



CLOUGHWOOD ACADEMY

Attendance Policy

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1. Introduction

Cloughwood Academy seeks to ensure that all students receive a full-time education which maximises opportunities for each student to realise his true potential.

The Academy will strive to provide a welcoming, caring environment, whereby each member of the academy community feels wanted and secure.

All Academy staff will work with students and their families /carers to ensure each student attends academy regularly and punctually.

The Academy will establish an effective system of incentives and rewards which acknowledges the efforts of students to improve their attendance and will challenge the behaviour of those students and parents/carers who give low priority to attendance.

To meet these objectives the Academy will establish an effective and efficient system of communication with students, parents/carers and appropriate agencies to provide mutual information, advice and support.

2. Aims

- 1) To improve the overall attendance percentage of students at Academy.
- 2) To make attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with the Academy including students, parents/ carers, teachers, non teaching staff and governors.
- 3) To develop a framework which defines agreed roles and responsibilities and promotes consistency in carrying out designated tasks.
- 4) To provide support, advice and guidance to parents / carers and students.
- 5) To develop a systematic approach to gathering and analysing attendance related data.
- 6) To further develop positive and consistent communication between home and Academy.
- 7) To implement an effective system of rewards and sanctions.
- 8) To promote effective partnerships with other services and agencies.
- 9) To recognise the needs of the individual student when planning reintegration following significant periods of absence particularly on transfer from other schools.
- 10) To develop a robust admissions criteria upon admission.
- 11) Communicate the effect of poor attendance on attainment on all parties.

AIM No 1: To improve the overall percentage attendance of pupils at the Academy

- Apply Whole Academy Attendance Policy consistently.
- Establish and maintain a high profile for attendance.
- Relate attendance issues directly to the academy's values, ethos and curriculum.
- Monitor progress in attendance using measurable outcomes.

AIM No 2: To make attendance a priority for all those associated with the Academy, including staff, students, parents/carers and Governors.

- Produce annual reports to parents/carers/governors.
- Display materials at focal points
- Discuss attendance issues in all relevant staff meetings (e.g. attendance review meetings.)
- Introduce award systems, including certificates, end of year prizes, termly prizes for students attending 100% on a sliding scale to include pupils who attend 95% of sessions post-Christmas.

AIM NO 3: To develop a framework which defines agreed roles and responsibilities and promotes consistency in carrying out designated tasks

- Maintain unambiguous procedures for statutory registration.
- Make phone/letter contact, using designated academy staff, on first day of absence.
- Ensure clearly defined late registration procedures.
- Appoint an Attendance Co-ordinator with appropriate time set aside.
- Define clearly the roles and responsibilities within the academy staffing structure.
- Timetable staff to work with other outside professionals, attend EHCP reviews and prepare reports such as LAC reviews, PEP meetings etc.
- Have clear procedures prior to referral to Education Welfare Officers.
- Review attendance termly and produce annual report to governing body.

AIM NO 4: To provide support, advice and guidance to parents/carers and students.

Highlight positive attendance through:

- PSHEE and related topics in form sessions in the morning
- Through use of Motivational Learning Instructors who will deliver individual programmes for pupils highlighted as having problem attendance.
- Through Motivational Learning Instructors and highlighted SENDIT team who are currently investigating ways in which parents can be supported with attendance issues.
- Implement training for Emotional Literacy via Emotional Literacy Support Assistants who will support students highlighted as having emotional aspects related to poor attendance.
- Assemblies
- Staff available to talk to students in form time and at social times.
- Year 11 students provided with opportunities to engage in work related learning and Duke of Edinburgh Awards scheme in order to boost attendance and engagement with the curriculum.
- Breakfast clubs

- Set aside area/time for parents/carers to speak to staff at parents evenings.
- Communication with parents e.g. when parents ring in.
- The school website and VLE
- Providing accurate and up-to-date contact information for parents.
- Involvement of parents from earliest stage.

AIM NO 5: To develop a systematic approach in gathering and analysing attendance related data

- Standardise recording of : authorised/unauthorised absence
- Analyse data according to gender, ethnicity, special need, age and status as a Looked after child of the Local Authority.
- Be consistent in the collection and provision of information.
- Decide what information, if any, is provided for: governors, academy staff, parents/ carers and students (individual or groups)
- Identify and act upon developing patterns of irregular attendance.
- All staff will undertake a review of the impact of poor attendance on attainment and will devise strategies in order to tackle this issue in their subject area.

