



Attendance Policy 2023/24

| Attendance Policy | |
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| Responsible Committee: | Local Advisory Board |
| Date approved by the LAB: | September 2023 |
| Next review date: | September 2024 |

Rationale

Regular attendance at our school is vital if children are to make good progress and to benefit from the opportunities that the school offers. We expect children to achieve a minimum of 96% attendance.

Milton primary Academy believes that in order to facilitate teaching and learning, good attendance is essential. Pupils cannot achieve their full potential if they do not regularly attend school.

We understand that barriers to attendance are complex, and that some pupils find it harder than others to attend school; therefore, we will continue to promote a safe and supportive environment at our school, as well as strong and trusting relationships with pupils, parents and carers.

We take a whole-school approach to securing good attendance, and recognise the impact that our efforts in other areas – such as the curriculum, behaviour standards, bullying, SEND support, pastoral support, and the effective use of resources such as pupil premium – can have on improving pupil attendance

Milton Primary Academy recognises that attendance is a safeguarding matter and that poor attendance may indicate that a child's welfare is at risk.

Aims of this policy at Milton Primary Academy we aim to:

- Promote a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which children feel safe, secure and valued.
- Ensure that all children attend our academy for the maximum time possible and at least to the level of national average attendance.
- Create a culture in which good attendance and punctuality is recognised as the norm, and is valued by the academy.
- Ensure that effective attendance practice is understood and implemented by all staff and is closely linked to safeguarding practice.
- Promote punctuality in attendance.
- Support parents and carers in their legal duty to ensure that children of compulsory school age attend school regularly.
- Apply our policy to all nursery and reception age children in order to promote good habits at an early age.
- Establish a pattern of monitoring attendance and ensure consistency in recognising achievement and dealing with difficulties.
- Recognise the key role of all staff in promoting good attendance.
- Intervening early and working with other agencies to ensure the health and safety of our pupils.

To these ends, this policy is designed to:

- Promote regular attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence.
- Ensure every child has access to the full time education to which they are entitled.
- Act early to address patterns of absence.

Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the school attendance guidance from the Department for Education (DfE) and has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (As amended)
- The Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014
- Children and Young Persons Act 1963
- DfE (2022) 'Working together to improve school attendance'
- DfE (2022) 'Keeping children safe in education 2023'
- DfE (2016) 'Children Missing Education'
- DfE (2023) Summary of Responsibilities where Mental Health is Affecting Attendance

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- SEND Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy

Local Authority

The Government expects local authorities to have a Code of Conduct in place so that the full range of measures for improving attendance are available to academies. Regular academy attendance is both a legal requirement and essential if children are to achieve better outcomes in education and maximise the opportunities available to them. Stoke-on-Trent academies consistently work towards a goal of 100 per cent attendance for all children in the academy.

Stoke on Trent City Council have released their Code of Conduct for issuing Penalty Notices 2018, for irregular academy attendance. The purpose of the local Code of Conduct is to ensure that Penalty Notices are issued consistently and fairly across the Local Authority area, in accordance with the relevant legislation, and that suitable arrangements are in place for the administration of the scheme.

Milton Primary Academy has adopted the SOTCC Code of Conduct for the issuing of Penalty Notices (Appendix B)

Roles and responsibilities

The headteacher is responsible for:

- The day-to-day implementation and management of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.
- Appointing a member of the SLT to the attendance lead role.
- Ensuring all parents are aware of the academy's attendance expectations and procedures.
- Ensuring that every pupil has access to full-time education and will act as early as possible to address patterns of absence.

Staff are responsible for:

- Following this policy and ensuring pupils do so too.
- Ensuring this policy is implemented fairly and consistently.
- Modelling good attendance behaviour.
- Using their professional judgement and knowledge of individual pupils to inform decisions as to whether any welfare concerns should be escalated.
- Taking the attendance register at the relevant times during the school day.

The attendance lead staff are responsible for:

- The overall strategic approach to attendance in school.
- Developing a clear vision for improving attendance.
- Monitoring attendance and the impact of interventions.
- Analysing attendance data and identifying areas of intervention and improvement.
- Communicating with pupils and parents with regard to attendance.
- Following up on incidents of persistent poor attendance.
- Informing the LA of any pupil being deleted from the admission and attendance registers

Pupils are responsible for:

- Attending their lessons and any agreed activities when at the school.
- Arriving punctually to lessons when at the academy.

