



**Manchester Academy**

The best in everyone™

Part of United Learning

# Manchester Academy Attendance Policy

## DRAFT Policy Information and Review

<b>Designated Lead Person(s)</b>	Mrs. G. McMullen (Vice Principal) Mr. M. Hurst (Assistant Vice Principal)
<b>Created/Reviewed</b>	Created for use from September 2023 (Annually)
<b>Date of last review and by whom</b>	July 2023, Mrs. G McMullen
<b>Link Governor (if applicable)</b>	N/A
<b>Ratification by Local Governing Body (date)</b>	N/A
<b>Next Review Date</b>	July 2024

## Introduction-

Regular school attendance is vital so that all students at Manchester Academy can reach their full potential.

Manchester Academy believes that attendance is the bedrock of a successful education in both academic excellence and being happy, thriving individuals that leave us to become contributing members of society.

We aim to understand and support families but not to tolerate poor attendance. We seek to identify reasons for poor attendance and work with families to improve attendance, keeping in mind the child's best interests at heart.

Attendance plays a key role in all aspects of Academy life and should be viewed alongside our Safeguarding, Behaviour, Anti-Bullying and SEND policies.

## General Principles-

Parents/carers are legally obliged to ensure that children of compulsory school age receive an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need that they may have. Where parents/carers decide to have their child at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for absence in advance from the school.

Compulsory school age means beginning of the term following the child's 5<sup>th</sup> birthday until the last Friday in June of the school year in which they reach the age of 16.

Under the Education Act 1996, the Local Authority has a statutory responsibility to ensure that parents secure education for children of compulsory school age and where necessary, use of legal enforcement.

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2016, require schools to take an accurate attendance register twice a day, once at the start of the morning session and again during the afternoon session.

The register must record whether the student was:

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

## Attendance at Manchester Academy

# Times of the School Day

KS3			KS4		
Form Time	8.30	9.00	Form Time	8.30	9.00
P1	9.00	10.00	P1	9.00	10.00
Break	10.00	10.20	P2	10.00	11.00
P2	10.20	11.20	Break	11.00	11.20
P3	11.20	12.20	P3	11.20	12.20
Lunch	12.20	13.00	P4	12.20	13.20
P4	13.00	14.00	Lunch	13.20	14.00
P5	14.00	15.00	P5	14.00	15.00

The Senior Leaders for the strategic approach to attendance in school are:

- Mrs. G. McMullen – Vice Principal – 0161 232 1639 – [gilly.mcmullen@manchester-academy.org](mailto:gilly.mcmullen@manchester-academy.org)
- Mr. M Hurst – Assistant Vice Principal - 0161 232 1639 – [matthew.hurst@manchester-academy.org](mailto:matthew.hurst@manchester-academy.org)

The Attendance officer is:

### Key Stage 3:

- Ms. S. Nelson – Attendance Officer – 0161 232 1639 – [sinead.nelson@manchester-academy.org](mailto:sinead.nelson@manchester-academy.org)

Ms. Nelson is currently on MAT Leave

- **Ms. Madeleine Lovett** – Attendance Officer – 0161 232 1639 – [madeleine.lovett@manchester-academy.org](mailto:madeleine.lovett@manchester-academy.org)

**Key Stage 4:**

- **Mr Tim Clarke** – Attendance Officer – 0161 232 1639 – [tim.clarke@manchester-academy.org](mailto:tim.clarke@manchester-academy.org)

If you would like a conversation regarding more detailed support for attendance, then please contact the wider pastoral team appropriate for the year group your child is in alongside our Attendance Officer.

