



# The Sir Geoffrey Leigh Academy

## Attendance and Punctuality Policy 2024-2025

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## **1. STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLE**

The Head of College responsible for Attendance & Punctuality is Mark Shepherd.

We believe that good attendance and punctuality at Sir Geoffrey Leigh Academy are vital to the wellbeing and future prospects of all our students. Attendance and punctuality are intrinsically linked to our academy strategy for raising achievement. This policy provides the framework within which all staff, parents, students, carers and external agencies ensure that high attendance and excellent punctuality are ensured.

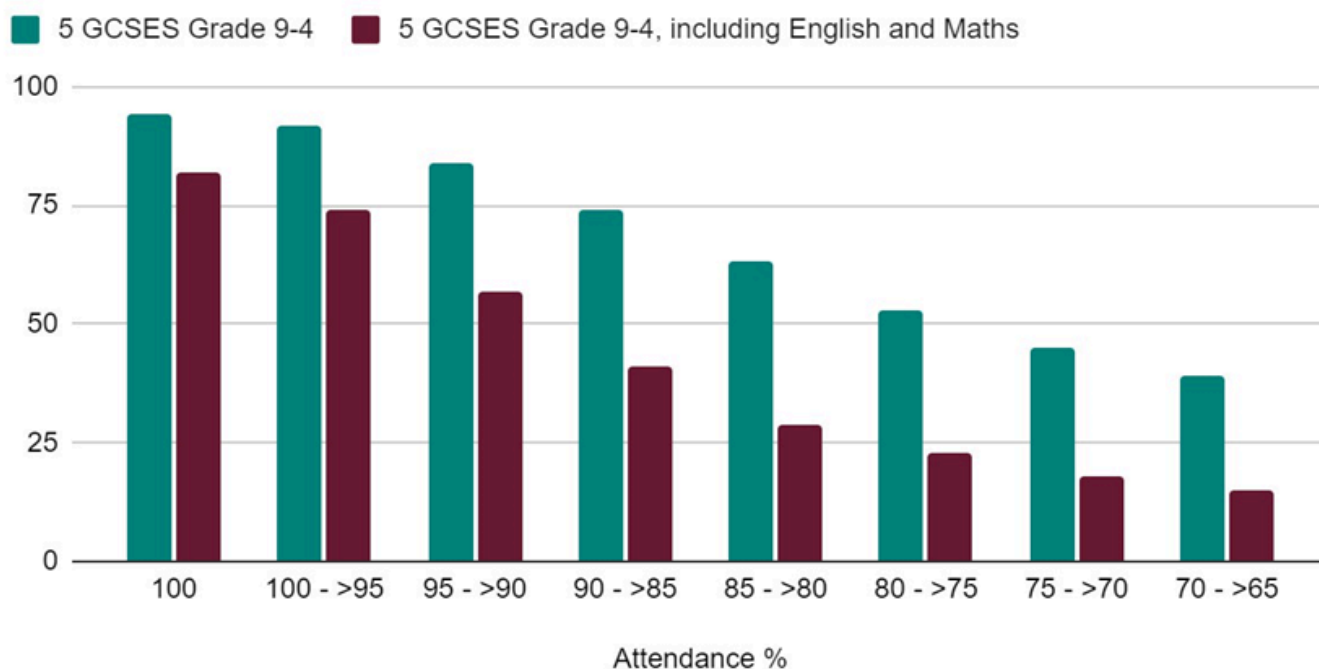
Under [Section 7 of the Education Act \(1996\)](#), parents/carers have a legal duty to make sure that their child attends the academy on a regular and full-time basis.

