

ATTENDANCE POLICY

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Attendance Policy

Statement of Intent

1. Milestone Academy is committed to providing a full and efficient educational experience to all students and recognises this can only be achieved by supporting and promoting excellent school attendance for all. Milestone will employ a wide range of strategies to do all we can to ensure maximum attendance for all students. Any problems that impede punctuality and regular attendance will be identified and addressed as a priority.
2. It is a fundamental part of Milestone Academy's ethos to celebrate success and achievement. Excellent attendance and punctuality are integral to a productive and successful education. Parents and carers have a vital role, as well as a legal responsibility, to ensure good attendance. Each academy will give high priority to developing effective links and conveying to parents, carers and students the importance of regular and punctual attendance.
3. The need to work in partnership with parents and carers is essential and will be the responsibility of Milestone Academy to identify, investigate and communicate concerns as quickly and efficiently as possible. We will adopt a clearly focused approach aimed at returning the student to full attendance at all times.
4. Milestone Academy is committed to promoting race, disability and gender equality within all practices and procedures related to attendance and punctuality.
5. It is only the Principal who can authorise absence.

Milestone's Principles

1. Ensure that all staff are aware of the Roll Call / Registration procedures and receive appropriate professional development with regard to these.
2. Complete Roll Call accurately at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session.
3. Stress to parents / carers the importance of contacting the academy on the first day of absence, and provide effective mechanisms for them to contact the academy.
4. Promote the importance that full attendance and punctuality play in achieving the best possible educational outcomes.
5. Through consultation days and reporting systems, ensure that parents, carers and students are made aware of the attendance pattern and provide an opportunity to discuss how it may affect learning and offer supportive strategies to improve attendance.
6. Work towards ensuring that all students feel supported and valued.
7. Support students who have difficulty accessing education through the work of the academy support, Trust Attendance and Welfare Officer and Local authority, Early Help, Schools Liaison Officer/Attendance service.
8. Actively promote and encourage 100% attendance.

Parents/Carers will

1. Actively promote and encourage 100% attendance.
2. Contact the school whenever the student is absent on the first day and on each day after, of absence.
3. Provide proof of medical appointments and medical treatment, if required to do so by the academy.
4. Avoid removing their child during the academy day.

Procedures for recording attendance, absence and punctuality

1. The statutory recording of attendance and absence at the start of the day and afternoon is known as Roll Call. This is undertaken within the first 30 minutes of the morning and afternoon sessions.
2. Wherever possible this Roll Call is taken 'electronically' by register.
3. Only designated staff will undertake the recording of attendance and absence. Staff will be reminded of their legal duty to complete and submit Roll Call at the appropriate time using the correct registration codes
4. Parents/Carers and students should be aware of Milestone's times to ensure punctuality. These can be found on the academy website.
5. Registers for Roll Call will officially close 30 minutes after the start of the am/pm session. After this time the students will be registered as late.
6. Parents/carers of students regularly arriving to school late will be contacted to discuss the matter further.
7. Milestone will provide a dedicated telephone recording facility to enable parents / carers to effectively communicate an absence.
8. When a student is sick whilst at the academy Parents/Carers will be contacted to arrange safe collection from the school site.

Strategies for Improving Attendance and Punctuality

1. The person responsible for leading attendance within Milestone will meet regularly with relevant staff and make them aware of significant attendance trends and patterns and seek their support to address any issues with students, parents / carers and other stakeholders.
2. Attendance, punctuality and its impact on learning and progress will be a key area for discussion between tutors, Senior Leadership teams and parents/carers during consultation days.
3. A range of positive strategies will be used to reward individual students and groups for outstanding and/or improved attendance.
4. Regular attendance meetings will be held between Milestone Academy and the Trust Attendance and Welfare Officer.

5. Student attendance data may be shared with Parents/Carers, Local Authority, Early Help, School Liaison Officer/Attendance Service, Children's Social Services, Police, relevant LEA's, Ofsted and the DfE.
6. A student is deemed to be a PA (Persistent Absentee) if their attendance falls below 90%. Milestone may consider students below 95% at risk. Students who fall into either of these categories, will be monitored by the academy attendance teams and the Trust Attendance Officer,
7. Analysis of trends and attendance by micro population should identify strengths and areas for intervention to further improve attendance.
8. A referral may be made to the local authority attendance service should attendance remain poor after academy and Trust interventions.