AIM NO 6: To further develop positive and consistent communication between home and Academy

- Initiate first day absence contact.
- Promote expectation of absence letters/phone calls from parents/carers.
- Explore the wide range of opportunities for parental partnerships (see Aim 2).
- Provide information in a user-friendly way
- Encourage all parents into academy in a variety of ways including parents evenings etc.

AIM NO 7: To Implement a system of Rewards and Sanctions

- Actively promote attendance and associated reward and effective sanctions.
- Ensure fair and consistent implementation.
 - All pupils with 100% attendance in one term will receive a small reward as deemed appropriate by the Designated Attendance Officer.
 - All pupils with 100% attendance in one academic year will receive a reward trip as deemed appropriate by the Designated Attendance Officer.
 - All pupils post-Christmas with 95%+ attendance will receive a reward trip in the Summer term.
- Involve students in system evaluation via assemblies, student council and questionnaires
- Make use of imaginative and immediate sanctions.
- Take action which accords with objectives agreed between academy and others, e.g. Education Welfare Officer, parent/ carer, Social Worker, Virtual School Head.

AIM NO 8: To promote effective partnerships with the Education Welfare Service and with other services and agencies

- Designated key staff for liaison with Education Welfare Service and other agencies.
- Carry out initial enquiries/intervention prior to referral. Gather and record relevant information to assist Education Welfare Service.
- Hold termly attendance review with key Academy staff and Education Welfare Service.
- Arrange multi-agency liaison meetings as appropriate.
- Establish and maintain list of named contacts within the local and extended communities e.g. community police contact officer, YOS workers etc
- Encourage active involvement of other services and agencies in the life of the academy.

AIM NO 9: To recognise the needs of the individual student when planning reintegration following significant periods of absence

- Be sensitive to the individual needs and circumstances of returning students.
- Involve/inform all relevant staff in reintegration process.
- Provide opportunities for student development and feedback.
- Involve parents/carers as far as possible.
- Include Education Social Workers, parents and student in reintegration plan.

AIM NO 10: To develop a robust attendance criteria upon admission

- Develop a committee of Senior Leaders within the Academy to approve applications for prospective pupils admitted to the Academy.
- Develop remit of the committee to include consideration of pupils applying, being turned down for a place at the Academy due to poor attendance at previous school. Also during the initial probationary period at the Academy, inability to engage with Academy policy and protocols regarding attendance could lead to Court proceedings and ultimately the placement being revoked.

3. Responsibilities of the Board of Directors.

- Approve the policy and any proposed changes.
- Receive reports from the Principal and Designated Officer for Attendance
- Review the working of the policy in the light of these reports.
- Ensure that the policy is promoted and implemented throughout the Academy and is known to parents/carers.

4. Responsibilities of the Principal.

- Set attendance targets as part of the development plan and target setting process.
- Ensure that strategies are in place to promote and implement the policy throughout the Academy.
- Notify parents as appropriate that failure to attend regularly by a student of compulsory age could lead to legal prosecution of the parents.

- Initiate through appropriate staff strategies to improve attendance.
- Make, in conjunction with the designated attendance officer, an annual report to Governors.

5. Responsibilities of Designated Attendance Officer.

- Oversee the attendance arrangements and ensure they are working efficiently.
- Make regular checks of the registers to monitor student absence and attendance figures.
- Make regular checks of absence and ensure clerical staff follow up unaccounted for absences.
- Advise the Principal on further improvements and progress towards set targets

6. Responsibilities of Classroom Staff.

- Take action if internal truancy is suspected i.e. contact Deputy Principal or senior member of staff.
- Promote attendance at school through making a welcoming classroom environment, promotion of good routines, importance and relation of attendance to successful attainment and through PSHEE dangers of young people being in an un-supervised environment such as out of school.

7. Responsibilities of Students

- Attend the majority of sessions available unless they are ill or have an authorised absence.
- Be aware and take responsibility for knowing that the Academy strives for 100% attendance from all pupils and that attendance below 95% will be seen as unsatisfactory.

