

# **GMET**

# **Attendance and Punctuality Policy**

## **V1.0**

**Whalley Range 11-18 High School**

## Approval History

Approved By:	Date of Approval	Version Approved	Comments
Performance Board	17.11.22	1	Revisions from initial draft 10.22

## Revision History

Revision Date	Previous Revision Date	Summary of Changes	Owner/Editor

## CONTENTS

1. Aims .....	4
2. Legislation and Guidance .....	4
3. Attendance Register .....	4
4. Why regular attendance is so important .....	5
5. Promoting regular attendance .....	5
5.1 Strategies for Promoting Attendance .....	6
6. Types of Absence .....	6
6.1 Authorised Absences .....	6
6.1.1 Religious Observance .....	7
6.1.2 Traveller Absence .....	7
6.2 Unauthorised Absences .....	7
6.3 Granting approval for term-time absence .....	7
6.4 Persistent Absence .....	8
6.5 Severely Absence .....	8
6.6 Long-term Absence due to Medical Conditions .....	8
7. Absence Procedures .....	9
8. Contact details for students .....	9
9. Monitoring of Attendance .....	9
9.1 Children at risk of missing education .....	9
9.2 Parenting Contract .....	9
9.3 Support from Early Help .....	10
10. Enforcing Attendance .....	10
10.1 Parenting Orders .....	10
10.2 Education Supervision Orders .....	10
10.3 Penalty Notices .....	11
10.4 Legal proceedings for failing to ensure regular attendance .....	11
11. Summary .....	11
Appendices (updated by individual academies)	
Appendix 1 – Transforming Attendance at Whalley Range .....	13
Appendix 2 – Leave of Absence Request form .....	15
Appendix 3 – Reporting Absence .....	16
Appendix 4 – Attendance Triangle .....	17
Appendix 5 – Letter templates .....	18

## 1 AIMS

Regular attendance at school is essential if students are to achieve their full potential. Greater Manchester Education Trust is committed to ensuring that every student achieves in line with their potential and our academies recognise the value of regular attendance and its contribution to success. Our academies will adopt a systematic approach to ensuring good attendance for all individuals and groups of pupils and use a range of information to swiftly identify and act on causes for concern, supporting our students and their families in improving attendance and removing barriers to achievement.

As set out in our policy, we will work with our families in a variety of ways to identify the reasons for attendance issues and address and resolve any difficulties.

## 2 LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act states that parents must ensure that children of compulsory school age receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude to any special educational needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

This policy meets the requirements of the school attendance guidance from the Department for Education (DfE) and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance and parental responsibility measures. These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- The Education Act 1996
- The Education Act 2002
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2011
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- Working Together to Improve attendance (May 2022)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

## 3 ATTENDANCE REGISTER

By law, all schools are required to keep an attendance register, and all students must be placed on this register. The attendance register will be taken at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session (*see paragraph 5*). It will mark whether every student is:

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

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

Every entry in the attendance register will be preserved for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Each school within the trust will have a localised attendance procedure that includes

- Students' expected arrival time in the Academy
- The time that the register for the first session will be taken and until what time it will be kept open.
- The time that the register for the second session will be taken after the lunch break

#### 4 WHY REGULAR ATTENDANCE IS SO IMPORTANT

Any absence disrupts the pattern of a student's education, disrupts teaching routines and will have an adverse effect on the learning of others and presents safeguarding risks if students are not present in school.

Students who attend for the full 190 days will achieve 100% attendance for the academic year and are highly likely to achieve the greatest progress for their ability, enabling them to continue their studies and raise their earning potential in the world of work. We know that the students with the highest progress and attainment at the end of key stage 4 have higher rates of attendance compared to those with the lowest attainment and progress. The lower a student's attendance, the greater the impact is on their achievement at school.

We know that some students find achieving high levels of attendance difficult and therefore we will work in partnership with families at all stages to try to remove any barriers and to put in place the right support at the right time.

#### Attendance percentage relating to learning days lost per academic year

Percentage Attendance	Days Lost
98%	4
95%	10
90%	19
85%	29
80%	38
75%	48

#### 5 PROMOTING REGULAR ATTENDANCE

At Greater Manchester Education Trust, our aim is for all students to achieve at least 98% attendance and we recognise that attendance below this will impact on a student's achievement.

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everyone's responsibility. To help us all to focus on this we will:

- give details of whole academy attendance in our messages to families and the community.
- report to families on their child's performance at the academy, giving their attendance percentage and punctuality details, and how this relates to their attainment.
- celebrate good attendance.
- reward good or improving attendance.
- work with families and partner agencies to provide advice, challenge and support where attendance is a concern.

We will:

<b>EXPECT</b>
High standards of attendance from all students and parents and maintain an academy culture where all can, and want to, be in school and ready to learn.
<b>MONITOR</b>
Using attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance as soon as possible.
<b>LISTEN AND UNDERSTAND</b>
Talk with students and families to understand barriers to attendance and agree how we can all work together to resolve them.
<b>FORMALISE SUPPORT</b>
Where absence persists and support is not working or not being engaged with, we will work with other agencies and advise families of the possible consequences if absence remains a concern. This may include formalising support through a parenting contract or education supervision order.
<b>ENFORCE</b>
Where all options have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, we will enforce attendance through statutory intervention or prosecution to protect a student's right to an education.

