

UNIVERSITY ACADEMY
HOLBEACH



UNIVERSITY OF
LINCOLN

The University Academy Holbeach

Principal: Sheila Paige BA (Hons.)

ATTENDANCE POLICY (ATTENDANCE - EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY)

To be reviewed annually
Adopted by the Governing Body: - September 2023
Review date: September 2024

This policy operates in conjunction with the following Academy policies –

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- SEND and Inclusion Policy
- Admissions Policy

This policy will be published on the Academy website.



UNIVERSITY OF LINCOLN

ACADEMY TRUST

University of Lincoln Academy Trust Policy Statement

The University of Lincoln Academy Trust (UoLAT) places great emphasis on school attendance and it is a high priority for Trustees, Governors and all Leadership Teams.

When the Trust was first formed an early appointment from the Local Authority of a highly experienced Educational Welfare Officer to work with senior staff dealing with attendance and related issues. That emphasis has continued as the Trust has grown.

All of our current academies operate in low wage economy, high employment area, an area of deprivation and high proportion low aspiration families.

Our two secondary academies are also non-selective schools in an area where 30% attend grammar schools. In addition, there is a very high percentage of young people would travel considerable distances to attend our academies. Both of our secondary academies have catchment areas that are very large. There is little or no public transport, which often means the distances pupils travel are often large and difficult sustain. These factors increase the responsibility of our academies to be innovative in finding solutions to improve our attendance.

The Trust was making very good progress in improving attendance across our academies, two factors have impacted on attendance during the last 2 to 3 years. Firstly, Covid had a massive impact on some parents/carers' attitudes to education and secondly post Brexit impact on the labour market in the area remains significant.

UoLAT is committed to improving social mobility and that is why we have developed the full range of academic and vocational courses, including a highly successful apprenticeship scheme that seeks to provide opportunities for all young people. However, we cannot improve young people's life chances if they do not attend our academies; this is why we are adding more resources to tackling this challenge and looking for innovative approaches. We see it as every member of staff's business to assist in improving attendance. We recognise the barriers to accessing education are wide and complex, both within and beyond the academy gates, and are often specific to individual pupils and/or families. The foundation of securing good attendance is ensuring that the school is a calm, orderly and safe, with a supportive environment. One that is where all pupils want to be, with enjoyable quality lessons and enriched experiences, so they are keen and ready to learn.

The vast majority of pupils and their parent/carers want to attend their academy. Some find it harder than others to attend; these pupils fall into two main categories, those who feel they cannot attend for a variety of reasons, but have parent/carers encouraging them to attend; and a group where parent/carers are quite happy to allow their children to stay at home and place little value on schooling. In both cases, an individual and persistent focus on creating a partnership between the academy, pupil and parent/carer is essential. This requires teamwork from staff to create a consistent approach to finding solutions that tackle barriers, either in the home or at school. Our staff work with the Local Authority Children's Services and other partners to build strong and trusting relationships with pupils and parent/carers to remove any barriers to attendance, by putting the right support in place. In addressing the failure to attend we are aware of potential safeguarding issues that may emerge and that is why working with Children's Services is so vital.

The Trust makes the pledge to focus on **improving attendance**.

UoLAT sees addressing and **improving attendance** as a team effort; in each academy and working across the Trust, sharing best practice.

All Principals will have a personal target to **improve attendance**.

Since September 2022 each academy must have an area in its development plan related to **improving attendance**.

Attendance must be reported at each meeting of the Board of Trustees and Academy Governing Committee.

The Attendance Policy and Guidance and advice for parent/cares must be available on each academy website, along with clear communication in other academy documentation.

As part of the publicity, we will also ensure: **all parent/carers are aware that having decided to have their child registered at one of our academies, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that academy regularly. This means their child must attend every day that the academy is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend, or being given permission for an absence in advance from the academy.**

In July the Executive Management Board will review progress on improving attendance and report to Trustees in the Autumn Term.