### **AIMS**

- To improve the overall attendance of students at Sir Geoffrey Leigh Academy and reduce unauthorised absence
- To reduce the levels of persistent absence
- To develop a learning environment for the academy where students are encouraged to attend regularly and to be punctual
- To make attendance a priority for students, parents, staff and governors
- To create a framework which defines roles and responsibilities and promotes consistency in carrying out designated tasks
- To create a rigorous system for monitoring and analysing attendance across the academy
- To provide support and advice to parents so that they can help their child return to school
- To recognise the needs of individual students when planning reintegration following significant periods of absence
- To ensure that attendance data is accurate and regularly generated so that:
  - Students can be praised and rewarded for their good attendance
  - Parents/carers can be quickly informed of issues

- Individual students and groups can be monitored easily
- Causes of absence and issues of inclusion and equal opportunity can be readily identified
- Targets for individual students, groups of students and the academy can be set and regularly reviewed

### *Impact of Attendance on KS4 Attainment (Data from the Department for Education)*



## **2. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **2.1 The Academy will:**

- Give attendance a high profile with students, staff and parents/carers
- Ensure that the register is taken at the beginning of every lesson/registration period, using the correct codes
- Ensure that academy expectations on attendance and punctuality are communicated clearly to all stakeholders
- Identify clear roles and responsibilities and ensure that staff have the time and resources to fulfill them
- Encourage their pupils to take responsibility for their attendance and punctuality through monitoring and reinforcing the need for high levels of attendance and excellent punctuality
- Monitor for internal truancy and look for patterns of absence, and consider the impact of the curriculum upon attendance alongside other causes
- Ensure that students on long term absence/exclusion access the curriculum and are supported on their return
- Ensure regular liaison with the Student Support Manager, tutors and SENCo to ensure procedures are being followed for students with continued low attendance

- Ensure that attendance is regularly discussed in assemblies and that students with high levels of and/or improved attendance are praised and rewarded regularly
- Ensure that students who have been absent from the academy are made to feel welcome on their return
- Be the very best of role models in terms of attendance and punctuality

## 2.2 Students will:

- Arrive on site by 8:20 am each academy day, correctly dressed in uniform
- Attend lineup and tutor time on time
- Attend all lessons on time
- Maximise their learning potential by taking responsibility for achieving excellent levels of attendance and punctuality
- Sign out with reception if they have to attend an appointment (evidence must be provided to reception and college admin)

## 2.3 Parents/Carers will:

- Actively promote and encourage 100% attendance
- Encourage students to leave home in plenty of time in the morning
- Ensure that students are in the correct academy uniform
- Contact the school whenever the pupil is absent on the first day and on each subsequent day of absence by 8.15am
- Make routine medical/dental appointments out of school time
- Avoid removing their child during the school day

## Help and Support

If you would like help, support and advice regarding your child's punctuality and attendance please contact your child's college. You can make an appointment by email or telephoning as appropriate from the below list.

Attenborough College Admin - 01322 620439 [attenboroughcollege@sgla.latrust.org.uk](mailto:attenboroughcollege@sgla.latrust.org.uk)

Curie College Admin - 01322 620508 [curiecollege@sgla.latrust.org.uk](mailto:curiecollege@sgla.latrust.org.uk)

Mandela College Admin - 01322 620511 [mandelacollege@sgla.latrust.org.uk](mailto:mandelacollege@sgla.latrust.org.uk)

Seacole College Admin - 01322 620520 [seacolecollege@sgla.latrust.org.uk](mailto:seacolecollege@sgla.latrust.org.uk)

Shakespeare College Admin - 01322 620507 [shakespearecollege@sgla.latrust.org.uk](mailto:shakespearecollege@sgla.latrust.org.uk)

## 3. ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

### 3.1 The Academy Day and Roll Call

- The statutory recording of attendance and absence at the start of each session (am / pm) is known as Roll Call. This is undertaken within the first 30 minutes of the morning and afternoon sessions.

Wherever possible this Roll Call is taken 'electronically' by register calling

- The recording of attendance and absence to all other lessons will be known as Registration
- Designated staff will be reminded of their legal duty to complete and submit Roll Call at the appropriate time, and using the correct registration codes ([Appendix 1](#))
- The registers will remain open for 30 minutes. Pupils arriving before the end of the registration period will be coded 'L' (late before registers close) which is a present mark. The number of minutes late will be recorded in the register. Pupils arriving after the registers have closed will be coded 'U' (late after registers close) which counts as an unauthorised absence for the whole morning session
- The afternoon register is taken at the start of period 3

### 3.2 Informing the Academy of Absence

If a child is absent parents or carers must:

