



Attendance Policy

October 2017

Office use

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1. Policy statement and introduction

Diverse Academies Learning Partnership (DALP) is committed to supporting students to ensure that everyone achieves the highest level of attendance at school.

- a. It is recognised that poor attendance can result in restricted access to the curriculum, disaffection from school, lowered academic success and loss of educational opportunity.
- b. Good attendance means students achieving their potential.
- c. Partnership with parents is greatly appreciated. The students are our priority but when home and school work together we get the best possible student outcomes.
- d. All staff work closely with students and their families to ensure that students attend regularly and punctually and that all understand the link between attendance and attainment.
- e. DALP Academies have a system of rewards which acknowledge good attendance, improved attendance and good timekeeping.

2. Scope and purpose

2.1 This policy applies to all employees, including volunteers, agency workers, consultants or self-employed contractors.

2.2 Legal requirements:

- a. Parents have a duty to ensure that their children receive full time education. (The Education Act 2002) Legal action may be instigated against parents/carers whose child's attendance is at an unacceptably low level and where parents/carers are failing to fulfil their responsibility. (Section 444(1) and 1(a)).
- b. The Academy will seek legal action through the local authority for continued poor attendance. This could result in a fixed penalty notice being issued.
- c. It is the parent/carer's responsibility to inform the school of the reason for any absence. From the 3rd day of absence the Student Welfare Officer may carry out a home visit.
- d. The Academy then decides if the absence will be authorised or not. If your child's attendance falls below 95% all absences will be unauthorised unless of exceptional circumstances or medical evidence has been provided, we accept appointment cards or letters and prescribed medication cartons with the child's name.
- e. By way of an example, <90% attendance is poor and treated as Persistent Absence by both the academy and the DfE, unlike 85% in an exam which is considered to be good. 95% attendance is the national expectation in secondary schools, and 96% in Primary.
- f. 20% absence is equivalent of missing 1 whole Academic year out of 5 in secondary education.

- g. An Academy is required to maintain an accurate register as a legal document on a session by session basis. A hard copy of the legal register must be processed.

The Academy is required to report a cumulative half termly report which records students with:

- Less than 90% attendance
- These students are referred to as Persistent Absentees (PA students).

3. Responsibility for implementing the policy

The Diverse Academies Learning Partnership (DALP) has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy and for ensuring compliance with the relevant statutory framework. The Trust has delegated day-to-day responsibility for operating the policy and ensuring its maintenance and review to the Principal of each DALP Academy.

4. School holidays

- a. Parents/carers are not entitled to remove children from the school for holidays as a right. Students should not have holiday time in addition to the normal school holidays.
- b. Notice of your intentions to take your child out during term time should be made in writing to the Principal.
- c. DALP does not authorise holiday absences.
- d. If you take your child on holiday during term time you may be liable for a fixed penalty notice being issued. With or without prior notice by parents/carers.

5. Support

5.1 Working with the academy

The academy will:

- a. Regularly and promptly record attendance
- b. Contact parents early when a student fails to attend school without a good reason
- c. Closely monitor students whose attendance falls below 95%, and put in place early intervention for those between 90-93% (those at risk of PA)
- d. Take into account any family bereavement
- e. Take into account medical and dental appointments when an appointment card is submitted

5.2 Working with governors

Each term the designated person in each academy (usually PDBW lead or Attendance Officer) will prepare a report on attendance levels, sessions missed and reasons for the authorised and

unauthorised absence for each year group/house. Any appropriate comments on action taken will also be reported.

5.3 Working with the Pastoral Teams

- a. Pastoral / attendance teams will monitor attendance daily and at the end of the week.
- b. Tutors will initially identify absence which causes concern, monitor and then discuss with Pastoral Team.
- c. Pastoral Team will liaise with the Student Welfare Officer, who will then contact parents through telephone or letter regarding concerns.
- d. Pastoral Teams and the Student Welfare Officer will refer to Targeted Support if attendance continues to cause concern.

Pastoral teams will ensure that all the appropriate procedures are followed.

5.4 Working with the Pastoral Support Administrators in Student Services

- a. An Attendance Administrator will before 9 am access the list of absent students, check that no contact has been made by parents/carers and check that the contact numbers are correct. They will then contact the parent/carers of all absentees where no knowledge of why they are absent is recorded. An outcome of the contact is recorded on the academy management system (SIMS/PARS/Scholarpack).
- b. If it is impossible to contact by electronic means or telephone calls The Student Welfare Office may carry out a home visit.
- c. Letters will be sent to parents at the end of each term to notify parents of their child's attendance at the academy.

5.5 Working with Targeted Support and other agencies.

- a. The role of Targeted Support is to investigate unauthorised absences and to support the school in working with families of students causing concern through absenteeism.
- b. A service level agreement between the school and Targeted Support ensures that an active dialogue benefits the schools work on attendance.
- c. Targeted support will in all cases seek to resolve attendance issues quickly to minimise disruption to a student's education.
- d. Failure to co-operate with Targeted support could lead to the Local Authority prosecuting parents of students with poor attendance. This could lead to the issue of a penalty notice or a 'fast track' to prosecution, (where parent may be summoned to a magistrate's court in just 12 weeks).
- e. Targeted support will also strive to interview and attend home visits on students with attendance problems to help improve their situation.

5.6 Working with Parents/Carers

- a. Parents/carers are expected to provide the academy with up to date home and emergency contact details.
- b. Parents/carers must ensure that their child arrives in the academy on time and prepared for the academy day. Punctuality is monitored and may be subject to FPN (fixed penalty notices) for persistent lateness to school.
- c. Parents/carers are requested to notify the academy immediately of absence and the likely duration. The academy through the form tutor, Pastoral team and Student Welfare Officer will work with parents/carers to check on any absences.
- d. The Assistant Principal (Pastoral) will determine in any cases where there is doubt whether an absence may be authorised.
- e. The role of parents/carers is crucial in ensuring that students achieve high levels of attendance.

5.7 Rewards

- a. Each half term letters are sent home to parents / carers of all students with 100% attendance.
- b. Each week the Student Welfare Officer will compare the attendance of all forms and will provide rewards for the group that is most improved.
- c. Individual attendance targets are agreed and in some cases awards are made for students working with the House Team and Student Welfare Officer.
- d. Special recognition is given to good attendance- individually and by form- in house assemblies.
- e. For Students in Year 11 (if applicable), invitation to the prom is closely linked to attendance.

6. Monitoring of the Policy

6.1 The designated person in each academy (PDBW / AO) produces a termly report for the academy governors on Attendance levels, sessions missed and reasons for the authorised and unauthorised absence for each year group.

6.2 The Principal is given weekly updates.

8. Review of the Policy

This policy is reviewed annually by the Trust we will monitor the application and outcomes of this policy to ensure it is working effectively