<p>All our academies are different so alongside this introductory Trust Policy Statement. The specific features for each academy are set out below.</p>

1. Expectations & Daily Routines

University Academy Holbeach is committed to providing a full and efficient education for all pupils. The school believes that excellent attendance (97%+) is essential and important to ensure the learning, achievement and keeping all our young people safe and well. The school, with the support of parents/guardians, is committed to ensuring that all pupils achieve maximum possible attendance and achieve their full potential. That any problems or issues preventing this are acted upon as quickly as possible, as this is in everyone's interest.

The team responsible for the overall approach to attendance at University Academy Holbeach is: -

Principal - Miss S Paige

Attendance Champion - Miss S Paige

Attendance Team - Mr M Vayro, Education Welfare Officer

Miss E Lawson and Mrs H Waller, Attendance Officer

University Academy Holbeach expects from all pupils and parents/guardians:

- That all pupils attend school on a regular basis and this is encouraged by parents/guardians.
- That all pupils understand the importance of an excellent attendance record (97%+) to ensure progress and parents/guardians encourage and support this as a positive part of growing up.
- That all pupils are punctual to school and registration (Registration is 8:40 am), so that they can be greeted by their Learning Coordinators and Form Tutors to help them prepare themselves for the school day.
- That parents/guardians contact the school on each day of absence as soon as they know their child is unable to attend, by 8:30 am or as is reasonably possible either by using the 'EduLinkOne' App or emailing attendance@uah.org.uk or telephoning on 01406 423042.
- That all pupils are punctual to all lessons and properly equipped and prepared for learning.
- That all pupils/parents/guardian inform their child's tutor or a member of staff of any reason or problem that may prevent them from attending school.
- That pupils are not absent for minor ailments, such as 'feeling unwell', 'a bit of a headache' etc.
- That, in the event of absence, pupils catch up on missed work by seeing their class teacher and/or accessing the VLE Lesson Board
- That any family time away is kept to school holidays.
- That parents/guardians write to the Principal at least 15 school days before an absence that has to be taken during term time explaining any possible exceptional circumstance.
- That parents/guardians arrange appointments outside of school hours, where possible.
- Where appointments cannot be made outside of school hours, parents/guardians support pupils to attend school before and after an appointment, where possible
- That parents/guardians notify the school in advance if an absence is required for a religious observance
- That parents/guardians keep the school informed of any changes of family situation, telephone numbers and addresses.
- That parents/guardians keep the school informed of all adults to be contacted in the event of absences or an emergency.

Parents/guardians and pupils can expect:

- Accurate completion of the online registration system (SIMS) during the school day, specifically morning and afternoon (P4) registration.

- That registers are monitored throughout the day, so that parents/guardians can be contacted via an automated system to make them aware of any absence, which we have not been notified about in advance or where a child is absent from a lesson. This is in order to safeguard all pupils. The school will contact the child's parent/guardian to make them aware of any absence. In some cases parents/guardians may be contacted by a member of school staff.
- If a parent/guardian cannot be reached by telephone, a letter will be sent home. If a young person is absent for 3 or more days with no reason being provided, then the Attendance Team may consider visiting the family home.
- Where school is made aware of an issue this will be dealt with appropriately and in a timely manner.
- Fair and consistent application of our policy to meet the needs of all pupils, accounting for those with specific needs.
- Consideration of the individual needs of pupils and their families who have specific barriers to attendance.
- In the development and implementation of this policy, we will consider our obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- Will be sent this policy with any initial information when pupils join the Academy and reminded of it at the beginning of each school year and when it is updated.

The school encourages attendance in the following ways:

- Verbal praise for individuals and tutor groups by the tutor, the Attendance Team, Learning Coordinator/Assistant Learning Coordinator or members of the Senior Management Team.
- Written recognition on pupil reports.
- The rewarding of 'house points' for each week of full attendance.
- A class shield is awarded each week to the tutor group in each year with the highest attendance.
- Each term the tutor group in each year with the highest attendance is awarded a prize. This is usually a box of chocolates.
- Rewards are organized throughout the year for individual pupils who have achieved at least 97%+ attendance.
- Individual pupils who have achieved 100% attendance for the term are entered in a raffle for which a variety of prizes are available.
- Individual pupils who achieve 100% attendance during KS3 and KS4 will be awarded a special certificate.
- At the end of the academic year all pupils who have achieved 100% attendance for the year are presented with a certificate and are entered in a raffle for which a prize is available.
- Tutor and Learning Coordinator prizes may also take into account excellent or improved attendance.