Parents are responsible for:

- Providing accurate and up-to-date contact details.
- Providing the school with at least two emergency contact numbers.
- Updating the school if their details change.
- The attendance of their children .
- Promoting good attendance with their children.

Attendance Register and Expectations

By law, all schools are required to keep an attendance register, and all children must be placed on this register. The attendance register will be taken twice daily, once at the start of the day and again straight after lunchtime.

- Parents must ensure that their children arrive at school on time (this includes Y6 children who walk).
- Our site opens at 8:30am and the doors open at 8:45am - children need to arrive between 8:45am and 9:00am.
- At 9:00am the doors and the gates are locked - this is the start of the school day.
- Children and parents arriving after 9:00am must report to the school office and register pupils on the arrival, a reason will need to be provided to the office staff who will make a record of this.
- The academy will carry out unannounced late gates, sometimes accompanied by our partner Education Welfare Officer.
- Persistent lateness is unacceptable and will be challenged by school leaders and external agencies.

Arriving late to school means that children miss important input from teachers which impacts upon their learning. Often it can be very distressing for a child to arrive late. It is also disruptive for the teachers and other class members. See (Appendix A) for the DfE attendance codes.

Absence Procedures

The school will always follow up any absences in order to:

- Ascertain the reason for the absence.
- Ensure any necessary safeguarding actions are taken.
- Identify whether the absence can be authorised or not.

Reporting Absence

- On the first day of absence, parents/carers must report absence by verbal communication to a member of staff either in person, on the telephone (01782234780 - absence line 1) or by emailing info@milton.windsoracademytrust.org.uk. We ask that the absence is reported by 9:00am - the pupil's name, class and reason for absence must be reported.
- Absence due to illness will usually be authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness. When the school is concerned about the authenticity of the illness, we will ask parents to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card. If we are not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised in this instance parents and carers will be notified.
- Unexplained absences will be followed-up by school staff.
- Following the daily absence check, a home visit may take place at the discretion of the Headteacher. An unannounced visit will be carried out by members of the school's welfare team/school staff when the school deems it necessary. These visits will continue until absence information has been secured.
- The school will liaise with other external agencies including social care, if a safeguarding concern is identified.
- The school will also seek advice from the Education Welfare Service to consider further action during a period of absence.
- PUPILS MUST HAVE at least 2 EMERGENCY CONTACTS ON OUR OFFICE SYSTEM in line with KCSIE 2023.

Medical or dental appointments

We expect parents and carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Advance notice is required for authorising these absences and evidence of appointments must be provided. It is an expectation that the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary. The absence will be marked as unauthorised for pupils who do not attend school around their medical appointments when able.

Children Missing in Education

The DfE guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' states 'schools should put in place appropriate safeguarding responses for children who go missing from school, particularly on repeat occasions. The school uses a checklist when a child leaves the setting to ensure that all actions are followed up and we are able to track movement of pupils. The academy will liaise

with appropriate outside agencies such as the Education Welfare Service, the Admissions Team and the local contact for home education should we have concerns that a pupil is not attending a school or setting.

Reporting to parents and carers

Milton Primary Academy will report pupil attendance to parents and carers termly through the Behaviour Report.

Leave of absence during term-time

At Milton Primary Academy, we consider carefully term dates to ensure where possible families are able to enjoy full weeks in and out of school. Leave of absence during term time will not be granted unless 'exceptional circumstances' are considered, this will be granted entirely at the Headteacher's discretion. When requesting a holiday during term time parents and carers must complete the holiday request form (Appendix C). No holidays will be agreed. Stoke-on-Trent will issue a penalty notice fine of £60 per parent per child, if paid within 21 days, going up to £120 if paid within 22 to 28 days.

Legal sanctions

Milton Primary Academy will refer parents of compulsory school age children to Stoke-on-Trent's Education Welfare Service who will issue a penalty notice.

PA (Persistent Absence)

There are various groups of pupils who may be vulnerable to high absence and being classed as a PA pupil.