## Punctuality

Prompt arrival to school and for individual activities during the school day supports effective safeguarding of students and prepares them for the expectations of life outside of school. To that end students are expected to arrive promptly to lessons and lateness will be recorded as such and will be sanctioned where there is no suitable reason for lateness.

Morning registration begins at 8.30 am and closes at 9.00 am. Afternoon registers open at 1.45 pm. Arrival outside of these times will be marked as lateness/unauthorised absence and sanctioned as such where there is no justifiable cause.

## 5.1 Strategies for Promoting Attendance

Each academy within the trust will have localised strategies to promote good attendance which will include; rewards, sanctions, assemblies, meetings with parents and other levels of support. Low levels of attendance mean lost learning time which has a negative effect on student progress. Please refer to appendix 4 for levels of attendance and associated responses.

As standard our academies will:

- View and respond to daily attendance and punctuality information
- Monitor weekly patterns of attendance and identify actions through leadership and attendance teams
- Share this information with pastoral and classroom colleagues for discussion with students.
- Examine half-termly data reports against previous patterns and local and national data benchmarks
- Maintain a risk-register approach to the assessment of emerging concerns regarding students and how those concerns will be addressed, tracking the impact of interventions

## 6 TYPES OF ABSENCE

Every half-day absence will be classified by the academy (not by families), as either **authorised** or **unauthorised** in accordance with the categories set out in Appendix 1.

### 6.1 Authorised absences

Authorised absences include mornings or afternoons absent for a valid reason such as illness, urgent medical/dental appointments or other emergencies (see Appendix 1). All non-urgent medical or routine dental appointments should be arranged outside of the academy day or during the holiday periods. Where this is not possible, **students should attend the academy before and after the appointment**. Families should provide the appointment letter, prescription or medication to enable the absence to be authorised as appropriate. If students are required to leave early or be absent from lessons for an urgent appointment, parents should telephone or email with this information.

If a student is absent for 5 days consecutive days due to illness, contact will always be made with families and medical evidence may be required in order to authorise the absence.

Students who have permission to leave during the day must sign out at reception. Students must report to the Attendance Team to obtain an official out of academy pass to produce in the event of being challenged.

### 6.1.1 Religious Observance

The Trust acknowledges the multi-faith nature of British society and recognises that on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside holiday periods or weekends. The authorisation of absence, or special leave for religious observance, will be considered in these instances, but families are requested to give advance notice if they intend for their child to be absent. Greater Manchester Education Trust feels that it is reasonable that **no more than one day be designated for any individual occasion of religious observance or festival and no more than three days in total in any academic year**. Any further absence will be categorised as unauthorised.

### 6.1.2 Traveller Absence

Our aim for children within travelling families, in common with all other children, 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.

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

- The child is on roll and attending another visited school.
- The child is 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.

## 6.2 Unauthorised absences

Unauthorised absences are those which the academy does not consider reasonable and may be subject to penalty notices or legal proceedings issued by the Local Authority.

Unauthorised absences include:

- truancy during the academy day.
- absences which have no proper explanation.
- persistent absence due to illness that has no supporting medical evidence.
- students who arrive late to the academy after the registers have closed.
- absence for the purposes of shopping, to look after other children or celebrate birthdays.
- families keeping children away from the academy unnecessarily.
- day trips or holidays taken during term time.
- excessive absence due to medical/dental appointments without good reason or evidence.

Families will be asked to provide medical evidence where there are repeated absences due to reported illness. Families may also be asked to provide medical evidence where their child is absent for 5 consecutive days or more, or where there are repeated instances of absence.



### **6.3 Granting approval for term-time absence (See appendix 2)**

Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence to students during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. Each school will have their own list of exceptional circumstances due to the needs of the community. However, exceptional circumstances are likely to include the following:

- acute family trauma
- terminal illness or death of a family member
- if a family member serves in the Armed Forces - Service personnel returning from a tour of duty abroad where it is evidenced the individual will not be in receipt of any leave in the near future that coincides with school holidays
- following advice from a health professional
- out of school programmes such as music, arts or sport operating at a high standard of achievement

### **6.4 Persistent Absence**

Students are classified as persistently absent when they miss 10% or more school sessions in an academic year. Students are, therefore, classed as persistently absent irrespective of whether absence is authorised or unauthorised.

We monitor all absence thoroughly and support and intervention will be provided by each school for students who are persistently absent or at risk of becoming persistently absent.

All our persistently absent students are subject to weekly review and actions are agreed in accordance with local academy policy. Mentoring is offered and support for learning where absence affects attainment. This may include support from partner agencies such as Early Help or School Health in addition to enforcement where interventions do not improve attendance.

### **6.5 Severe Absence**

A student is severely absent when they miss 50% or more schooling across the academic year, for whatever reason. Students are, therefore, classed as severely absent irrespective of whether absence is authorised or unauthorised. Schools and local authorities are specifically expected to have agreed a joint approach for all severely absent students.

All severely absent students across GMET are subject to weekly review and actions are agreed in accordance with school-level procedure. Help and support will be offered from partner agencies such as Early Help or School Health. Where interventions do not improve attendance, a range of legal actions will be explored with the local authority.

### **6.6 Long-term Absence due to Medical Conditions**

Where a student is absent from the academy due to a long-term medical condition, a care plan will be developed in accordance with the individual academy's Supporting Students with Medical Conditions policy. Where possible, the academy will support the student to continue his or her access to education by providing specialised provision or by engaging the Home/School Teaching Service. A reintegration plan will be agreed with families to enable a successful return to the academy.

