



# Attendance Policy

## Review Summary

<b>Adopted:</b>	<b>Sep 2017</b>
<b>Review Cycle:</b>	<b>Bi-annual</b>
<b>Last Review:</b>	<b>Mar 2018</b>
<b>Next Review:</b>	<b>Sep 2019</b>

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1. The Trust is committed to providing a full and effective educational experience for all pupils. We believe that if pupils are to benefit from education, punctual, daily attendance is crucial. Irregular attendance undermines the educational process and can lead to educational and social disadvantage.
- 1.2. The Trust actively promotes and encourages 100 per cent attendance for all our pupils. We recognize that parents have a vital role to play and that there is a need to establish strong home-school links and communication systems that can be utilised whenever there is concern about attendance.
- 1.3. If there are problems which affect a pupil's attendance, we will investigate, identify and strive in partnership with parents and pupils to resolve those problems as quickly and efficiently as possible. We will adopt a clearly focused approach aimed at returning the pupil to full attendance at all times.

## **2. Legislation**

- 2.1. The Education Act 1996 requires parents/carers to ensure their children receive effective, full-time education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. Schools and Academies are responsible for recording student attendance twice a day; once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session.
- 2.2. The government expects:
  - a. Schools and local authorities to:
    - Promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence;
    - Ensure every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled; and, act early to address patterns of absence.
  - b. Parents to perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age who are registered at school attend regularly.
  - c. All pupils to be punctual to their lessons.
- 2.3. These requirements are contained in:
  - a. The Education Act 1996 - sections 434(1)(3)(4)&(6) and 458(4)&(5)
  - b. The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
  - c. The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010
  - d. The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2011
  - e. The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
  - f. The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016

## **3. What you can expect from the Ted Wragg Multi Academy Trust:**

- a. We will promote good attendance and punctuality and will investigate any unexplained and/or unjustified absence.
- b. We will work closely with parents/carers where pupil's absence is cause for concern.
- c. We will support pupils to achieve good attendance and punctuality.
- d. We will support pupils returning to school after prolonged absence.

## **4. What the Ted Wragg Multi Academy Trust expects from pupils:**

- a. To attend regularly and on time.
- b. To be punctual.

## **5. What the Ted Wragg Multi Academy Trust expects from Parents/Carers:**

- a. To ensure their child attends the academy on those days it is open, punctually, dressed in full uniform and equipped to learn.

- b. To ensure their child attends every day the Academy is open unless they are too ill to do so.
- c. To avoid arranging holidays during term time.
- d. To immediately inform the Academy if their child is unable to attend.
- e. To avoid making medical appointments during school time as far as possible.

## **6. Managing Attendance**

6.1. Refer to Appendix A for an individual academy's managing attendance procedures.

6.2. If an attendance award system is used within a school, an attendance reward will take exceptions for 'authorised absence' into account, which are pupils whose absence marks relate to a recognised impairment (as the Disability Discrimination Act requires us to treat those with a disability 'more favourably') or those pupils granted leave for religious observance.

## **7. Punctuality**

It is the responsibility of parents/carers to ensure their child attends full time education and arrives at Academy on time. Punctuality is monitored by the Academy and parents will be contacted if their child is not arriving to Academy on time. If a child persistently arrives after the registers close, cases will be referred to the EWO who may consider issuing a Penalty Notice.

## **8. Authorised Absences**

8.1. Absences from school will only be classified as authorised for the following reasons:

- a. Genuine illness
- b. Unavoidable medical / dental appointments
- c. Days of religious observance
- d. Exceptional circumstances, such as bereavement or marriage of an immediate family member
- e. Seeing a parent who is on leave from the armed forces
- f. External examinations
- g. When Traveller children go on the road with their parents

## **9. Absences during Term Time**

9.1. Permission must be sought in advance to take a pupil out of school during term time, which can only be requested from a parent/carer with parental responsibility and with whom the child normally lives.

9.2. If the circumstances relating to this request are considered exceptional and the absence is authorised by the academy, the authorising of the absences will be conditional on the child's attendance being satisfactory up to the date covered by this request. If the academy withdraws the authorisation due to the attendance dropping to an unacceptable level, the parent/carer will be informed of this in writing.

9.3. If a request is refused and the child is taken out of school, this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence, which may then be liable to a penalty notice, payable by each parent/carer, or the subject of court proceedings which could result in a fine of up to £2,500 and/or a term of imprisonment of up to 3 months.

## **10. Truancy**

It is the legal responsibility of parents/carers to ensure their child attends all lessons as required. Parents/carers will be informed by the Attendance Officer if their child has been identified as truanting from the Academy. Persistent cases may be referred to the EWO who may consider issuing a Penalty Notice.