- Children open to CIN, CP and Early Help
- LAC and PLAC
- Young carers
- Pupils who are eligible for FSM
- Pupils with EAL
- Pupils with SEND
- Pupils who have faced bullying and/or discrimination

The school will use a number of methods to help support pupils at risk of PA to attend.

These include:

- Offering meet and greets for pupils who may be anxious or require support coming in.
- Child-led attendance discussions.
- Establishing plans to remove barriers and provide additional support to families and children.
- Making regular contact with families to discuss progress.
- Assessing whether additional support is required and if any external agencies can provide this.
- Considering what support for re-engagement might be needed with an individual attendance plans if appropriate

Intervention

- Letter 1 – Cause For Concern (additional version for EYFS)
- Letter 2 –Request for medical evidence and an attendance clinic to be held with the EWO, and a member of the welfare team or SLT where appropriate.
- Level 3 - Statutory Referral and Penalty Notice Warning Letters
- Late letters

Promoting Good Attendance

- Classes whose weekly attendance is 98% or higher are rewarded with an additional 10 minutes play.
- Sharing attendance figures on the school newsletter. Each term, an attendance assembly is held where:
- Colour banded certificates for gold, silver and bronze attenders are presented.
- Postcodes are sent home for improved attendance.

Appendix A

Absence and attendance codes

| | |
|--|--|
| I | Present in school morning session |
| \ | Present in school afternoon session |
| L | Late arrival before the register has closed |
| Present at approved off-site educational activity | |
| B | Off-site educational activity |
| D | Dual registered |
| J | At an interview with prospective employers, or another educational establishment |
| P | Participating in a supervised sport activity |
| V | Educational visit or trip |
| W | Work experience |
| Not Present in school | |
| C | Leave of absence authorised by the school |
| E | Excluded but no alternative provision made |
| H | Holiday authorised by the school |
| I | Illness (not medical or dental appointments) |
| M | Medical or dental appointments |
| R | Religious observance |
| S | Study leave |
| T | Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence |
| G | Holiday not authorised by the school or in excess of the period determined by the head teacher |
| N | Reason for absence not yet provided |
| O | Absent from school without authorisation |
| U | Arrived in school after registration closed |
| Administrative codes | |
| X | Not required to be in school |
| Y | Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances |
| Z | Pupil not on admission register |
| # | Planned whole or partial school closure |


Appendix B

Stoke-on-Trent Code of Conduct

A copy is displayed in the school office.

Appendix C

Leave of Absence Request Form



MILTON PRIMARY ACADEMY

A part of Windsor Academy Trust

Headteacher
Mrs R. Bailey

Place of registration: England

Leek Road, Milton,
Stoke-on-Trent, ST2 7AF

01782 234780

info@milton.windsoracademytrust.org.uk

www.miltonprimaryacademy.org.uk

Milton Primary Academy

Application for Leave of Absence During Term Time

This form must be completed 4 weeks prior to the requested leave

The Education (Pupil Registration England) Regulations 2006 make clear that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term-time unless there are **exceptional circumstances**.

Unauthorised "Leave of Absence" could result in legal action and a Penalty Notice being issued. The penalty for each parent is £60 for each child, if paid within 21 days of receipt of the Penalty Notice. The penalty increases to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days of receipt of the Penalty Notice, per parent, per child.

If a penalty is not paid in full by the end of the 28 day period, the Education Welfare Team at Stoke-on-Trent City Council will either prosecute for the offence for which the Penalty Notice has been issued, or withdraw the Penalty Notice. The prosecution is not for non-payment of the Penalty Notice but is a prosecution for irregular academy attendance (Section 444(1) Education Act 1996).

If the leave is taken without the authorisation of the Headteacher, a Penalty Notice will be issued. The school expects every student to achieve at least 96% attendance. We expect all holidays to be booked during non-term time.

I wish to apply for leave of absence for my child:

Name of Child: Class:

First day of leave requested: Last day of leave requested:

Number of academy days involved:

The exceptional circumstance leading to the request is:

Signed: (parent/carer) Date:

(To be completed by the Headteacher)

The above request is authorised / not authorised, in accordance with the academy's policy and procedure.

Signed: (Headteacher) Date:

Kind regards,
Mrs Rebecca Bailey
Headteacher

Together We Achieve Our Best

