



Attendance Policy

Statement of Intent

The Academy aims to work together with parents and carers to ensure that all children registered attend both regularly and punctually; subsequently they will be able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available. The Academy expects attendance to be 100% unless there are exceptional or unavoidable reasons for absence.

Good attendance is important because:

- Statistics show a direct link between underachievement and poor attendance.
- Regular attenders make better progress, both socially and academically.
- Regular attenders find Academy routines and school work easier to cope with.
- Regular attenders find learning more satisfying.
- Regular attenders have an easier transfer to secondary school.

Parents' and Carers' Responsibilities

Parents and carers have the primary responsibility for ensuring that children of compulsory school age (i.e. 5 to 16 year olds) receive a suitable education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. It is the responsibility of the Local Authority (LA) to ensure that parents and carers meet these responsibilities.

Parents and carers should ensure that if their child is to be absent from school for any unavoidable reason such as sickness they should inform the Academy on the first day of non-attendance by 9.15am when registers close (in line with ASCA schools). This may be done by 'phone, by letter or in person.

Parents and carers may not authorise their child's absence – only the head teacher can do this on the basis of the explanation provided by the parents or carers; should parents or carers fail to prove a satisfactory reason for their child's absence the Academy will record such absence as unauthorised.

Parents and carers should ensure that their child arrives at the Academy in time for the start of registration (9.00am). If a child arrives after 9.00am his or her parents or carers should report directly to the School Office and sign into the Late Absence Log.

It is important that children arrive on time for school as the first 10 – 15 minutes of the school day are often used to give out instructions or organise school work for the rest of the day. If children miss this short but vital session, their work for the whole day may be affected or they may miss an intervention which has been planned to address gaps in learning. Late arrivals are disruptive to the class and it is often embarrassing for the child involved.

Leave of Absence Requests

The Government brought in new legislation from 1st September 2013 regarding parental requests for leave of absence. Amendments have been made to the 2006 regulations in the Education Regulations 2013.



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Amendments to the 2006 regulations remove references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. The amendments make it clear that head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are 'exceptional circumstances'.

The Governing Body have agreed the following exceptional circumstances:

- If a parent, grandparent or other close relative is seriously/terminally ill.
- If there has recently been a death or significant other trauma in the family.
- Housing crisis.

Absence that is due to religious observance must also be authorized

Please note: there is no longer a provision for head teachers to authorise term-time holidays. Families are advised to take their trips during school holidays. Children and families have 175 days off school to spend time together, including weekends and school holidays. Holidays during term-time will result in the absence being recorded as unauthorised which may result in a fixed penalty.

The governors recognise that regular attendance at the Academy is essential for children to make progress. Even one or two days absence from school affects progress as children miss teaching input which is sequential.

As a result, the Governing Body have revised the Academy's Absence Request Form, in line with the Education Regulations 2013. The form is available from the School Office, which parents and carers must use to request a leave of absence. Should you require further copies, these can be accessed via the Academy's website ('Policies and Prospectus' section): <http://www.upwood.cambs.sch.uk/>.

Schools are unable to grant leave of absence:

- If a child's attendance record over the previous 20 week period is less than 95% - even if any previous absence was due to unavoidable causes such as illness.
- If the period of leave coincides with the start of term, or is near to, or coincides with assessments, SATs or other significant events in the school calendar, such as transition arrangements.

If leave is taken without authorisation, it will be recorded in the school attendance register as Unauthorised Absence (the same as truancy), and the matter may be referred to the Academy's Education Welfare Officer.

Academy Responsibilities

The Academy will record and monitor attendance in accordance both with the statutory requirements and with the principle that regular, uninterrupted attendance is vital to a child's educational progress.

Pupil registration – the head teacher is required to maintain two registers: an admission register (known as the school roll) and an attendance register. The admission register shall contain a list of all pupils at the Academy (see the school's management information system, SIMs). The head teacher must ensure that an attendance register for all pupils on the school roll is taken twice a day; once at the start of the morning session and once at the start of the afternoon session. An entry must be made in the attendance register for all pupils of compulsory school age who are on the Academy's admission roll. The register must be marked either as present, engaged in an approved



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educational activity away from the school site or absent. If the pupil is absent the register must say whether or not the absence has been authorised by the Academy.

Registers will be called at 9.00am and at 1.30pm for both Key Stages. Registers will close at 9.15am and at 1.35pm. Any child arriving after the closing of the register will be recorded as 'late' for that session.

Teachers will complete registers in accordance with the Academy's policy. The head teacher will ensure registers are completed accurately and efficiently.

The head teacher will meet with the School Secretary weekly to ensure that registers are being satisfactorily maintained and to ensure that any potential attendance difficulties are identified at an early stage, including lateness.

Should a class teacher have particular concerns about an individual child's attendance or punctuality, then the class teacher should speak to the head teacher in the first instance as there may be child protection concerns related to the attendance issue.

If a child is absent the class teacher will enter the appropriate code in the register. If no explanation has been received from the child's parent or carer the School Office staff will endeavour to make contact with the parents or carers the same day, wherever possible. If this proves impossible the School Office staff should refer the matter to the head teacher.

All absence notes from parents and carers are dated and signed by the School Secretary when the absence has been entered into SIMs. Only notes concerning absences about which there are concerns or queries should be brought to the attention of the head teacher.

The School Secretary notifies class teachers of impending absence on the school registers to allow them time to plan for curriculum changes etc.

The head teacher will regularly collect attendance data and will use this data during meetings with the Academy's Education Welfare Officer. These meetings will agree on attendance thresholds and targets and will identify respective tasks and follow-up actions for both the Academy and the EWO.

The head teacher is required to tell the LA if a pupil fails to attend regularly or has been absent for a continuous period of ten days and the absence is treated as unauthorised.

Reporting – the Academy will submit to the Department for Education (DfE) details of the level of absence within the school in terms of authorised and unauthorised absence as requested.

The Academy will employ a number of strategies to help, encourage and support children and parents and carers to achieve regular, punctual attendance:-

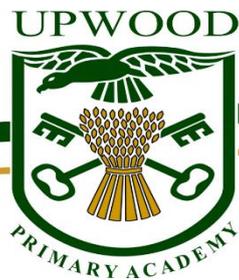
- the Senior Leadership Team will communicate regularly with parents and carers on attendance matters;



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- the head teacher will encourage a good working relationship with parents and carers by publicising attendance in the Home-School Agreement;
- the Senior Leadership Team will offer pastoral support to parents and carers who are finding it difficult to achieve regular attendance;
- appropriate personal encouragement or congratulations will be offered to individual children who improve their rates of attendance.



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