Absence during Term Time

1. Milestone may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are very exceptional circumstances. These could include: service personnel returning from tour of duty, absence recommended by a health professional as part of a parent's or the child's rehabilitation, the death or terminal illness of a person close to the family, to attend a wedding or funeral of a person close to the family. (Ref KCC Education Penalty Notices Code of Conduct, effective from April 2017, Medway Council Code of Practice dated 1st September 2014, Royal Borough of Greenwich unauthorised absence code).
2. Applications for leave of absence must be made in writing to the Milestone's Principal. The Principal will make the decision of acceptance or refusal. Milestone can consider the student's previous record of attendance and take this into account
3. If absence is not authorised and the leave of absence of at least 10 sessions (5 days) is taken, a referral will be made to the local authority attendance service who may issue a Penalty Notice to each parent for each child taken out of the academy.

Penalty Notices

1. Currently local authorities have different penalty notice codes. This is likely to be streamlined nationally in the near future.
2. Leigh Academies Trust academies are under the auspices of Kent County Council, Medway Council and Royal Borough of Greenwich.
3. In line with KCC Education Penalty Notices Code of Conduct, Medway Council Code of Practice and Royal Borough of Greenwich Unauthorised Absences Code, academies follow set procedures for issuing penalty notices.
4. Local authority Attendance Services take responsibility for issuing Penalty notices and taking other legal actions following referral by the academy.

Circumstances where a Penalty Notice may be issued

1. Unauthorised absence:
2. A Penalty Notice can only be issued in cases of persistent unauthorised absence
3. Parents/Carers and students are supported by the academy and local authority to overcome barriers to regular attendance.
4. Sanctions of any nature are used where parental cooperation in this process is either absent or deemed insufficient to resolve the presenting problem.
5. A penalty notice can only be issued as a means of enforcing attendance where there is a reasonable expectation that its use will secure improvement.
6. A penalty notice can only be issued where a student has been absent or late for a period/periods of time and the absence or lateness has not been authorised by the academy.
7. After the academy has taken steps to resolve attendance concerns/warned the parent/carer of a possible Penalty Notice referral, the academy will refer directly to the relevant local authority, to issue a Penalty Notice for unauthorised absence:
 - a) absent for 10 or more half day sessions without authorisation during any 100 possible school sessions (these do not need to be consecutive) persistently late for up to 10 sessions after register has closed (15 minutes)
 - b) unless the issuing of the Penalty notice in these circumstances would conflict with other interventions in place such as Early Help.

Exclusion

- A penalty notice can only be issued where an excluded child is found in a public place during school hours of days 1-5 of any fixed term or permanent exclusion.
- Where penalty notices are imposed, local authority regulations will apply. Failure to pay the penalty in full by the end of the 28 day period may result in prosecution by the local authority

Monitoring and Evaluation

1. Milestone's attendance data will be published for consideration at every academy board meeting and module reviews, as requested. It may also be submitted to the Trust Academies Standards Committee, as required.
2. The Principal has responsibility for the attendance figures and actions to improve attendance within Milestone.
3. Attendance Data will be produced regularly and distributed to the senior leadership team to enable interventions to occur.
4. A designated senior leader has overall responsibility for the publication and monitoring of the attendance data for the whole academy.
5. Attendance data will be collected via the DfE Census three times per annum.

Code Description

- / Present (AM)
- \ Present (PM)
- **B** Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)
- **C** Other Authorised Circumstances 7(not covered by another appropriate code/description)
- **D** Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)
- **E** Excluded (no alternative provision made)
- **F** Extended family holiday (agreed)
- **G** Family holiday (NOT agreed or days in excess of agreement)
- **H** Family holiday (agreed)
- **I** Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)
- **J** Interview
- **L** Late (before registers closed)
- **M** Medical/Dental appointments
- **N** No reason yet provided for absence
- **O** Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)
- **P** Approved sporting activity
- **R** Religious observance
- **S** Study leave
- **T** Traveller absence
- **U** Late (after registers closed)
- **V** Educational visit or trip
- **W** Work experience
- **X** Non-compulsory school age absence
- **Y** Enforced closure /School/LA Transport unavailable / widespread disruption to travel.
- **Z** Pupil not yet on roll
- **#** School closed to pupils