Where an assessment of a student's illness or well-being concludes that their achievement will be significantly impaired unless alternative arrangements for education are made, a referral can be submitted to the Hospital School in Manchester under Section 19 of the Education Act 1996. This includes students who display Anxiety Based School Avoidance. Referrals will be made in partnership with families and will require the support of a medical professional, such as a paediatrician or Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services, in order to be accepted.

## **7 ABSENCE PROCEDURES**

The Trust is committed to promoting the safety, health and welfare of all students and endeavours to manage absences fairly and consistently, with the aim of supporting students and their families.

Each academy in the Trust will have a clear set of procedures for families to report and address absence in a timely and accurate way. These are outlined in Appendix 3

## **8 CONTACT DETAILS FOR STUDENTS**

To comply with Health and Safety guidelines and Keeping Children Safe in Education it is important that we have more than one up to date contact details for all students. There are a variety of reasons that staff from the academy may need to contact parents or carers, including ill health when at the academy, emergencies, to discuss unexplained absences and to ensure students are safe. To confirm the reason for a student's absence with families, the academy will generally telephone the first contact number listed on the student's record. If contact information changes, please telephone or email the academy so that contact details are correct and up-to-date.

## **9 MONITORING OF ATTENDANCE**

Each academy will monitor attendance to school and to all lessons closely throughout the year on a daily basis. Each academy will have a detailed set of procedures to provide support and challenge as appropriate to secure good attendance for all students. This may include utilising safeguarding procedures and working with external agencies.

An overview of those procedures against related levels of attendance is provided in Appendix 4

### **9.1 Children at risk of missing education**

All academies will inform the local authority (LA) of any student who fails to attend regularly, or has been absent without the academy's permission for a continuous period of 10 days or more. As this could be a safeguarding issue leaders will ensure that regular follow up contact is made with the LA if the whereabouts of the student are not known or communicated to the academy. If a vulnerable child cannot be contacted on the first day of absence a home visit will be completed, a non-vulnerable by the third day of absence. This will continue until the information has been secured. Leaders will follow the guidance issued by the Department for Education: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-missing-education>

## **9.2 Parenting Contracts**

A parenting contract is a formal written agreement between a parent and the academy to address irregular attendance. This is not legally binding but allows a more formal conversation to take place with clear outcomes and expectations where a voluntary Early Help plan has not worked or is not appropriate. A parenting contract is intended to provide support and offer an alternative to legal action. A separate leaflet is available from the academy which offers more information about parenting contracts and this will be shared with families if this process is deemed to be appropriate. It is also available on the academy's website.

## **9.3 Support from Early Help**

Where barriers to attendance are complex, the academy will offer to work with students and families to complete an Early Help Assessment. This will enable more intensive support to be provided either at academy level or through the Early Help hub and will establish a Lead Practitioner for the family. The Lead Practitioner will be from the team or service best placed to support the family and their needs, and may be from the academy, the local authority or another partner such as a health professional.

# **10 ENFORCING ATTENDANCE**

## **10.1 Parenting Orders**

Parenting orders are imposed by the Court following conviction for non-attendance alongside a fine and/or a community order. Parents' agreement is not required before an order is made. They may be appropriate where the parent has not engaged in support to improve their child's attendance.

The order requires a parent to comply with the arrangements specified in the order by the Court which can include a requirement for parents to a parenting class. A responsible officer will be named on the order to work with the family as the lead practitioner. If parents don't comply with the order, it can be seen as an offence and a fine can be imposed the Court.

## **10.2 Education Supervision Orders**

Where an early help plan or a parenting contract has not been successful, an application for an Education Supervision Order (ESO) can be made to provide legal intervention to improve attendance without families being prosecuted. In deciding whether to progress to an ESO, the academy will consult with the local authority and they will agree that support has not been successful and that making the order would be beneficial for the student and the family. Where safeguarding concerns exist, the lead practitioner will agree with academy's safeguarding lead and children's social care that an ESO would be a more suitable option than a s.17 (Children in Need) or s.47 (Child Protection) plan. If it is decided to apply for an ESO, a meeting will be arranged with the family to notify them and a final decision made.

ESOs are made through the Family or High Court, rather than Magistrates Court. They give the local authority a formal role in advising, helping and directing the student and their family to ensure that the student receives an efficient, full-time, suitable education. For the duration of the ESO, the family's duties to secure the child's education and regular attendance are superseded by a duty to comply with any directions given under the ESO.

The order initially lasts for one year, but extensions can be applied for within the last 3 months for a period of up to 3 years at a time.

Where families persistently fail to comply with the directions given under the ESO, they may be guilty of an offence. Local authorities can prosecute in the Magistrates Court for persistent non-compliance with the Order and parents (upon conviction) will be liable to a fine of up to £1,000. The lead officer should also raise this with children's social care.

### **10.3 Penalty Notices**

A penalty notice is a fine which can be issued to each person with parental responsibility for every school-aged child or young person with irregular attendance. The penalty is £120, reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days. Penalty notice fines are issued by Manchester City Council in accordance with their Penalty Notice Protocol. Failure to pay the penalty in full by the end of the 28 day period may result in prosecution by the Local Authority for failure to ensure regular attendance, according to s444, Education Act 1996.

With the exception of unauthorised holidays taken in term time, parents will be sent a formal warning of their liability to receive such a notice before it is issued.

Penalty notices will be considered when:

- A student is absent for the purpose of a holiday in term time and the absence has not been authorised.
- A student has accumulated at least five sessions of unauthorised absence and further unauthorised absence has occurred following written warning to improve.