The school recognises that it may be necessary to involve outside agencies in an attempt to improve attendance.

The School works closely alongside the Local Authority. The Local Authority may be required to deal with matters concerning behavioural problems, exclusions and child protection. The school may enlist the services of other agencies for individual cases for example Social Services, Local Authority support services, the Early Help team, Emotional Based School Avoidance (EBSA) pathway, Educational Psychologist, Healthy Minds, CAMHS and any other relevant agency.

The School understands the difficulties that face young carers, and will endeavour to identify any young person who is a young carer at the earliest opportunity. A caring and flexible approach will be taken to the needs of the young carer and each pupil will be examined on a case-by-case basis, involving other agencies if appropriate.

Mid-Year Admissions

As soon as a child has been offered a place in the academy, we will add the child to the school admissions register on the agreed start date.

In accordance with regulation 12(3), (4) and (5) of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, we will notify the local authority within 5 days of adding a pupil's name to the admission register and provide the local authority with all the information held within the admission register about your child.

We expect the parent/carer to arrange admissions with ourselves within seven school days of the date of your offer letter of a school place. If your child fails to attend on the agreed or notified date, it is the academy's responsibility to establish the reason for absence. If contact is made and the reason given for your child's absence is unacceptable, then the absence must be unauthorised and the relevant non-school attendance procedures followed. Contact will be made with the parent by telephone call, text message, email, posting letters to last known address, home visit or open letter through the door, contacting previous school to check if the family is still there or asking previous school for any additional contact details.

If no contact is made, the academy will follow their non-school attendance procedures. This could result in the academy reporting your child as a Child Missing in Education.

Child Missing in Education

The Academy **must** send a Child Missing in Education file within 5 days of the admissions notification or within 5 days of an un-authorised absence where the Academy has had no contact from parent/carer and the family have moved from their current address.

The Academy **must** keep trying to contact the family via all means possible.

If after the 20 days of reasonable enquiries by the academy, the academy will request the local authority to remove the child from their roll.

DFE School Admissions Code September 2021

Withdrawing an offer or a place

*2.13 An admission authority **must not** withdraw an offer unless it has been offered in error, a parent has not responded within a reasonable period of time, or it is established that the offer was obtained through a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application. Where the parent has not responded to the offer, the admission authority (the Academy) **must** give the parent a further opportunity to respond and explain that the offer may be withdrawn if they do not. Where an offer is withdrawn on the basis of misleading information, the application **must** be considered afresh, and a right of appeal offered if an offer is refused.*

As part of the mid-year admissions process, the attendance record of your child will be confirmed with their previous school/academy.

5. Deletion of names from the Admissions Register

A pupil's name can only be deleted from the admission register for a reason set out in regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended. A pupil's names must not be removed for any other reason and doing so would constitute off-rolling.

Leavers

Parent/carers are required to complete a leavers form stating their new address and new school details. On the days the child starts their new school contact is made with the new school to confirm

their attendance. Paperwork is then transferred and the child removed from our roll. The Local Authority is also informed of the child's movements.

2. Data & Monitoring

The school monitors attendance in the following ways:

- The Principal, working with the Attendance team, has overall responsibility for authorising absences, where there is a valid reason or where there is an exceptional circumstance for a term time absence.
- Learning Coordinators and the Attendance Team meet weekly to track attendance weekly, each half-term, and termly. There is also day to day discussion around specific issues.
- There is regular contact between tutors and Learning Coordinators where specific concerns are raised.
- Staff monitor individual pupil attendance and punctuality to every lesson, concerns are raised initially to the Head of Department and then on to the Year Team.
- Parents/guardians can monitor their child's attendance via the app 'EdulinkOne'. This also provides an alert for a weekly attendance of 100%.
- Tutors will follow up on all absences, will discuss attendance on the child's return and make sure that we have been informed by the parents as to the reason for the absence.
- Using the attendance data, the Learning Coordinator/Attendance Team will identify pupils who have been absent for 3 or more days in a 6-week period and may initially meet with the young person in school. A letter will also be sent home and the young person's attendance will be reviewed weekly for the next four weeks and the impact measured via their weekly meetings.
- If the pupil continues to have further weekly absences the Attendance Team will arrange a School Attendance Panel Meeting with their parent/guardian. An Attendance Panel Meeting will discuss the issues and provide an action plan moving forward. This will be reviewed weekly and the impact measured via the weekly meetings.
- If the pupil continues to have further weekly absences then an Early Help Assessment (EHA) will be completed with an aim to meet any identified 'needs of support' and a plan made to implement appropriate and necessary actions. Parents/guardians may be advised to seek support from their doctor.
- At any time, it may be deemed, necessary to make a home visit, especially if the School has not been notified of a young person's absence or the School is struggling to make contact with the parent/guardian
- If all actions are completed or parents choose not to engage with the support offered. the case will be discussed further, with further action planned which may include consideration of an Education Supervision Order, issuing of a Fixed Penalty Notice or referral to Local Authority to consider taking legal action e.g. prosecution.

The national codes enable schools to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way which complies with the regulations. They are also used for collecting statistics through the school Census system. The data helps schools, local authorities and the Government to gain a greater understanding of the level of, and the reasons for, absence. The codes are:

- Registration Code / \: Present in school / =am \ =pm
- Code L: Late arrival before the register has closed
- Code U: A pupil arriving in school after the register has closed
- Code B: Present at an Off-site educational activity

- Code D: Dual registered – at another educational establishment
- Code V: Educational visit or trip
- Code C: Leave of absence authorised by the Academy
- Code E: Excluded but no alternative provision made
- Code H: Holiday authorised by the Academy
- Code I: Illness (not medical or dental appointments)
- Code M: Medical or dental appointments
- Code R: Religious observance
- Code G: Holiday not authorised by the Academy or in excess of the period determined by the Executive Principal
- Code N: Reason for absence not yet provided
- Code O: Absent from school without authorisation
- Code Y: Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

3. Escalation of Procedures

Attendance - everyone's responsibility

We need to listen, understand, empathise and support individual pupils to attend school, but not to tolerate poor attendance where there is not a valid reason.

For the year		Form Tutors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warm welcome • Attendance matters raised in tutor time • Request notes for unauthorised absences and place in Tutor Folder to have SIMs updated • Praise for those with 100% attendance that week • Record attendance in Planner and whether they have been Present or Absent this week • Talk with <i>yellow and red</i> groups to offer motivation
0-2 Days absent	100% - 99%		
3-7.5 Days absent	98% - 96%		
8-13 Days absent	95% - 93%	Assistant Learning Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warm welcome • Praise for those with 100% attendance that week • Meetings with pupil and possibly with parents/guardians to discuss any issues and to devise an individual plan • To monitor identified pupils' attendance and raise concerns with Learning Coordinator for weekly meetings
15-19 Days absent	92% - 90%	Learning Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warm welcome • Praise for those with 100% attendance that week • Meetings with pupil and possibly with parents/guardians to discuss any issues • Weekly Meetings with Attendance Team to raise concerns, monitor and track impact • School Attendance Panel meetings with parents/guardians and Attendance Team • Home Visit by Attendance Team • Consider completion of an Early Help Assessment to assess individual unmet 'needs of support' and develop an individual plan
19+ Days absent	Under 90%		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Praise for those with 100% attendance that week • Consider completion of an Early Help Assessment to assess individual unmet 'needs of support' and develop an individual plan • Home Visit by Attendance Team • Possible involvement with other agencies to offer support

The school recognises that it may be necessary to involve outside agencies in an attempt to improve attendance.

The school works closely alongside the Local Authority. The Local Authority may be required to deal with matters concerning behavioural problems, exclusions and child protection.