Year	DCC	LCB
Year 7	TBC	<a href="mailto:Jessica.cheetwood@manchester-academy.org">Jessica.cheetwood@manchester-academy.org</a>
Year 8	TBC	<a href="mailto:James.Morton@manchester-academy.org">James.Morton@manchester-academy.org</a>
Year 9	<a href="mailto:Darren.clarke@manchester-academy.org">Darren.clarke@manchester-academy.org</a>	<a href="mailto:Tianna.Richards@manchester-academy.org">Tianna.Richards@manchester-academy.org</a>
Year 10	<a href="mailto:Lyndsey.Henzell@manchester-academy.org">Lyndsey.Henzell@manchester-academy.org</a>	<a href="mailto:Emmanuel.Nnadede@manchester-academy.org">Emmanuel.Nnadede@manchester-academy.org</a>
Year 11	<a href="mailto:Rebecca.Tempest@manchester-academy.org">Rebecca.Tempest@manchester-academy.org</a>	<a href="mailto:Imran.Gill@manchester-academy.org">Imran.Gill@manchester-academy.org</a>

LCBs carry out first day calling on the first day of absence when a child is absent and will log findings on Arbor.

**1. Absence types:**

The attendance register must accurately identify whether or not the absence is authorised or unauthorised. Absence can only be authorised by the Principal and not by parents or carers. All absence will be unauthorised unless a **exceptional circumstance** reason is provided to Manchester Academy.

Parents must report absence by 8:30am by:

- phone @ 0161 232 1639
- email @ [attendance@manchester-academy.org](mailto:attendance@manchester-academy.org)
- message on the MyEd app

by 8:30am on each day of absence. Parents/carers must also provide an expected date of return alongside any medical evidence should a child have attended the doctors or dentists etc. This should be

in the form of an appointment card or letter or copy of a prescription. **Even if you have phoned school, you may receive a phone call from staff to clarify matters.**

Absence will be categorised as follows:

**Illness (I)** – If a student is too ill to attend school, the parent/carer should contact the school via the methods outlined above and provide medical evidence so the Principal can authorise absence where appropriate.

**Medical/Dental Appointments (M)** – Medical and dental appointments should where possible outside of school hours. In exceptional circumstances and the student must attend during school hours then the child must attend school until the time of their appointment, allowing for travelling time. If possible, the student should also return to school if there is time left of the school day. Proof of appointment is also required by an appointment card/letter.

**Suspended (where no alternative provision made) (E)** – Suspension from school is counted as an authorised absence. The student must complete work following their timetabled lessons using our online learning platforms Seneca, Bedrock, Sparx and Hegarty Maths.

**Religious Observance (R)** – Manchester Academy is a multi-faith community that reflects the multi-faith nature of modern Britain. Manchester Academy recognises that on rare occasions, days for religious observance will fall outside school holidays and INSET days. Where this happens, parents/carers should write to the school requesting this absence two weeks in advance.

**Study Leave (S)** – Students in Year 11 may be give study leave to prepare for their public examinations. This will be kept to a minimum and used in the best interests of our students.

**Family Holiday not agreed (G)** – Students are not entitled to take holidays when the school is open. Requests for holiday are only agreed to in extremely rare and exceptional circumstances. All requests should be put in writing to the Principal for authorisation four weeks in advance. Manchester Academy requests that families do not book any flights until a decision has been made by the Principal. Taking a family holiday where not agreed may result in statutory action.

**Late Arrival (After registers close) (u)** – The morning session registers open at Manchester Academy at 8:30am and close at **9:00am**. If a student arrives after **9:00am** then they are given a U code on the register for the morning session which will affect their attendance and statutory action may be issued as a result. This absence will be unauthorised unless an adequate reason, with evidence, is provided to the Academy. Late students must report to the Main Reception at the front of school.

**Traveller Absence (T)** – It is expected that Traveller children, in common with all other children, are to attend school as regularly and as frequently as possible.

To protect Traveller parents from unreasonable prosecution for non-attendance, the Education Act 1944, section 86, states that a Traveller parent is safe from prosecution if their child accrues 200 attendances (i.e. 200 half days) in a year. This is only when the family are engaged in a trade or business that requires them to travel and when the child is attending school as regularly as that trade permits. When in or around Manchester, if a family can reasonably travel back to their Base School then the

expectation is that their child will attend full-time.