8. Responsibilities of Parents

- Inform the academy on the first day of their son's absence, giving a satisfactory reason for that absence and providing acceptable time-frames for re-engagement within the boundaries as set out by the Academy.
- Take responsibility for their son if he is attending for below 95% of sessions and work with the Academy and outside professionals in order to find strategies which improve attendance to levels which are acceptable to the Academy.

Appendix: Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

- When a student is absent from the Academy the register must record when this absence is authorised or unauthorised.
- Authorised absence includes illness authorised by the parent. Students may also be marked absent on an approved educational activity which is defined as:
 - One which is taking place off the academy premises.
 - One approved by a person authorised by the Principal or Governing Body.
 - Being supervised by a person approved by the Principal or Governing Body.
 - Of an educational nature e.g. field trips, work experience.
 - Work-related courses where students attend another academy or F.E. college part time or Curriculum related course such as work-related learning or apprenticeships or the Duke of Edinburgh award.
 - Students receiving part of their education at home e.g. because of illness
 - An approved sporting activity.

Short Term Leave

- The Principal can legally grant short term leave for family reasons and it is up to the Principal to decide reasonableness i.e. bereavement.
- Dental and hospital appointments constitute authorised absence although the academy would urge parents to make appointments where possible outside Academy hours.
There is no legislation or guidance on absence for religious observance.

Long Term Leave

When pupils have an absence or illness that means they are away for over five days , in consultation with parents/carers the Academy will do all it can to send material home for school work.

Categories of Absence

1. Illness

The Education Act of 1996 provides that no offence is committed, if a pupil is prevented from attending the Academy by illness. If the Academy is satisfied with the reason offered, then the absence must be treated as authorised. Alternatively, if there is doubt regarding the validity of the explanation following contact with the parents, then the Academy will treat the absence as unauthorised.

2. Special Occasions

Only in exceptional circumstances should these be authorised. A birthday would not be such an example and would be unauthorised, whereas the graduation of a brother or sister should be treated as an authorised absence. In considering the individual case the Principal will have regard to the nature of the

event, its frequency, whether advance notification was given and the overall attendance pattern of the pupil.

3. **Signing Out**

It is best to make medical appointments outside Academy hours. Before leaving the premises, with a parent/carer or member of Academy staff, all pupils must sign out at Reception. If a pupil returns to the academy later on the same day, then he must sign in again or be signed in by the responsible adult.

4. **Family Bereavement**

Such situations will be treated sensitively, absences will be authorised to attend a funeral within the family or of a very close friend.

5. **Family Holidays**

Parents do not have the right to take children out of school on holiday. The Academy will not grant leave of absence for an annual holiday in term time. Any pupils taken out of school for the purpose of a holiday during term time will be marked as unauthorised. This may result in a fixed term penalty being issued to the parent/carer. If parents insist on removing students from school during term time as unauthorised they are requested to contact school and fill out an appropriate form as directed by the Principal.

6. **Traveller Children**

The Academy will authorise the absence of Traveller Children when we are satisfied that a family migrates but gives reasonable indications that it has every intention of returning.

7. **Interviews**

Where a pupil attends an interview with either a prospective employer or in connection with an application for a place in further or higher education, the academy will authorise the absence upon proof of the appointment (pupil counted present).

8. **Work Experience**

Where a pupil is engaged on an approved scheme, the absence will be authorised by the Academy (pupil counted present).

9. **Off Site Activities**

Where these are academy directed (e.g. educational visits, sporting activities) they will constitute an authorised absence. In the case of activities peculiar to an individual (e.g. music exams, special tuition), the academy will exercise its discretion to authorise the absence (pupil counted present).

10. **Study Leave**

Study leave will constitute as an authorised absence (pupil counted present).

Court Proceedings

These will be very much a last resort but the academy will look to the EWO for support in bringing parents of poor attenders before the courts. It must be made clear to parents and pupils that non-attendance will not be tolerated and all must see that appropriate action is taken.

Monitoring

Pupil attendance will be monitored via:

- Named attendance officer monitoring figures
- Named attendance officer meeting regularly with clerical staff to highlight patterns of non-attendance
- Termly meetings with Education Welfare Service to discuss strategies for working initially pupils whose attendance is lower than 85%
- The Governing body have overall responsibility to monitor attendance. This will be done through an annual report from the Principle.
- Accurate attendance records which will be kept on file for 3 years.