### **10.4 Legal proceedings for failing to ensure regular attendance**

If a child of compulsory school age fails to attend regularly at a school at which they are registered, or at a place where alternative provision is provided for them, their family may be guilty of an offence and can be prosecuted by the local authority.

Prosecution in the Magistrates Court is the last resort where all other voluntary and formal support or legal intervention has failed or where support has been deemed inappropriate. In all cases, local authorities must fully consider using an ESO before moving forward to prosecution. Where it is decided to pursue prosecution, only local authorities can prosecute families.

Failing to ensure regular school attendance is an offence punishable in the Magistrates' Court with a fine of up to £1000 or in the case of 'aggravated' offences up to £2500 or a term of imprisonment of up to 3 months.

The local authority will make the decision to prosecute but in deciding, the following will be considered:

- The level of engagement from the family and whether prosecution is needed to demonstrate how serious the absence is and to ensure parental engagement with support.
- Whether all other legal interventions have been considered and are not appropriate or have been tried and have not worked.
- Whether statutory children's social care intervention would be more appropriate including a Child in Need or Child Protection Plan.
- The family's response to formal warnings and information provided relating to the absence.

## **11 SUMMARY**

The trust will regularly share data and information on attendance to promote high standards amongst its academies. Equally, parents and carers have a duty to ensure that their child attends regularly. Greater Manchester Education Trust is committed to working with families and partner agencies to ensure the highest possible levels of attendance are achieved and to offer help and support to students and their families in order for them to achieve the best possible outcomes from their education.

Each academy within the trust will have guidance procedures which outline the following:

- Local procedures and graduated response to attendance support and challenge
- Scale of escalation
- Correspondence and templates
- Off-rolling procedures

### **The Trust and its Local Academy Committees will:**

- Ensure that the importance and value of good attendance is promoted to pupils and their parents
- Annually review Attendance Policy and ensure the required resources are available to implement the policy
- Identify a member of the Trust Board to lead on attendance matters
- Ensure that the Registration Regulations, England, 2013 and other attendance related legislation is complied with
- Agree academy attendance targets annually
- Monitor the academy's attendance through termly reporting at Governing Body Meetings
- Ensure that the official attendance data is reported to external bodies as required and on time
- Ensure that there is a named senior leader for attendance in each academy who is fully aware of absence procedures and ensures their implementation
- Ensure that the academy has clear systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all pupils, including those who are educated off-site
- Ensure that there are implemented procedures for collecting and analysing attendance data and to identify causes and patterns of absence
- Ensure that data is understood and used to devise solutions and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions ensuring that there are aspirational targets for each individual pupil.

**Senior Leaders will:**

- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to pupils and parents
- Form positive relationships with pupils and parents
- Ensure that there is a whole academy approach which reinforces good attendance; with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all pupils to attend and to achieve
- Monitor the implementation of the Attendance Policy
- Ensure that all staff are aware of the Attendance Policy and adequately trained to address attendance issues
- Ensure that systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all pupils, 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
- Develop a multi-agency response to improve attendance and support pupils and their families
- Document interventions used to a standard required by the local authority should legal proceedings be instigated

**In order to support good attendance parents and carers should:**

- Instil 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 academy if their child is absent to let them know the reason why and the expected date of return.
- Avoid unnecessary absences. Wherever possible make appointments outside of school hours
- Ask for help if their child is experiencing difficulties
- Inform the academy of any change in circumstances that may impact on attendance
- Encourage routines and good preparation habits at home
- Avoid taking their child out of school during term-time

## APPENDIX 1:

Codes	Description	Meaning	Physical Meaning
/	Present (AM)	Present	In for whole session
\	Present (PM)	Present	In for whole session
B	Education off site (no Dual reg)	Approval Education Activity	Out for whole session
C	Other authorised circumstances	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session
D	Dual registration	Approved Education Activity	Out for whole session
E	Excluded	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session
G	Family holiday (not agreed)	Unauthorised Absence	Out for whole session
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session
I	Illness	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity	Out for whole session
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present	Late for session
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised Absence	Out for whole session
O	Unauthorised Abs	Unauthorised Absence	Out for whole session
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity	In for whole session

<b>Codes</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Meaning</b>	<b>Physical Meaning</b>
R	Religious observance	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session
S	Study leave	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session
T	Traveller absence	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised Absence	Out for whole session
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity	Out for whole session
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity	Out for whole session
#	School closed to pupils & staff	Attendance not required	Out for whole session
Y	Enforced closure	Attendance not required	Out for whole session
X	Non-compulsory school age absence	Attendance not required	Out for whole session
Z	Pupil not on roll	Attendance not required	Out for whole session
-	All should attend/No mark recorded	No mark	Out for whole session



## APPENDIX 2 – LEAVE OF ABSENCE REQUEST FORM

Dear Parent/Carer,

Maximum attendance is an essential element of ensuring our young women achieve their full potential. Every absence disrupts learning and potentially has an impact on achievement.

We recognise that many of our students have strong links abroad. There are thirteen weeks of school closure each academic year and we feel this is ample time for making family visits. For such visits we advise all parents/carers to check the Travel Advice from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office to establish whether they consider it safe for travel and if any precautions need to be taken ([www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice](http://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice)).

