



Co-op Academy  
Priesthorpe

# Attendance Policy

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## Policy details

Approved by governors - 11/10/2023

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## Introduction

Co-op Academy Priesthorpe is committed to providing a full education to all pupils that embraces the concept of equal opportunities for all. We provide a welcoming, caring environment where every pupil feels safe and valued. Regular attendance and excellent punctuality are essential in ensuring pupils make sustained academic progress and social development.

The academy works in partnership with students and their parents or carers around the importance of regular and punctual attendance. Regular and punctual attendance is of paramount importance in ensuring that all children have full access to the curriculum, as valuable learning time is lost when students are absent or late.

## Our Aim

It is the aim that at Coop Academy Priesthorpe, students and staff should enjoy learning, experience success and maximise their potential. The aim of the Attendance Policy reflects this and recognises that regular attendance has a positive impact on the motivation and attainment of students.

## Principles

There is a clear link between poor attendance at school and lower academic achievement at GCSE level, with poor attenders much less likely to achieve five strong passes at GCSE, including English and Maths.

Similarly, research clearly demonstrates a strong correlation between high absenteeism in schools and poor pupil attainment when studying A Level subjects.

In accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2022, we recognise that Children Missing Education are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation, and becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training) later in life.

## Objectives

To provide an effective and efficient system for monitoring attendance and punctuality.

To recognise the external barriers which influence student attendance and work with parents and the Academy to overcome these.

To encourage students to take full advantage of their educational opportunities by attending school everyday.

## Practice

### Attendance Register

By law, all schools (except those where all pupils are boarders) are required to keep an attendance register and all pupils must be placed on this register.

The attendance register is taken at the start of the first session of each day and once during the second session. It marks whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Students are able to access the school building from 8.00am on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, and from 8.30am on Tuesday and Thursday.

They must be in their first lesson or Coaching by 8:30am on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, and 9.00am on Tuesday and Thursday. Academy registration closes at 9:00am prompt on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, and 9.30am on Tuesday and Thursday.

### Absence

Parents must notify the academy on the first day of absence using the Keep Kids Safe Text system or phone the Attendance Office on 0113 3871886 to report a student absence before 8.25am and continue to make daily contact until the student is well enough to return. Parents should explain the reason for absence.

Where attendance levels are 97% or below, on return to the academy, parents must provide medical evidence such as a stamped medical card, hospital letter or prescription in order for the absence to be authorised.

If a reason for absence is not provided the Attendance Team will make contact via a phone call before 11 am, in line with our Safeguarding Policy.

Failure to notify the academy of an absence may result in a home visit carried out by the Attendance Team in line with academy safeguarding policy.

## Medical Appointments

Parents are required to make medical and dental appointments out of academy hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should return promptly.

If a student has an appointment during the academy day, a medical card/official letter should be given to the Attendance Improvement Manager along with prior notice of the appointment. The appointment should be made at the start/end of the academy day to minimise disruption to learning.

## Punctuality

The academy closes the statutory register at 9.00am on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, and 9.30am on Tuesday and Thursday, after which time pupils arriving late without prior notice or reasonable explanation, will receive an unauthorised absence mark.

If a student is:

- Late, but arrives before the register has closed, they will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.
- Late after the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code.
- If a pupil arrives late at the start of the day and/or P4 (after lunch) they will receive a one hour detention after school on the same day. Parents/carers of pupils arriving late into school will receive a text notification in this regard.

## Absence Follow Up

The academy follows up any absences with one of the following actions:

- Telephone call to parent/carer
- Text to parent/carer
- Home Visit

The outcome of the follow up is recorded and marked accordingly on the register using the correct code.

## Leave Of Absence During Term Time

The Government's amendments of the Education Regulations 2006 removed the right of Principals to authorise family holidays and extended leave. The academy policy, therefore, reflects this legislation.

Holidays in term time will not be granted unless it is considered to be for 'exceptional circumstances'

Where an application is made for a holiday, if the reason for travel is defined as an exceptional circumstance, this will be given to the Principal for authorisation.

Parents/Guardians who choose to take their child out of school during term time could receive a Fixed Penalty Notice of up to £120

Parents/carers should complete a leave of absence form where possible for Religious Observances such as EID. Authorisation of 1 day will be granted in such circumstances.

If a student fails to return from a leave of absence and contact with the parents has not been made or received, school may take the student off the school's role in compliance with the Education (student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. This means that the child will lose their school place.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually whilst taking into account circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the Principal's discretion.

## Supporting Attendance

School recognises that poor attendance can be an indication of difficulties in a child's life. This may be related to problems at home and/or in school. Parents should make school aware of any difficulties or changes in circumstances that may affect their child's attendance and or behaviour in school, for example, bereavement, divorce/separation, incidents of domestic abuse. This will help the school identify any additional support that may be required.