Manchester Academy will be regarded as the base school if it is the school where the child normally attends when they are not travelling. However, the student must have attended in the last 18 months. Traveller children can register at other schools temporarily while away from their base school, in such cases, the student's school place will be kept open for them whilst travelling. This is to protect them from unfairly losing their place at their school of usual attendance. Manchester Academy can only effectively operate as the child's base school if it is engaged in on-going dialogue with Traveller families. This means that parents must:

- advise of their forthcoming travelling patterns before they happen; and
- inform the school regarding proposed return dates. Manchester Academy will authorise absence of Traveller children if we are satisfied that a family is travelling and has given indication that they intend to return.

Traveller children will be recorded as attending an approved educational activity when:

- The child is on roll and attending another visited school.
- Undertaking supervised educational activity under the jurisdiction of another Local Authority's Traveller Education Service.
- The child is undertaking computer based distance learning that is time evidenced where Traveller children are registered pupils at a school and are known to be present either at a site (official or otherwise) or in a house and are not attending school, the absence will be investigated in the same way as that for any pupil and appropriate statutory action may be undertaken.

**Other Authorised Circumstances (C)** – This relates to any absence authorised for exceptional circumstances for example a family bereavement. **Exceptional circumstances are only authorised by the Principal/SLT.**

**Unauthorised Absence (O)** – All absences will be unauthorised unless a valid reason, with evidence, is provided to Manchester Academy. For example, family holidays, 'my child wouldn't get up', sibling INSET days etc. are not valid reasons for absence.

Parents who need to take their child out of school during term time due to exceptional circumstances must send a written request to the Principal. Retrospective requests will not be considered and therefore will result in the absence being categorised as unauthorised.

All requests for leave of absence will be responded to in writing outlining the conditions of leave granted. If a student fails to return and contact with the parents has not been made or received, school may take the student off the school's roll in compliance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2016. This means that **after the 20<sup>th</sup> day of absence** the child will lose their school place.

If the permission to take leave is not granted and the parent takes their child out of school the absence will be unauthorised. In such cases the school may request the local authority issue a Penalty Notice or consider other legal sanctions including prosecution in the magistrate's court.

## **2. Deletions from Register**

Manchester Academy's primary purpose to ensure that all students on roll are appropriately safeguarded. Therefore, students will only be removed from the register for reasons outlined in Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2016. These are:

- The student has ceased to be of compulsory school age.
- Permanent Exclusion has occurred, and all necessary checks have been made.
- Transfer between schools.
- Student withdrawn to be educated outside of the school system.
- Failure to return from an extended holiday after the school has tried to locate the student.
- A medical condition prevents attendance and return to school before ending compulsory school age.
- In custody for more than four months.
- 20 days continuous unauthorised absence and the school has tried to locate the student.
- Left school but not known where they have gone after the school has tried to locate the student.
- Death of a student.

### **3. Roles and Responsibilities**

Manchester Academy 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. As such, the Governing Body will:

- Ensure that the importance and value of good attendance is promoted to pupils and their parents.
- Regularly review the school's Attendance Policy and ensure the required resources are available to fully implement the policy.
- Ensure that the Registration Regulations, England, 2016 and other attendance related legislation is complied with.
- Agree school attendance targets and ensure they are widely publicised.
- Monitor the school's attendance and related issues through termly reporting at Governing Body Meetings.
- Ensure that attendance data is reported to the Local Authority or Department for Education as required and on time.
- Ensure that there are named senior leaders to lead on attendance.
- Ensure that the school has clear systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all students, including those who are educated off-site.
- Ensure that there are procedures for collecting and analysing attendance data frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence.
- Ensure that data is understood and used to devise solutions and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions.