## **11. When Attendance Causes Concern**

- 11.1. If a child of compulsory school age fails to attend regularly at a school at which they are registered, or at a place where alternative provision is provided for them, the parents may be guilty of an offence and can be prosecuted by the local authority.
- 11.2. The Academy will utilise the support of the Education Welfare Service (EWS), where attendance is a concern. The EWS service can support and advise parent/carers who may be experiencing difficulties with their child's attendance.
- 11.3. If attendance continues to be unacceptable, the academy, with support from the EWS, will instigate the fast track to prosecution process as per the flow chart in Appendix B
- 11.4. For continued unacceptable attendance the local authority may make the decision to issue a Penalty Notice, requiring a parent to pay a fine of up to £120 per parent/carer. In certain circumstances, a parent/carer may be prosecuted and be required to attend the Magistrates Court where they could face up to 3 months imprisonment and/or a fine of up to £2,500. The parent/carer will be given every opportunity to improve their child's attendance and they will receive a written warning before any legal action is taken.

## **12. Policy Circulation**

- 12.1. This Policy will be published on the Trust's website and included in the Trust's Policy Monitoring Schedule.
- 12.2. This Policy will be circulated to every Member, Trustee/Director, Governor and Senior Employee by sending an email to the link on the Trust's website on an annual basis and when each new Member, Trustee/Director, Governor and Senior Employee joins the Trust.
- 12.3. The Trust Executive Team, is responsible for overseeing, reviewing and organising the revision of this Policy.

## **Adoption of the Policy**

This Policy has been adopted by the Trustees of the Ted Wragg Multi Academy Trust.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

(Chair of Trust)

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## **Appendix A – Isca Academy Attendance Management Procedures**

### **1. Introduction**

Isca Academy is committed to providing a full and effective educational experience for all students. We believe that if students are to benefit from education, good attendance is crucial. Irregular attendance undermines the educational process and can lead to educational and social disadvantage. As an Academy we do all that we can to ensure maximum attendance for all students. Any problems that prevent full attendance will be identified and addressed as speedily as possible.

It is the policy of our Academy to celebrate achievement. Attendance is a critical factor to a productive and successful school career and establishes a good pattern for later life. Our Academy will actively promote and encourage 100 per cent attendance for all our students. We recognize that parents have a vital role to play and that there is a need to establish strong home-school links and communication systems that can be utilized whenever there is concern about attendance.

### **2. Objectives**

- To encourage full attendance and punctuality
- To ensure that parents / carers are aware of attendance / punctuality concerns
- To work with EWS and other appropriate agencies to support good attendance and punctuality
- To record and monitor attendance and absenteeism and apply appropriate strategies
- To acknowledge and reward a successful record of attendance through the Academy's rewards system
- To ensure a consistent approach throughout the Academy
- To improve attainment and achievement of pupils through improved levels of attendance.

### **3. Statutory Duty of School and Parents**

The Education Act 1996 requires parents/carers to ensure their children receive effective, full-time education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. Schools and Academies are responsible for recording student attendance twice a day; once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session. At Isca Academy an electronic registration system is in place. Student attendance is recorded for every lesson.

#### **Principles**

Parents/carers are legally responsible for ensuring that their children attend school. This extends to ensuring that students arrive at Academy on time, properly attired, with correct equipment and in a condition to learn. The Academy will make every effort to promote good attendance, giving advice and support where needed.

#### **The Education Welfare Service (EWS) & School Attendance**

The EWS is a part of the Devon Local Authority (the LA). Its aim is to ensure that every child has the opportunity to benefit from a full time education by attending school regularly. The EWS can help and advise parents/carers who may be experiencing difficulties that prevent this. It is the responsibility of parents/carers to ensure that their

child attends school regularly and the EWS expects parents/carers to do all that is necessary to make sure this happens.

**What happens if your child does not attend school regularly (and their absence is not authorised)?**

It is a criminal offence for a child not to attend school regularly and, as the parent, this is your responsibility. A Penalty Notice may therefore be issued, requiring you to pay a fine of up to £120 per parent/carers, per child if their attendance is below an acceptable level. In certain circumstances you may be prosecuted and be required to attend the Magistrates Court where you could face up to 3 months imprisonment and/or a fine of up to £2,500. You will be given every opportunity to improve your child's attendance and you will receive a written warning before any legal action is taken.

**4. Statutory Attendance Responsibilities**

There is a legal responsibility to have a morning and an afternoon registration mark for every student at the Academy.

**The School will:**

- Record and monitor attendance and absence. Legally we are required to do this twice a day.
- Use an electronic registration system to record and monitor attendance of all lessons during the school day to ensure the safety and welfare of all pupils.
- Record and monitor the punctuality of all students and, where necessary, inform parents of persistent lateness and apply appropriate consequences. Registers are taken at 8.50am, and 12.40pm: Pupils arriving after registers are closed will be recorded as an unauthorised absence (U).
- Only authorise pupil absence in exceptional circumstances where absence is unavoidable.
- Maintain strong home-school liaison to inform and support parents with their child's attendance. The Academy uses Groupcall as a communication method to follow up daily absences.
- Work closely with the school Educational Welfare Officer and other appropriate agencies where there are concerns regarding attendance.
- Help to investigate, identify and resolve any issues with children and their families which prevent full attendance at Isca Academy and will do everything possible to help return students to full attendance.
- Promote the importance of attendance through weekly assemblies and celebrating students who achieve 100% attendance.
- Inform parents (in the form of a letter) on a regular basis, of all children whose attendance is causing concern .