- Contact the child's relevant college email or absence number prior to 8.15am on the first day of absence, advising of the reason and likely length of absence

Attenborough College Admin - 01322 620439 [attenboroughcollege@sgla.latrust.org.uk](mailto:attenboroughcollege@sgla.latrust.org.uk)

Curie College Admin - 01322 620508 [curiecollege@sgla.latrust.org.uk](mailto:curiecollege@sgla.latrust.org.uk)

Mandela College Admin - 01322 620511 [mandelacollege@sgla.latrust.org.uk](mailto:mandelacollege@sgla.latrust.org.uk)

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Shakespeare College Admin - 01322 620507 [shakespearecollege@sgla.latrust.org.uk](mailto:shakespearecollege@sgla.latrust.org.uk)

- Parents or carers should continue to inform the academy on each subsequent day of absence and provide the reasons and necessary evidence to authorise the absence. This needs to be completed as soon as the evidence is available. The academy will not chase up evidence as this is a parental responsibility to provide. Wherever possible, all medical appointments should be taken outside of school time. Supporting evidence can be an attached photo, or photocopy, of:

- a. letter from medical professional
- b. appointment card with name date and time
- c. copy of prescription note
- d. copy of prescribed medication sticker on side of medicine packaging
- e. copy of receipt from purchase of medication from a pharmacy

If the Academy is not informed of an absence, it will take the following action:

Day	Academy Action if Absence Not Reported
1	Absent without reason, SMS is sent by College, followed by phone call made by Attendance Officer
2	If no response to day 1 call, 2nd day call by Attendance Officer, if family is supported by internal support teams, they will contact
3	If no response to day 1 and 2 calls or texts, a home visit will be arranged and a concern letter sent notifying the parent / carer of the possibility of issuing a FPN
4	If no response a meeting with the Attendance Team is scheduled to discuss support
>5	If there is no response or improvement made, a FPN may be issued if student reaches a total of 10 sessions of unauthorised absence
>10	Further unauthorised absence may trigger a referral to outside agencies including Trust Attendance and/or local authority

### 3.3 Unauthorised Absence

Absence will be deemed unauthorised where:

- Parents or carers do not provide evidence to support absence due to ill health when requested by the academy
- Parents or carers remove students from school for holidays or trips during term time
- Students arrive at the academy after the registration period has closed
- Parents or carers keep children from the academy unnecessarily
- Parents or carers do not communicate the reason for absence to the academy
- A student truants and are absent without the parents' or carers' knowledge

Holidays in term time will never be authorised. The academy is closed for 14 weeks a year when parents can take holidays and travel abroad. Where there is an exceptional circumstance resulting in a student being absent during term time, a request can be made to the Principal in writing or via email who will then consider the application and respond in writing. The Principal's decision is final.

A student who has 10 unauthorised sessions across 10 school weeks may be liable for a fixed penalty notice by the Kent County Council Attendance Service.

### Education for Health Needs Including Mental Health

The academy will operate according to its statutory duties under [section 19 of the Education Act 1996](#) and [DfE: Education for Children With Health Needs Who Cannot Attend School](#). The academy will refer to the local authority regarding alternative provision where a student cannot attend school full-time for 15 days or more, consecutive or otherwise, due to a physical or mental health need and cannot access full-time

education.

Under the [Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#), a school may only remove the name of a pupil who is unable to attend school because of additional health needs from its roll in specific circumstances, which include where:

- The pupil has been certified by a medical officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school, before ceasing to be of compulsory school age; and
- Neither the pupil nor their parent has indicated to the school the intention to continue to attend the school, after ceasing to be of compulsory school age

### **3.4 Lateness**

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. Students arriving late cannot start the day effectively, may disrupt lessons, and encourage absence or poor punctuality in others. Where students are late to the academy, with no valid reason the following punctuality protocols will be followed:

- The academy day starts officially at 8.30am and students are expected to be through the gate and on their way to their morning registration lineup by 8.25am
- Any student who arrives through the gate after 8.30am will be expected to enter via Reception and report to the Reception Desk. They will take their name and will be issued a late mark ('L') anytime between the registration period of 8.30am and 9.00am
- Lateness after 9am results in an absence mark for the morning session which, without valid reason, would be deemed unauthorised (U)
- If you know your child is going to be late for a specific reason please call the academy before 8:30am, following the same procedures for absence
- Poor punctuality resulting in unauthorised absences (U) e.g after 9am, is classed as irregular academy attendance and is dealt with accordingly. This may mean that parents or carers could face the possibility of legal action
- If a student is returning to the academy following an absence during the day they will need to arrive for registration between 1.30pm and 2.00pm, or they would be marked as absent for the afternoon session



Detentions will be issued to those students who arrive late to the academy in the morning or late to lessons during the day. The system for maintaining a consistent approach across tutor groups and subject areas for dealing with poor punctuality has been agreed and the following sanctions will be applied to students. These sanctions will reset each module.

Late to the academy (arriving after 8:30am):

- 1-3 lates - S1 15 minute detention (notifications from BROMCOM)
- 4-5 lates - S2 30 minute detention (phone call and letter)
- 6+ lates - S3 60 minute detention (meeting with parents)

### 3.5 Leaving Site During the Day

Pupils are not to leave site during the school day, except in exceptional circumstances:

- In case of medical need, in the first instance the pupil should seek medical attention from our on-site first aider. With permission, a pupil may take time out of a lesson (in a designated area) to see if their condition improves. The first aider may feel that it is not appropriate for the child to be in the academy due to poor health. Permission from the Head of College must be granted before a child leaves site due to feeling unwell
- First aid staff will contact parents or carers to gain permission to send the pupil home, in some cases the parent will be required to collect their child from the academy
- Pupils must NOT contact parents during the academy day and request collection or permission to leave
- Prior to leaving the academy site, all pupils must report to their College Student Services and be officially signed out. If parents/carers are unable to collect their child, and have given verbal permission for the pupil to leave the academy, they will be issued with an exit pass which confirms the pupil has permission to leave the site
- Post 16 pupils who wish to leave the site during the academy day must adhere to the signing out procedures determined by the Director of Learning for Post 16



#### 4. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Monitoring of attendance is systematic and rigorous to ensure there is a strategic approach to improving a pupil's attendance where it is below expected and impacting on their progress:

- Academy attendance data will be published for consideration at every academy board meeting. It may also be submitted to the Trust Academies Standards Committee as required
- Attendance Data will be produced regularly and distributed to the Senior Leadership Team to enable interventions to occur
- The relevant Head of College, Assistant Head of College and Student Support Manager within each college will be responsible for monitoring attendance in their college
- The Head of each College has responsibility for the management of attendance figures, and actions to improve attendance within their college
- A Designated Principal/Senior Leader has overall responsibility for the publication and monitoring of the attendance data for the whole academy
- Attendance data will be collected via the DfE

There is a clear link between poor attendance and low levels of attainment. Poor attendance can disrupt a pupil's own learning and that of others. Every academy day counts, don't let your child miss out on the education they deserve.

100%	99%	98%	90%	84%	80%	74%
190 school days a year	186 days of education	182 days of education	171 days of education	160 days of education	152 days of education	140 days of education
0 days off school in a year	4 days off in a school year	8 days off in a school year	19 days off in a school year	30 days off in a school year	38 days off in a school year	50 days off in a school year
			Research suggests that your child would now be falling 1-2 grades below their potential	Your child would have missed 6 weeks of education	Research suggests that your child would now be falling 2-3 grades below their potential	Your child would have missed 10 weeks of education
<b>Amazing!</b> Your attendance is on track			<b>Concerning</b> You are now classed as persistently absent		<b>Serious Concern</b> The local authority will be moving towards court action	

#### 5. STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVING ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY

- The academy's attendance lead is Mr Shepherd (Vice Principal) who will work alongside our Attendance Officer to monitor attendance across the school