The Senior Leadership Team will:

- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to students and their parents.
- Form positive relationships with students and parents.
- Ensure that there is a whole school approach which reinforces good school attendance. For example, good teaching and learning experiences that encourage students to attend and

achieve.

- Monitor the implementation of the Attendance Policy and ensure that the policy is reviewed regularly.
- Ensure that staff are aware of the Attendance Policy and can address attendance issues.
- Ensure that the Registration Regulations, England, 2016 and other attendance related legislation is complied with.
- Ensure that there are named senior leaders to lead on attendance and allocate sufficient time and resource.
- Return school attendance data to the Department for Education as required and on time.
- Report the school's attendance and related issues through termly reporting to the Governing Body.
- Ensure that systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all students, including those who are educated off-site are implemented.
- Ensure that attendance data is collected and analysed frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence.
- Interpret the data to devise solutions and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions.
- Ensure that all the above priorities are shared with and reinforced by all relevant school staff.
- Develop a multi-agency response to improve attendance and support students and their families.
- Use the standard documents to support a move to legal proceedings should that be necessary.

Parents will be asked to:

- **At the start of each academic year, Year 7-11 will be asked to sign the home-school agreement**
- Talk to their child about school and education. Take a positive interest in their child's work and educational progress.
- Instill the value of education and regular school attendance within the home environment.
- Encourage their child to look to the future and have aspirations.
- Contact the school if their child is absent to let them know the reason why and the expected date of return. Follow this up with a note where possible.
- Try to avoid unnecessary absences. Wherever possible make appointments for the doctors, dentists etc. outside of school hours.
- Ask the school for help if their child is experiencing difficulties.
- Inform the school of any change in circumstances that may impact on their child's attendance.
- Support the school; take every opportunity to become involved in their child's education, form a positive relationship with school and acknowledge the importance of children receiving the same messages from both school and home.
- Encourage routine at home, for example, bedtimes, independent learning, preparing school bag and uniform the evening before.
- Not keep their child off school to go shopping, to help at home or to look after other members of the family.
- Avoid taking their child out of school during term-time, where this is unavoidable, and only in exceptional circumstances send a written leave request to the Principal in good time.

#### **4. Using Attendance Data/Incentives**

Manchester Academy uses a system called SOL Attendance with a goal of stopping poor attendance



habits before they start. Each week, the SOL spreadsheet is sent to all staff. The spreadsheet contains each child's year to date attendance for that week showing if each child's attendance has maintained, improved or declined.

**Once a week**, during form time, form tutors must share with students their attendance for the week prior and publicly celebrate those who have improved their attendance or maintained excellent attendance (above 97%). Form tutors must also have a discrete conversation with each student who has dropped in attendance to ascertain the reasons why this has occurred and to reiterate our expectations regarding attendance. The form tutor must then also inform the DCC for that year group of the contents of the conversation so that the DCC can decide on the appropriate course of action and record these on the SOL tracker.

The above describes our approach to stopping poor attendance habits from embedding over time. As well as this, DCCs must implement an action for each student that has a down arrow as well as those with an attendance lower than 90% (a persistent absentee). This system also allows DCCs to track and evaluate the impact of interventions they have made over time.

Each student's attendance is categorized according to their attendance year to date as follows:

No Concern - Green Group. The child attends for 97% - 100% of the time.
Concern - Yellow Group. The child attends for 95% - 96.9% of the time.
Risk of Underachievement – Amber Group. The child attends for 93% - 94.9% of the time.
Severe Risk of Underachievement – Pink Group. The child attends for 90% - 92.9% of the time.
Extreme Risk of Underachievement – Red Group. The child attends for 0% - 89.9% of the time.