Leave of absence is not generally considered acceptable and will not be authorised unless under exceptional circumstances. I would hope that parents will understand how important their daughter's education is and will therefore not make any unnecessary requests. All requests will be replied to in writing and authorisation will be to a maximum of 10 days. If a student can't return on the stated (or agreed) date you must contact us immediately to explain the delay. Evidence must be supplied in support of any delayed return, such as proof of rescheduled flight tickets.

We request 10 days in order for requests to be considered and processed and we advise you not to make travel bookings before receiving a written response. Supporting documents such as official medical evidence and proof of bereavement will be taken into consideration.

Should you choose to disregard this advice and take your daughter out of school for a period of leave without securing prior authorisation, then you may be issued with a Penalty Notice by the Local Authority. Penalty Notices incur a fine of £120 per parent/carers, per child to be paid within 28 days of the date of issue. This is reduced to £60 if paid within the first 21 days. Failure to pay a Penalty Notice may result in prosecution.

If a student incurs absence of 20 consecutive days or more, her name may be removed from our admission register. This will be done in accordance with the Local Authority's Children Missing Education procedures. I advise you that should your daughter lose her place you will be required to apply to Manchester City Council's school admissions service for re-admission. It is unlikely that she will be re-admitted to Whalley Range 11-18 High School due to the high demand for places.

Please protect your daughter's learning and achievement.

Yours sincerely

-----  
Name of student: \_\_\_\_\_ Year / Form: \_\_\_\_\_

First day of absence will be: \_\_\_\_\_ My daughter will be back in school on: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason: \_\_\_\_\_

Destination: \_\_\_\_\_ Contact numbers during absence: \_\_\_\_\_

Persons travelling (please list all): \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**This form must be returned to the STUDENT SERVICES OFFICE at least 10 DAYS PRIOR to travel. Please add any additional information you feel is relevant to your request and explains the exceptional circumstances involved.**

### **Appendix 3: Reporting Absence:**

#### **If a student is absent from the academy, families should:**

- contact the academy by 8.30 am on the first day of absence by telephone on 01618602999 or by email to [attendance@wrhs1118.co.uk](mailto:attendance@wrhs1118.co.uk) and send any supporting medical evidence to the Attendance Team if the absence is likely to continue.
- maintain contact with the academy every day of absence for safeguarding reasons, ensuring that staff are aware of the reason for absence and the likely date of return.

#### **It is a family's responsibility to contact the academy to advise staff of absence to support the safeguarding and welfare of all students.**

AM registration will take place at 8.30 am during form time. Once all students are registered for the morning session, the Attendance Team will send an email to the Year Teams enquiring if any absent students have been seen in the academy. Absent students will be coded as N unless a reason for absence has been received.

If a student is not registered in the academy we will:

- Text or email families.
- Make phone calls to contact numbers on SIMS.
- Where students are vulnerable, make home visits and contact Social Workers or Early Help support workers.
- Send letters in accordance with the stages of our policy.

Once reasons for absence have been returned, N codes in the register will be changed to the appropriate authorised code or converted to code O to indicate an unauthorised absence or that no reason has been received.

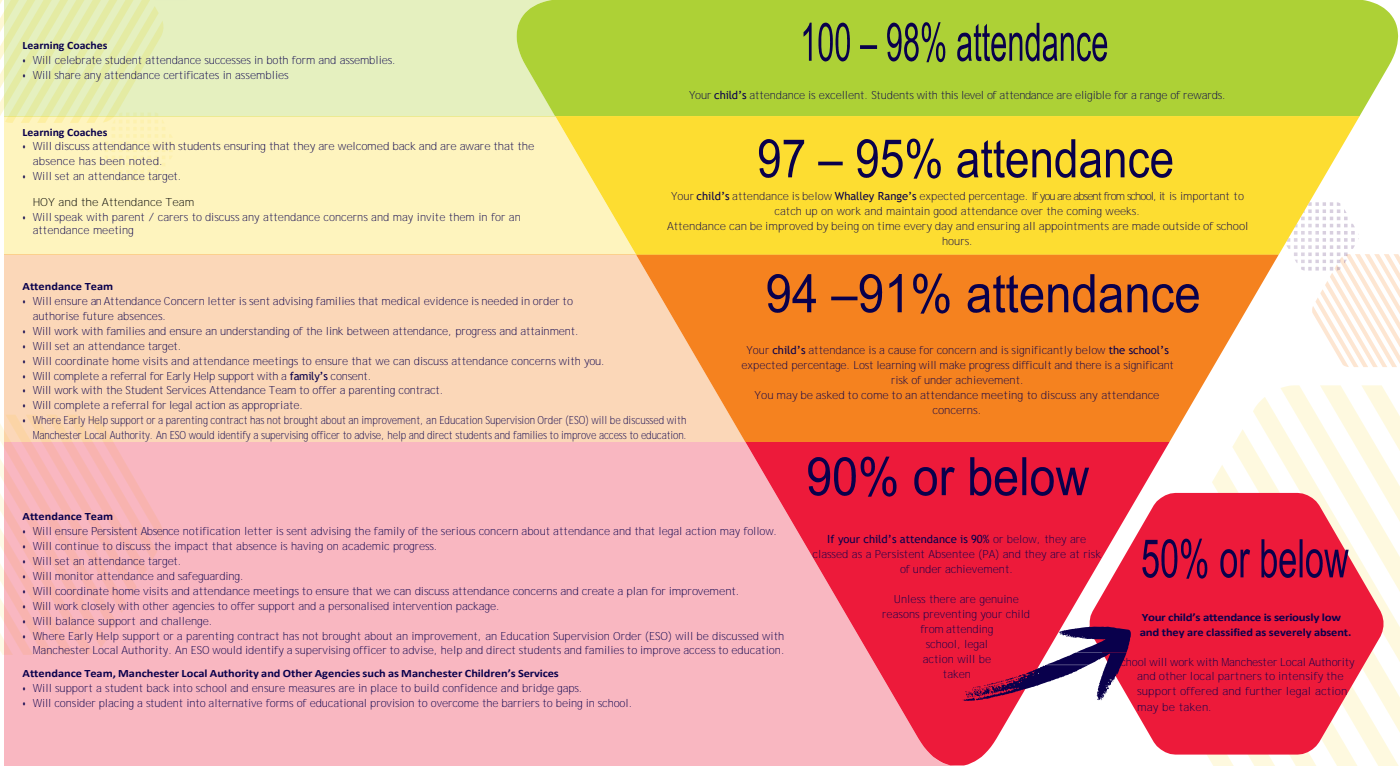
Registration is taken throughout the academy day and always within 10 minutes of the start of the lesson.