- The person responsible for leading attendance in each college 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. This may include Student Services or pastoral staff, tutors, Directors of Learning, college leadership teams, Trust Attendance Officer and other staff as appropriate
- Attendance, punctuality and its impact on learning and progress will be a key area for discussion between tutors, Student Support, College Leadership teams and parents / carers during consultation days
- A range of positive strategies will be used to reward individual students and groups for outstanding and/or improved attendance
- Regular attendance meetings will be held between individual college leadership and the Trust Attendance Officer
- Student attendance data may be shared with parents/carers, local authority, Early Help / Family Solutions, School Liaison Officer/Attendance Service, Children’s Social Services, Police, relevant Local Education Authorities, Ofsted and the Department for Education
- We understand the importance of working with all stakeholders to improve attendance within the academy and we follow the guidance from the DFE ‘Working Together to Improve School Attendance’

## **6. ABSENCE OF LEAVE DURING TERM TIME**

The academy will not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are very exceptional circumstances, you may be asked to provide supporting documentation.

Applications for Leave Of Absence must be made in writing to the Principal of the academy who will make the final decision of acceptance or refusal. The academy will take into account the pupil's previous record of attendance. The fundamental principles for defining ‘exceptional’ are ‘rare, significant, unavoidable and short’.

If absence is not authorised and a leave of absence of at least 10 sessions (5 days) is taken, a referral will be made to the local authority attendance service which may issue a Penalty Notice for £160 (or £80 if paid within 28 days) to each parent for each child taken out of the academy.

## **7. PERSISTENT ABSENCE REFERRALS**

A pupil is deemed to be a PA (Persistent Absentee) if their attendance falls below 90%. The academy will consider pupils below 95% at risk. Pupils who fall into either of these categories will be monitored by the academy’s Attendance Officer, the College Team and the Trust Attendance Officer.

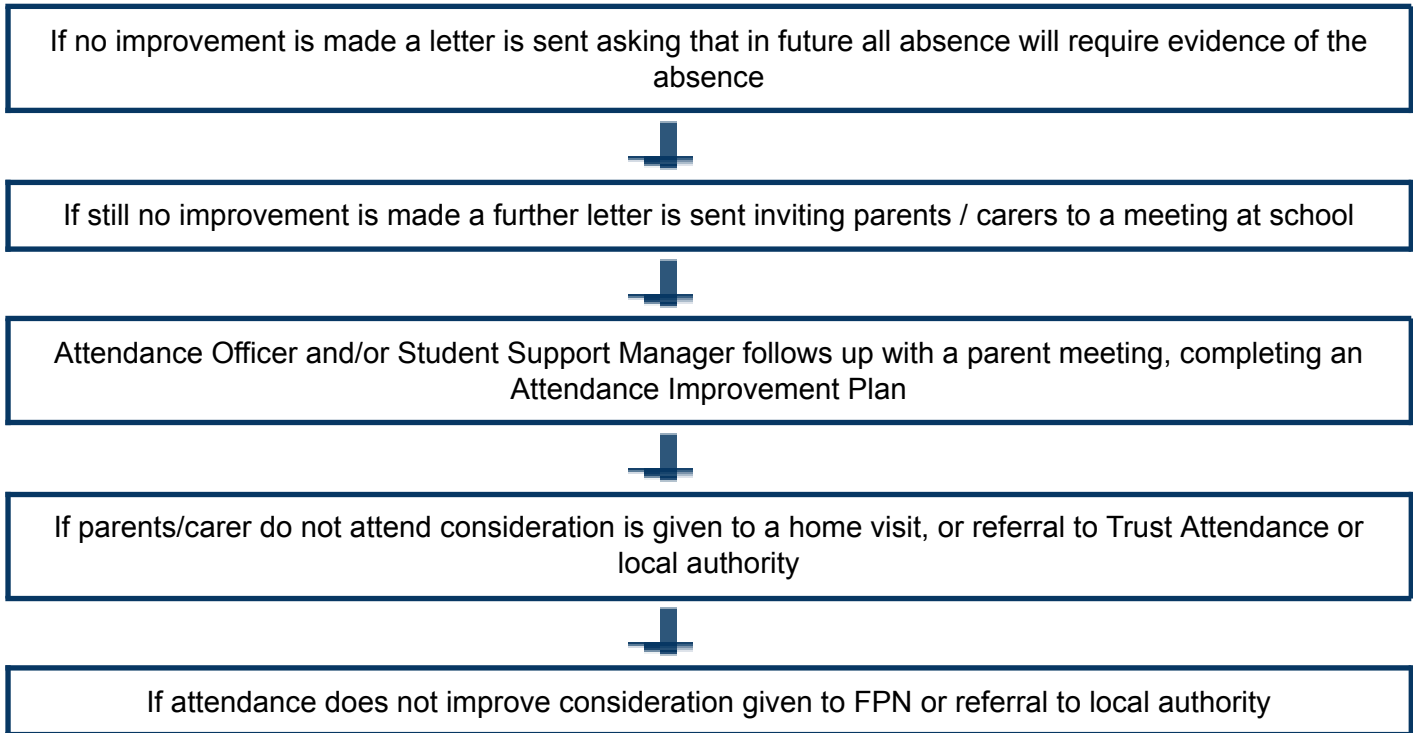
Analysis of attendance by micro population will identify strengths and areas for intervention to further improve attendance. A referral may be made to the local authority attendance service should attendance remain poor after academy and trust interventions.

