Monitor attendance of students new to the Academy who have a history of poor attendance.
- Seek ways of identifying strategies for improving attendance - reward those with the highest percentages with a trip, for example.
- Monitor registers and make data comparisons from computer print-outs.
- Contact parents/carers of students with 3 days' unexplained absence.
- Use the MIS print-out of information to send letters, each half term, to all parents/carers whose child has an attendance record of 85% or less and a letter each term to parents/carers whose child has an attendance record of 90% or less.
- Inform parents/carers where students punctuality is regularly poor and set sanctions as appropriate.
- Print out attendance of each student to be displayed at Student Services.

3 VICE PRINCIPAL (INCLUSION)

- The VP Inclusion will meet each week with the Attendance Manager to examine trends and discuss necessary interventions and referral to the Inclusion Panel.
- Individual students whose attendance is 85% or lower will be discussed with actions to improve attendance agreed.
- The VP and the Attendance Manager will organise regular "truancy visits" with the Safer Schools Officer.
- The VP will monitor the work of the Heads of College to ensure that they are having a positive impact on attendance.
- Report to and discuss with the Principal and Academy governors all issues relating to the Academy attendance figures.

4 HEADS OF DEPARTMENT AND TEACHERS

- Recognise that truancy may be the result of a lack of success, poor self-esteem, bullying in class, inappropriate work tasks, difficulties with home learning/ coursework, etc.
- Department staff will develop strategies for identifying students with problems and devise plans of action to help overcome them.
- Teachers will keep accurate lesson registers every lesson using MIS system; record the lateness of students and set an appropriate sanction.
- Subject staff will report attendance problems concerning individual students to attendance team.
- Teachers will encourage promptness at lessons - refer to Rights and Responsibilities and Home/Academy Agreements. Apply sanctions if students are late. Refer to Behaviour and Discipline Policy

Appendix 1 - Activities to encourage attendance

- **Tutor and College league tables.**
- **Display materials to emphasis the benefits of good attendance.**
- **Clear display materials to communicate attendance targets and the progress towards them.**
- **Regular rewards and prize draws for good attendance.**
- **Assemblies to explain the need for good attendance.**
- **Curriculum modules in citizenship and drama linked to attendance issues.**
- **The use of theatre groups to emphasise attendance.**
- **The intervention of the EWO and the Attendance Team and BAP interviews**
- **Regular information to the parents of targeted students.**
- **Attendance information included on all reports.**
- **Annual awards for students with 100% attendance.**
- **Student mentoring.**
- **Buddying system.**
- **Parental support.**
- **Providing a calm, friendly school environment.**
- **100% Club rewards – fortnightly recognition.**
- **College panels.**