Where absence becomes a concern or no contact is possible with families, interventions will be in accordance with the various stages of our policy and will include:

- Inviting families into the academy for a meeting with Student Services.
- Notifying parents by letter when their child's attendance falls below certain parameters.
- Working closely with families and where consent is given, completing an Early Help Assessment to identify areas for support.
- Completing a parenting contract to agree actions and set targets.
- Make a referral to Manchester City Council for enforcement action.

**Appendix 4: Attendance Triangle**

# Transforming attendance At WRHS



## Appendix 5: Letters

### Statutory Warning Letter – Attendance Concerns

Date

Parent Details

Parent Address

**Re:** Warning letter – Statutory Action

«chosen\_forename» «chosen\_surname» («year\_reg»)

I have reviewed «chosen\_forename»'s attendance record and am concerned to note that she has incurred at least five sessions (2.5 school days) of unauthorised absence in the last 100 sessions (50 school days).

I enclose a copy of «chosen\_forename»'s attendance record and remind you that as a parent/carer of a child who is a registered pupil at this school, you hold legal responsibility for ensuring she attends regularly.

All Manchester schools and academies share the government's determination to raise levels of pupil attendance and achievement in order to ensure the best possible start in life for our children.

Under the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 an authorised officer of the City Council has the power to issue each parent/carer with a Penalty Notice for each of their children who fails to attend school regularly. A Penalty Notice is an early deterrent which is intended to prevent more extended periods of unauthorised absence developing.

Each such Penalty Notice incurs a fine of £120 to be paid within 28 days, which is reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days of the notice being served. Failure to pay a Penalty Notice may result in prosecution.

I write to advise you that we are actively monitoring «chosen\_forename»'s attendance. Should she incur any further unauthorised absence after the date of this letter, then further action, including the issue of a penalty notice or referral to City Solicitors for consideration of a prosecution, may be taken. Any such penalty notice or prosecution may relate to «chosen\_forename»'s attendance record both prior to and subsequent to this letter.

Sometimes, absence from school can be an indicator of other issues in the home and the Local Authority as a team of 'Early Help' workers who can support with issues such as housing, parenting or money management.

If you feel you would benefit from a conversation around this, you can contact school or visit: [manchester.gov.uk/helpandsupportmanchester](http://manchester.gov.uk/helpandsupportmanchester) to complete an Early Help Assessment form. This is completely voluntary.

Support and guidance on attendance is always available from Whalley Range 11-18 High School and if you have any specific queries in relation to this letter, please contact us via email at [attendance@wrhs1118.co.uk](mailto:attendance@wrhs1118.co.uk)

Yours sincerely,

## Stage 1 Attendance Concern Letter

Date

Parent Details

Parent Address

Re: Attendance Concerns - Stage 1

«chosen\_forename» «chosen\_surname» («year\_reg»)

It is widely recognised that regular and punctual attendance is essential for students to access the full range of educational opportunities on offer and to maximise their future attainment. It is also recognised that the best outcomes are achieved when families and schools work together to address issues early.

As concerns have been raised (ie. 5 or more unauthorised sessions of absence recorded), we have issued you with a separate statutory warning notice. To prevent any legal action being implemented we would like to work with you to ensure «chosen\_forename»'s attendance and/or punctuality improves going forward.

She will be required to achieve 100% attendance in the three weeks following the date of this letter.

Any absence during this time will only be authorised with medical verification from a professional, for example a GP or hospital letter. We do not authorise absence for minor ailments of headache, nausea, period pain, sore throat, general aches and pains, tiredness or routine medical appointments such as dental check-ups.

To support «chosen\_forename» in achieving 100% attendance in the coming weeks, she will be offered mentoring support to help us track her progress more closely.

If you would like to discuss this letter, please do not hesitate to contact the Attendance Team via email at [attendance@wrhs1118.co.uk](mailto:attendance@wrhs1118.co.uk)

Yours sincerely,

## Stage 2 Attendance Improvement Plan Letter

Date

Parent Details

Parent Address

Dear

**Re:** Attendance Concerns - Stage 2

«chosen\_forename» «chosen\_surname» («year\_reg»)

We have previously written to you advising of attendance concerns. Since the date of the statutory warning and stage 1 letters, your daughter has recorded further unauthorised absences meaning she has failed her stage 1 monitoring period and you are at an increasing risk of legal action being implemented.