First day calling and SMS for absence by Attendance Officer and/or College Team



Letter is sent home informing that a student’s attendance is less than 90%





## 8. PENALTY NOTICES

In line with [Kent County Council Code of Conduct, 19 August 2024](#), the academy follows set procedures for issuing penalty notices. Kent Attendance Service takes responsibility for issuing penalty notices and taking other legal actions following referral by the academy. There are various circumstances where a Penalty Notice may be issued:

### 8.1 Unauthorised absence:

- A penalty notice can only be issued in cases of persistent unauthorised absence
- Parents/Carers and pupils are supported by the academy and local authority to overcome barriers to regular attendance. Sanctions are used where parental co-operation in this process is either absent or deemed insufficient to resolve the issues relating to absence
- 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
- A penalty notice can only be issued where a pupil has been absent or late (after registration has been closed 'U') for a period or periods of time and the absence or lateness has not been authorised by the academy. After the academy has taken steps to resolve attendance concerns / warned the parent/carer of possible Penalty Notice referral, the academy will refer directly to the local authority to issue a Penalty Notice. This will be for unauthorised absence where the student has been absent for 10 or more half day sessions without authorisation during 10 school weeks.

### 8.2 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, the regulations state that the penalty will be £160 to be paid within 28 days, reduced to £80 if paid within 28 days. Penalty notices are issued to each parent of each child. Failure to pay the penalty in full by the end of the 28 day period may result in prosecution by the local authority.

## **9. REMOVING A PUPIL FROM OR ADDING A STUDENT TO THE ACADEMY ROLL**

### **9.1 Continued Serious Absence**

As per The Education Regulations Act 2006 Section 8, when all possible actions have been taken we will remove the student from the academy roll due to continued serious absence.

Where a pupil has failed to attend the Academy within 10 school days immediately following an authorised leave of absence, and there are no reasonable grounds for the pupil not to attend, the academy and local authority will make reasonable enquiries to ascertain where the pupil is, and if unable to establish the pupil's whereabouts, we will remove from roll. ([Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#))

Where a pupil has failed to attend the Academy for 20 school days or more and the absence is unauthorised, and there are no reasonable grounds for the pupil not to attend, the academy and local authority will make reasonable enquiries to ascertain where the pupil is, and if unable to establish the pupil's whereabouts we will remove from roll. ([Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#))

### **9.2 School Transfer**

If parents/carers decide to transfer their child to another school or academy, they should advise the relevant college Student Support Manager and the relevant Head of College as a matter of priority, providing all necessary details, including any new address (if relevant) and the school or academy the child is transferring to.

When in the process of a school or academy transfer the child must continue to attend the academy until a start date has been agreed with the new school or academy. If the academy does not receive this information and a child stops attending, he or she may become a 'Child Missing Education' (CME). Any child in this category is reported to the Child Missing Education Officer at the local authority, who will follow up the matter under safeguarding legislation.