Co-op Academy Priesthorpe also recognises that some students are more likely to require additional support to achieve excellent attendance, for example, those students with special educational needs, those with physical or mental health needs, and looked after children.

The academy implements a range of strategies to support improved attendance. Strategies used will include:

- Communication with parents via telephone/meeting/letter
- Attendance Mentor Programme
- Attendance panels
- Attendance Report Cards
- Parenting contracts
- Referrals to support agencies
- 1-1 work with pastoral and Attendance Staff
- Reward systems
- Reintegration support packages

Where parents fail or refuse to engage with the support offered and further unauthorised absence occurs, Co-op Academy Priesthorpe will consider the use of legal sanctions.

## Rewarding Attendance

- Pupils with 100% attendance in any one half term are rewarded. The types of rewards on offer vary – students have an input through various forms of student voice as to the type of rewards
- Pupils who achieve 100% attendance over a longer period ie. Full term / Full year receive more substantial rewards/prizes.
- Pupils will also be rewarded if they achieve their attendance target
- Rewards are also given during the year, for example, group attendance awards such as 'Highest Achieving Coaching Group'.
- Rewards may also be given for students who significantly improve their attendance.

## Legal Intervention

The law requires parents to ensure that their child attends school regularly. The academy has a primary responsibility in dealing with the issue of attendance, in partnership with parents and pupils. The majority of attendance issues will be dealt with by the academy, however, on occasions, attendance concerns may need to be passed on to Leeds City Council Attendance Advisors.

Schools have to regularly inform the Local Authority of any pupils who are regularly absent from school, have irregular attendance, or have missed 10 school days or more without the school's permission. Schools also have a safeguarding duty, under section 175 Education Act 2002, to investigate any unexplained absences

If a student is missing school without good reason and support options have been exhausted without improvement/engagement, schools can refer to the Local Authority for legal intervention. This is likely to result in the student case file being referred for consideration in the Magistrates Court.

As a result of this, one of the following outcomes can be expected:

- Parenting Order
- Education Supervision Order
- School Attendance Order
- Fixed Penalty Notice

## Attendance Monitoring

Attendance data will be generated, analysed and actioned in order to ensure that effective intervention strategies are implemented as a matter of routine.

Year Managers/Coaches and Behaviour Support Workers will be provided with regular updates to monitor patterns of attendance.

## Monitoring attendance

- Monitor attendance and absence data half-termly, termly and yearly across the school, key groups, and at an individual pupil level
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and Local Authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the Academy Governing Council

## Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data weekly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families using internal strategies as well as signposting to other outside agencies to seek support
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

## Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to [class teachers/student coaches], and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

## Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to identify patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Follow Fast Track monitoring procedures/School Attendance Panel Meetings to support students and families to improve attendance.
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance

## Attendance and Safeguarding

At Coop Academy Priesthorpe we understand that absence from school is a potential safeguarding risk and understand this is an important part of keeping children safe.

### Children Missing in Education

Our academy recognises that a child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect and such children are at risk of being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation; it also recognises that prolonged absence could be the result of travelling to conflict zones, female genital mutilation and forced marriage.

If a student fails to attend on the agreed or notified date, the school will undertake reasonable enquiries to establish the child's whereabouts. Where there are safety or other concerns, and also in circumstances where a child is being particularly monitored, the school will notify the Local Authority and/or social services of this, depending on the circumstances.

Where a pupil has not returned to school for ten days after an authorised absence or is absent from school without authorisation for twenty consecutive school days the pupil can be removed from the admission register after making reasonable enquiries to establish the whereabouts of the child. This can only be applied if the school does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend because of sickness or other acceptable and unavoidable cause.

There is a local authority protocol with regard to the reports and their frequency when the school will provide details of pupils who fail to attend regularly, or have missed ten school days or more without permission.

## Roles and Responsibilities

Co-op Academy Priesthorpe believes that improved school attendance can only be achieved if it is viewed as a shared responsibility of the school staff, governors, parents, students and the wider school community.

### Academy Governing Council (AGC)

The AGC is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the Principal to account for the implementation of this policy.

### Principal

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



## Attendance Team

The Attendance Team is responsible for recording absence and monitoring student attendance.

Actions that may be taken to address attendance issues include any or all of the following, dependent on circumstances:

- Challenge non-attendance at every opportunity
- Monitor attendance procedures and work with teachers/pastoral support to improve attendance
- Monitor closely students at risk of becoming a PA and deliver intervention as appropriate.
- Work closely with PA students and parents/carers to support them in improving attendance.
- Work closely with students and family to address attendance issues.
- Rewards and recognition for excellent attendance
- Telephone conversation(s) with parents/carers
- Letters or meetings with parents/carers and other family members
- Home visit(s)
- Use of report card to monitor attendance
- Use of contract to support attendance
- Referral to Attendance Panel
- Fixed Penalty Notices for unauthorised absence which can lead to a fine per parent in respect of each child
- Cases forwarded for prosecution for non-attendance