When a student's attendance falls below the expected rate (97%), Manchester Academy follows a staged approach depending on which colour the child's attendance puts them in. After each intervention, the student is then monitored to assess impact. If the intervention has not had the desired impact then the DCC would implement the next stage of intervention. The staged approach is as follows:

- Stage 1: Any student that falls in attendance a letter is sent home by the Attendance Officer reiterating our expectations.
- Stage 2: A letter is sent home from the DCC inviting parents/carers in for a meeting to ascertain reasons and discuss strategies.
- Stage 3: A letter is sent home by the SLT link for that year group in for a meeting wit ascertain reasons and implement further strategies
- Stage 4: Meeting with SLT lead on attendance and possible use of Fixed Penalty Notice.

Further information on further legal sanctions can be found in part 6 of this policy.

When DCCs are deciding on the best course of action for each student that requires intervention it is important to note whether or not a student is a persistent absentee (an attendance lower than 90%) or a severe absentee (an attendance lower than 50%). DCCs may decide to start on a higher stage of

intervention dependent on how severe absence is.

Attendance plays a key role in our rewards strategy. Whilst excellent attendance in itself will reward students with better educational outcomes, it is important to reward attendance in other ways too. Students with excellent attendance and those who have shown marked improvements will be able to take part in our Pastoral Pledge trips as well as being rewarded in end of half term celebration assemblies with prizes and certificates. Random awards from leaders throughout the year will also be issued for students with excellent attendance and sustained improved attendance.

Leaders will evaluate interventions and support strategies weekly, monthly, half termly, termly and yearly. Using the SOL attendance tracker, leaders will identify micro-populations that have poor attendance to ensure that we can tailor our interventions appropriately.

## **5. Support Systems**

Manchester Academy strives to ensure that inclusion is at the heart of what we do, and we consider any issues that a child may be having at home or in school. We recognise that poor attendance may be due to factors out of the direct control of the family such as bereavement for example.

We also acknowledge that students with special educational needs, who are disadvantaged, with physical or mental health needs and those who are Looked After may require further support than their peers.

Our support strategies include but are not limited to:

- Discussion with parents/carers.
- Attendance panels.
- Parenting contracts.
- Attendance reports.
- Referrals to external support agencies.
- Learning mentors.
- Student voice groups.
- PSHE.
- Family support groups.
- Inclusion Centre intervention.
- Reward systems.
- Reintegration support packages.
- **A home visit on the third day of an unexplained absence with the Personal Development staff include our Attendance Officers and Community Liaison staff.**

Where decided support measures have been implemented with no effect then Manchester Academy will consider legal action.

## **6. Legal Sanctions:**

Penalty Notices Penalty Notices will be considered when:

- A student is absent from school and the absence has not been authorised by the school.
- A pupil has accrued unauthorised absence following written warning to improve.

A Penalty Notice gives each parent the opportunity to discharge themselves of their legal responsibility if a £120 fine is paid within 28 days, reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days of the date the Notice was issued. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice may result in a prosecution under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996. Penalty Notices will be used in accordance with Manchester City Council's Penalty Notice Protocol.

Prosecution where intervention fails to bring about an improvement in attendance, the Local Authority will be notified and legal action in the Magistrates' Court may be taken. The school will provide the Local Authority with evidence required for a prosecution under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 and will appear as a prosecution witness if required by the court. This is to ensure that parents realise their own responsibilities in ensuring attendance at school and most importantly about returning children to education.

Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 states that if a parent fails to ensure the regular school attendance of their child if he/she is a registered pupil at a school and is of compulsory school age, then they are guilty of an offence. A parent found guilty of this offence can be fined up to £2500 and or be imprisoned for a period of three months.

Alternatives to Section 444 prosecution are Parenting Contracts, Penalty Notices or an Education Supervision Order.

Parenting Contracts (Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003)

A Parenting Contract is a voluntary agreement between school and the parent, it can also be extended to include the child and any other agencies offering support to resolve any difficulties leading to improved attendance. The contract will outline attendance targets and will detail agreed actions that will help to achieve the target. The contract will be reviewed regularly. The contract can be used as evidence in a prosecution should parents fail to carry out agreed actions.