**Parents should:**

- Ensure their children arrive on time to Academy with the correct equipment and full uniform
- Be aware that any person who has the care of a child or who has parental responsibility is responsible for ensuring good attendance.
- Ensure that they are fully aware of school procedures – see appendix A

**5. Reporting Absences****Up to 3 Days' Absence**

- It is the responsibility of the parents/carers to inform the Academy of the reason for a student's absence by 9.00 a.m. on the day of absence and every day that they are absent thereafter unless the absence is covered by a medical certificate specifying date of return.
- The Academy will operate a First Day Calling system and the parents/carers of every absent student will be contacted by the Attendance Officer.
- Any absence where a reason is NOT provided, will be followed up with a message in the first instance then a letter from the Attendance Officer.

**More than 3 Consecutive Days' Absence**

- Where there has been no parental/carer notification after 3 consecutive days, appropriate staff should contact parents/carer.
- Where there has been an absence of more than 4 consecutive days and parents/carers have not made contact or cannot be contacted by school, EWO should be informed.
- In the case of 5 or more days of illness, the Academy should be notified so that teachers can set work. Medical evidence will need to be provided to the school in order for the Academy to authorise the absence. The EWO will be notified if the absence is unauthorised.

**Methods of Reporting Absences**

In any case of absence, parents/carers should contact the Academy by one of the following methods:

- By phone to the Attendance Officer.
- Personal contact with Attendance Officer who will note the reason for absence on

SIMs. Attendance Officer will notify the tutor of absence and reason.

- If you are unable to contact the Attendance Officer, a parental note explaining the absence must be passed to the Attendance Officer on the first day back at Academy.
- Notification by fax and e-mail cannot be accepted, we do however accept messages via Groupcall

## 6. Authorised Absence

### Reasons for absence

Be aware that absence from school will only be authorised if it is for the following reasons:

- Genuine illness
- Unavoidable medical / dental appointments (but try to make these after school if at all possible) We are not able to authorize a whole day's absence for this unless an L5 Absence Form is completed in advance.
- Days of religious observance
- Exceptional circumstances, such as bereavement or marriage of an immediate family member
- Seeing a parent who is on leave from the armed forces
- External examinations
- When Traveller children go on the road with their parents

### Absences during Term Time

#### **NOTES TO PARENTS/CARERS**

The law does not grant parents/carers an automatic right to take their children out of school during term time. If the request is for an absence in term time you must have Parental Responsibility and be the parent/carer with whom the child normally lives. Permission must be sought in advance. If the circumstances relating to this request are considered exceptional and the absence is authorised by the school, the authorising of the absences will be conditional on the child's(rens') attendance being satisfactory up to the date covered by this request.

Warning: If the school refuses your request and the child is still taken out of school, this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence. Unauthorised absence may make you liable to a Penalty Notice for each child, payable by each parent/carer, or the subject of court proceedings which could result in a fine of up to £2,500 and/or a term of imprisonment of up to 3 months.

Absences will only be authorised if there are considered to be exceptional circumstances. Absence Request Form L5 should be submitted a minimum of four weeks in advance to the Academy (available from Reception). The absence will only be authorised at the Headteacher's (or delegated Deputy) discretion.

If an absence is authorised by the school it remains conditional upon attendance being



96% or over, up until the date of absence. If the school withdraws the authorisation due to the attendance dropping to an unacceptable level, the parent/carer will be informed of this in writing.

If a parent/carer is refused an absence request and the student is still taken out of school by the parent/carer, you may be issued with a penalty notice for the unauthorised absence.

#### **7. Truancy**

It is the legal responsibility of parents/carers to ensure their child attends all lessons as required. Parents/carers will be informed by the Attendance Officer if their child has been identified as truanting from the Academy. Persistent cases may be referred to the EW O who may consider issuing a Penalty Notice.

#### **8. When Attendance causes Concern (see Appendix A Section 7)**

Our attendance target for the year is 96% and we expect all pupils to achieve at least this or above. This rate has been agreed by Babcock LDP as an acceptable target for secondary schools across Devon for the academic year 2017/2018..

- Tutors and HOY will monitor targets to encourage good attendance and to address any concerns
- Contact will be made with parents to advise them of poor attendance using a RAG system:

Green letter- monitored by the tutor

Amber letter- monitored by the Head of Year

Red letter- monitored by the Education Welfare Officer.

- A referral will be made to the Education Welfare Service and you may be contacted by the EWO with regard to your child's attendance. You could be asked to attend either an attendance meeting or legal meeting in school to look at how the issue can be resolved.

#### **9. Punctuality**

It is the responsibility of parents/carers to ensure their child attends full time education and arrives at Academy on time. Punctuality is monitored by the Academy and parents will be contacted if their child is not arriving to Academy on time. If a child persistently arrives after the registers close, cases will be referred to the EW O who may consider issuing a Penalty Notice.

## Appendix B – Fast Track to Prosecution Process