### **9.3 Elective Home Education (EHE)**

If parents or carers take the decision to educate a child at home, they must inform the academy of this in writing, addressed to the Principal and include the date of decision to home educate and a brief explanation of the reasons for EHE. Once this is received, the academy will remove the pupil from the academy roll and advise the Elective Home Education Officer of the local authority, who will make contact with parents or carers. If an EHE request is not received, the pupil will remain on the academy roll and action may be undertaken following irregular or non-academy attendance procedures, and could lead to prosecution or an instant fine under [Section 444 of the Education Act 1996](#).

## **9.4 Joining the academy**

We will only enter pupils on the admission register where we have received written confirmation that the person with control of the pupil's attendance has accepted the school place.

Where the local authority has offered a place at the school but no written confirmation of acceptance has been received from the person with control of the pupil's attendance, we will write to the local authority requesting evidence in writing and will not enter the pupil onto the admission register until this has been received. If written confirmation is not received within 10 school days, the offer of a place will be withdrawn and offered to another pupil in accordance with our Admissions Policy.

We will enter pupils' names on the admission register on the first day that the school and a person with control of the pupil's attendance have agreed that the pupil will attend the school. If no date has been agreed or notified, the pupil's name will be entered on the first day they attend the school. Names must be added before, or at the beginning of the first session on that day.

Where a pupil does not attend on the agreed date, we will send a letter to the person with control of the pupil's attendance asking them to confirm in writing within 10 school days that they wish to take up the place. If written confirmation is not received within 10 school days, the pupil's name will be removed from the admission register and the place offered to another pupil in accordance with the admission policy.

## **10. HOME VISITS**

Home visits are carried out in the event of absence from the academy, in particular where there has been no contact from the parents or carers, usually after the third day of absence. A home visit will be made to ascertain the safety and well-being of the child and to ascertain the reason for absence from the academy.

### **10.1 Aims**

The aim of a home visit is:

- To establish a partnership between parents/carers and staff so that all parties share their knowledge about the child to enable the individual needs of the child to be met
- To develop and strengthen relationships with parents/carers for the best interests of the child

### **10.2 Reasons for home visits**

Home visits are to be used when:

- Students are refusing to come into school; this can be carried out by school staff when there are attendance issues or concerns
- When students are being educated at home
- When all other means of contact with a family has failed
- To meet with parents/carers to discuss an issue regarding their child where it is in the best interest of the child to have that discussion in their own home, rather than at the academy or where it would be difficult for parents/carers to attend school for a meeting, and information needs to be shared in a face-to-face meeting in a timely manner

- To try and establish that a child is safe if they are absent from school and attempts to contact parents/carers have not elicited a response and we have any welfare or safeguarding concerns for the student
- To work with and support parents/carers in developing strategies to help their child attend the academy where attendance is an issue
- To drop off or collect work for a child when they are completing schoolwork at home
- To visit a child who has been off school for a period of time, for example due to a medical issue, so that they do not feel isolated from school
- To investigate situations when there are suspicions that someone may be on holiday contrary to earlier indications, for example when a child is not at school and reported as being ill, during the same period for which a request for exceptional leave in term-time had been refused

## APPENDIX 1

### Attendance and Absence Codes

On each occasion the register is taken, the appropriate national attendance and absence code must be entered for every pupil (of both compulsory and non-compulsory school age) whose name is listed in the admission register at the time.

The codes enable schools to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way and are used to collect statistics. The data helps schools, local authorities, and the government gain a greater understanding of the delivery of education and the level of, and reason for, absence.

Code	Meaning
/	Present at the school morning session
\	Present at school afternoon session
B	Attending any other approved educational activity
C	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstance
C1	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.
C2	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable
D	Dual registered at another school
E	Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made
G	Holiday not granted by the school
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)
J1	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority
L	Late arrival before the register is closed
M	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment
N	Reason for absence not yet established
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances
P	Participating in a sporting activity
Q	Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements
R	Religious observance
S	Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes
U	Arrived in school after registration closed
V	Attending an educational visit or trip
W	Attending work experience
X	Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school
Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available

<b>Y2</b>	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel
<b>Y3</b>	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed
<b>Y4</b>	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed
<b>Y5</b>	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention
<b>Y6</b>	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law
<b>Y7</b>	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause
<b>Z</b>	Prospective pupil not on admission register
<b>#</b>	Planned whole school closure