The school may enlist the services of other agencies for individual cases for example Social Services, Local Authority support services, the Early Help team, Educational Psychologist, Healthy Minds, CAMHS and any other relevant agency. Usually, when we complete an Early Help Assessment we will consider various strategies and resources, and will also determine which agencies we may refer to, including Social Care. We use the Early Help Assessment as the referral document. Some agencies and strategies may require their own specific documentation to be completed.

Reduced Timetable

All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In the very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a pupil's best interests, there may be a need for a temporary reduced timetable to meet their individual needs.

A reduced timetable:

- Must only be in place for the shortest time necessary and not be treated as a long-term solution.
- Should have a time limit by which point the pupil is expected to attend full time.
- Should be regularly reviewed with the pupil and their parents

In agreeing to a Reduced Timetable Agreement, a school has agreed to a pupil being absent from school and therefore must treat the absence as authorised.

All Reduced Timetable Agreements must be notified to the local authority every 4 calendar weeks via the online notification survey.

We will consider the needs of every child and should we consider a short reduced timetable will bring attendance back to being considerably good and meet the needs of the child, an attendance team meeting will decide the best way forward.

Unauthorised Leave of Absence

The Principal is responsible for deciding whether the reason provided for any absence is valid. If it is deemed that the absence is not a valid one, it will be coded as 'unauthorised'. The Education Welfare Officer will inform parents/guardians that any future absences will be unauthorised unless a valid reason is provided. Leave of Absence requested during term time to take pupils on holiday will be unauthorised unless there is an exceptional circumstance for the request.

A pupil should arrive at School for registration at 8:40 each day. If a Pupil arrives after 8:45 they will be marked as arriving to school Late. If a Pupil arrives after 9:10 they will be recorded as being Unauthorised Late (U code) unless we have been provided of a valid reason for their late arrival, when another appropriate absence code will be used. If a Pupil is persistently late then the usual procedures for absence will be followed.

Penalty Notices issued for non-school attendance

The Local Authority will be responsible for deciding whether a Penalty Notice is issued.

In law an offence occurs if a parent/guardian fails to secure a child's attendance at a school at which they are a registered pupil and that absence is not authorised by the school. Penalty notices supplement the existing sanctions currently available under Section 444 Education Act 1996 (prosecution of parents), or Section 36 of The Children Act 1989 (Education Supervision Order) to enforce attendance at school where necessary.

Circumstances where a Penalty Notice may be issued

A Penalty Notice may only be issued in cases of unauthorised absence. The issue of a Penalty Notice may be considered appropriate in the following circumstances:

- (a) overt truancy (including pupils caught on truancy sweeps)
- (b) parentally-condoned/unauthorised absences
- (c) excessive delayed return from extended holidays without prior school agreement
- (d) persistent late arrival at school (after the Register has closed)

The amount payable on issue of a penalty notice is £60 if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice, rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days of receipt of the notice. Full details of the Code of Conduct relating to Penalty Notices are available from Lincolnshire County Council.

If there is no improvement in the young person's attendance following the issuing of an FPN or the level of non-attendance is a real concern, this then may result in a Formal Warning being issued. Following further non-attendance, a final warning will be issued and a Legal Report completed. This Legal Report will then be submitted to the local authority for further action.

Prosecutions by local authorities

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, the parents/guardians may be guilty of an offence and can be prosecuted by the local authority. Local authorities must conduct all investigations in accordance with the Police and Criminal Evidence (PACE) Act 1984. Local authorities have the power to prosecute parents who fail to comply with a school attendance order (section 443 of the Education Act 1996) or fail to ensure their child's regular attendance at a school (section 444 of the Education Act 1996).

The fines available to the courts if parents are found guilty of the section 444(1) offence include a level 3 fine of up to £1,000. If they are found guilty of the section 444(1A) the fine is at level 4, up to £2,500 and the court can also sentence them to imprisonment for up to three months. Local authorities have the power to prosecute parents of pupils found in a public place during school hours after being excluded from school. The fine is a level 3 fine of up to £1,000.