You are therefore required to attend a meeting in school to establish an Attendance Improvement Plan. Issues are best addressed by open and honest communication between home and school so it is essential that you engage with this process in order to ensure your daughter's needs are being met with the correct support.

Your appointment has been scheduled for **Time and Date**. Please report to the main visitor reception at the front of school on arrival.

The meeting will allow us to discuss any support that your daughter / family may require, such as a voluntary Early Help Assessment or referral to other support services.

If you do not attend your appointment and further unauthorised absences are recorded, we may refer your daughter's irregular attendance to the Local Authority for consideration of legal action.

The meeting date will be preceded by a further 3-week monitoring period to allow time for improvement. Absences will only be authorised on receipt of supporting medical evidence such as a prescription, GP letter or hospital letter. All routine appointments must be made for outside school hours.

If you would like to discuss this letter, please do not hesitate to contact the Attendance Team via email at [attendance@wrhs1118.co.uk](mailto:attendance@wrhs1118.co.uk)

Yours sincerely,

## Medical Warning Letter

Date

Parent Details

Parent Address

Re: Warning letter – Medical evidence required to authorise absence

«chosen\_forename» «chosen\_surname» («year\_reg»)

I have reviewed «chosen\_forename»'s attendance record for this academic year and am concerned to see that she recorded several periods of absence. A copy of her registration certificate is enclosed for you reference.

Due to the recurrent pattern of absence, we will require supporting medical evidence in order to authorise any absences in the future. It is your responsibility to inform school of the reason for absence and following this, the decision to authorise (or not) is made by the school.

You are advised to provide supporting medical evidence in the form of a prescription, medication, appointment card/letter or a doctor's note. Evidence should be presented with a cover note, to the Attendance Office at the earliest opportunity and no later than the first day of return. This can also be done via email to [attendance@wrhs1118.co.uk](mailto:attendance@wrhs1118.co.uk)

Appointment cards alone are only accepted in relation to emergencies and should be accompanied with a prescription where possible. Our attendance policy does not allow absence for routine medical appointments scheduled during the school day. Such appointments as blood tests, dental check-ups, optician's appointments and asthma reviews should be made for after school hours or in holiday periods.

Failure to report a reason for absence or supply evidence will result in the absence being recorded as unauthorised, which may in turn, result in legal action being taken against you. Your daughter's attendance record both prior and subsequent to this letter may be used in evidence.

If there are health issues affecting «chosen\_forename»'s capacity to attend school, then please contact the Attendance Office to discuss this. A Health & Wellbeing Adviser may be available to offer guidance should your daughter have any long-term conditions.

Sometimes, absence from school can be an indicator of other issues in the home and the Local Authority as a team of 'Early Help' workers who can support with issues such as housing, parenting or money management.

If you feel you would benefit from a conversation around this, you can contact school or visit: [manchester.gov.uk/helpandsupportmanchester](http://manchester.gov.uk/helpandsupportmanchester) to complete an Early Help Assessment form. This is completely voluntary.

Thank you in anticipation of your co-operation in addressing this matter.

Yours sincerely,

## Unauthorised Absence Letter

Date

Parent Details

Parent Address

Re: Warning – Unauthorised absence

«chosen\_forename» «chosen\_surname» («year\_reg»)

I am concerned to see that «chosen\_forename» is absent from school without authorisation and I have reason to believe this may be due to leave of absence taken without request or another unsatisfactory reason.

Absence reporting and leave of absence procedures at Whalley Range 11-18 High School are clearly communicated to all parents via letter, leave of absence request forms, student planners, the website, the school's attendance policy and the parent attendance information leaflet. You have failed to follow the stated procedures in this instance.

I advise you that having taken «chosen\_forename» out of school without permission, this period of absence will be recorded as unauthorised and the Local Authority may issue a Penalty Notice on your daughter's return. Penalty Notices incur a fine of £120 (per parent, per child) which is reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days of the notice being served. Failure to pay may result in prosecution.

Additionally, you should also be aware that if «chosen\_forename»'s absence exceeds 20 school days, her name may be removed from the school admission register and the place offered to another student on our waiting list.

Should «chosen\_forename» lose her place here you will be required to apply to the Local Authority for readmission to a Manchester school. It is unlikely that she will be readmitted to Whalley Range 11-18 High School due to the high demand for places.

Sometimes, absence from school can be an indicator of other issues in the home and the Local Authority as a team of 'Early Help' workers who can support with issues such as housing, parenting or money management.

If you feel you would benefit from a conversation around this, you can contact school or visit: [manchester.gov.uk/helpandsupportmanchester](http://manchester.gov.uk/helpandsupportmanchester) to complete an Early Help Assessment form. This is completely voluntary.

If you have a legitimate reason for taking your daughter out of school such as a medical emergency or illness then evidence of this must be supplied to the Attendance Team immediately upon return or sooner if possible.

Yours sincerely,



## Persistent Absence (PA) Letter

Date

Parent Details

Parent Address

Dear

**Re:** Persistent Absence Concern

«chosen\_forename» «chosen\_surname» («year\_reg»)

Whalley Range 11-18 High School values the link between full attendance and high achievement and we are concerned that «forename»'s current level of absence will affect her progress and achievement.

«forename»'s attendance is currently «percentage\_attendance»%. Any student with attendance below 90% is categorised as a Persistent Absentee by the Department for Education, regardless of the reason for this. As a school we have an obligation to notify our Local Authority of all students who fall into this category.

Previously you may have received warning letters from school or a Penalty Notice from the Local Authority. I am therefore writing this letter to invite you to contact us to discuss any issues that may be impacting on «forename»'s attendance. It is important that we address these concerns as soon as possible and I would ask that you contact school via email, [attendance@wrhs1118.co.uk](mailto:attendance@wrhs1118.co.uk) to arrange a mutually convenient appointment.

Sometimes, unauthorised absences can be an indicator of other issues in the home and the Local Authority as a team of 'Early Help' workers who can support with issues such as housing, parenting or money management.

If you feel you would benefit from a conversation around this, you can contact school or visit: [manchester.gov.uk/helpandsupportmanchester](http://manchester.gov.uk/helpandsupportmanchester) to complete an Early Help Assessment form. This is completely voluntary.

If you do not respond to this letter and «forename» records unauthorised absence this matter will be referred to the Local Authority for consideration of legal action. We keep records of all our actual and attempted communications with parents/ carers and this log may be used in evidence. I advise you of this in the hope that no such action will become necessary.

Yours sincerely,

## Severe Absence Letter

Date

Parent Details

Parent Address

Dear,

**Re:** Severe Absence Concern

«chosen\_forename» «chosen\_surname» («year\_reg») Current attendance:  
«percentage\_attendance»%

Whalley Range 11-18 High School values the link between full attendance and high achievement and we are concerned that «chosen\_forename»'s current level of absence is having a negative effect on her progress and achievement.

A student with attendance below 50% is categorised as a Severe Absentee by the Department for Education. As a school we have an obligation to notify our Local Authority of all students who fall into this category and to jointly offer additional targeted support.

This academic year «chosen\_forename» has missed «total\_authorized\_absences» sessions due to authorised reasons and «total\_unauthorised\_absences» sessions due to unauthorised reasons.

I invite you to contact us to discuss any issues that may be impacting «chosen\_forename»'s attendance. It is important that we address these issues together and I would ask that you email [attendance@wrhs1118.co.uk](mailto:attendance@wrhs1118.co.uk) to arrange a mutually convenient appointment.

Sometimes, absence from school can be an indicator of other issues in the home and the Local Authority as a team of 'Early Help' workers who can support with issues such as housing, parenting or money management.

If you feel you would benefit from a conversation around this, you can contact school or visit: [manchester.gov.uk/helpandsupportmanchester](http://manchester.gov.uk/helpandsupportmanchester) to complete an Early Help Assessment form. This is completely voluntary.

If you do not respond to this letter and «chosen\_forename» records further unauthorised absence this matter will be referred to the Local Authority for consideration of legal action. We keep records of all our actual and attempted communications with parents/ carers and this log may be used in evidence. I advise you of this in the hope that no such action will become necessary.

Yours sincerely,

## Leave of Absence Decline

Date

Parent Details

Parent Address

Dear

**Re:** Warning - Request for Leave of Absence Refusal

«chosen\_forename» «chosen\_surname» («year\_reg»)

Thank you for your application to take «forename» out of school during term time which has been carefully considered.

As a school we may only authorise absence for exceptional and unavoidable circumstances. Outside of this, we require «forename» to be in school every day in order to make full use of the learning opportunities open to her. With this in mind, your request has been refused as there is insufficient evidence to support exceptional and unavoidable cause on the dates requested.

If you take your daughter out of school without permission, then the absences will be recorded as unauthorised in the school register. As a result, the Local Authority may issue you with a penalty notice upon your return. Penalty notices incur a fine of £120 to be paid within 28 days of being served, reduced to £60 if paid within the first 21 days. Notices are issued to each responsible parent for each child and failure to pay may result in prosecution.

Additionally, you should also be aware that if «forename»'s absence exceeds 20 school days, her name may be removed from our admission register and the place be offered to another student from our waiting list. Any such action will be taken in accordance with the City Council's protocols.

Should «forename» lose her place here you will be required to apply to the Local Authority for readmission to a Manchester school. It is unlikely that «forename» will be readmitted to Whalley Range 11-18 High School due to the current high demand for places.

Sometimes, absence from school can be an indicator of other issues in the home and the Local Authority as a team of 'Early Help' workers who can support with issues such as housing, parenting or money management.

If you feel you would benefit from a conversation around this, you can contact school or visit: [manchester.gov.uk/helpandsupportmanchester](http://manchester.gov.uk/helpandsupportmanchester) to complete an Early Help Assessment form. This is completely voluntary.

Yours sincerely,

## Punctuality Concern

Date

Parent Details

Parent Address

Dear

Re: Punctuality Concerns

«chosen\_forename» «chosen\_surname» («year\_reg»)

We are writing to express concern about «chosen\_forename»'s punctuality to school which is currently below expectation.

Since the start of the academic year in September, she has arrived late to registration «total\_lates\_before» times. «chosen\_forename» should be on school premises no later than 8:20am to ensure she can be present in her form room when lessons start at 8:30am.

There is a very clear link between punctual attendance and high achievement so it is essential your daughter develops the habit of punctual attendance. Being on time is the product of proper planning, personal discipline and a respect for other people's time. It also reflects a strong work ethic.

We will be monitoring «chosen\_forename»'s progress in the coming weeks and thank you in anticipation of your co-operation in addressing this matter. If you would like to respond to this letter please contact us via email at [attendance@wrhs1118.co.uk](mailto:attendance@wrhs1118.co.uk)

A copy of «chosen\_forename»'s attendance certificate and minutes late report are available upon request.

Yours sincerely,