

Attendance policy

Weavers Academy



*Creative
Education
Trust*



Approved by:

Luke Bowers, Director
of Performance

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1. Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Promoting good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

We expect every pupil to attend every session unless there is a legitimate reason for absence.

2. Legislation and guidance

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

- Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

It also refers to:

- [School census guidance](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The Creative Education Trust Board and Academy Council

The governing boards are responsible for:

- › Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- › Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- › Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- › Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- › Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- › Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy through both the Academy Council and the Academy Improvement Board

3.2 The Principal/Headteacher

The Principal/Headteacher is responsible for:

- › Implementation of this policy at the academy
- › Establishing and maintaining an effective culture of attendance at the academy
- › Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governing boards
- › Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- › Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- › Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary
- › Agreeing any part-time timetables within the school

3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- › Leading attendance across the school
- › Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- › Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- › Having an oversight of data analysis
- › Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- › Building relationships with parents/carers to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- › Creating intervention reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- › Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Deborah Noakes and can be contacted via 01933 222830 or Deborah.noakes@weaversacademy.org.uk.

3.4 The attendance improvement team

The school attendance improvement team is responsible for:

- › Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)

- › Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- › Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher
- › Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- › Advising the Principal/Headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

3.5 Class teachers/form tutors

[Class teachers/form tutors] are responsible for recording attendance in a timely manner and for each session/lesson as determined by academy leaders. This must be undertaken using the correct codes, and submitted on the defined academy reporting system (e.g. Arbor).

3.6 School administration support staff

School administration support staff will:

- › Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- › Transfer calls from parents/carers to the appropriate member of staff in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

3.7 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- › Make sure their child attends every session on time
- › Call the school to report their child's absence before 8am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence), and advise when they are expected to return
- › Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- › Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day

3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- › Arrive at school every day on time
- › Attend every session punctually
- › Be prepared for learning, in line with the academy policy

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil 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

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- › Whether the absence is authorised or not
- › The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- › The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8.35am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8.35am and will be kept open until 9.05am. The register for the second session will be taken at 12.10 and will be kept open until 12.40pm.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8am or as soon as practically possible by calling the schools designated absence line or registering the absence on the Arbor App staff (see also section 7).

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

We recommend you use the NHS guidance 'is my child too ill to attend school?'

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

4.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

You should request leave of absence by emailing your son/daughters appointment card and the time required away from school to attendance@weaversacademy.org.uk.

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

With all appointments, we expect the child to attend before and after the appointment, and be absent for a maximum of 2 hours.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- › Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- › After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

Any pupil arriving late will receive a sanction. This could include a detention where their attendance is crucial. Failure to attend this detention could lead to a further sanction for defiance – including being placed in the schools reset area.

We track and monitor punctuality trends and involve parents in parental meetings when concerns arise.

4.5 Following up unexplained absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- › Send a message to the parent/carer, usually by 9.30am.
- › Call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may dispatch a safeguarding visit to the registered address.
- › Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- › Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session
- › Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving the local authority.

It is considered a safeguarding concern if a parent/carer does not contact us to notify us of absence.

4.6 Reporting to parents/carers

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels via termly reports and a monthly attendance bulletin.

You can use the Arbor app to see your son/daughter's attendance at any time. Alternatively, you can contact the school where the attendance team can support you with this.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The Principal/Headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the Principal/Headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at four weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the school office.

The Principal/headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include but are not limited to:

- › Illness and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- › Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- › Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision

5.2 Legal sanctions

The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by a Principal/Headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

All fixed penalty notices for Weavers Academy are managed by North Northants local authority. The academy does not benefit financially from this action.

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

All Creative Education Trust academies actively promote the importance of good attendance. The following strategies are employed at this academy:

- Focus groups and initiatives
- Notification home
- Parental meetings
- Work with local safeguarding partners
- The use of occupational health assessment services
- Assemblies and tutorial messages
- Prize draws

7. Attendance monitoring

The academy monitors attendance on a daily basis to ensure timely and reliable information can be provided to key stakeholders, and to rapidly respond to any trends or patterns which present themselves.

7.1 Monitoring attendance

The academy will:

- Formally monitor attendance and absence data weekly, half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics.

The Creative Education Trust Board is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It does this through routine reporting to the Academy Improvement Board and Academy Council. These boards hold the Principal/Headteacher to account for the implementation of this

policy in the same way. At these meetings the academy will compare attendance data to the national average for all pupils, year groups and pupil groups. Trends from the previous meetings will also be presented.

Academies where attendance is causing concern will have monthly meetings with the Director of Performance and will have an external review of attendance practices. This will continue until such a time when attendance is no longer a cause for concern.

7.2 Analysing attendance

The academy will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

7.3 Using data to improve attendance

The academy will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to key staff and school leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families
- Present attendance data to both the Academy Improvement Board and the Academy Council on a regular basis to allow additional scrutiny
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

7.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school sessions, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school sessions.

The academy will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance

The academy uses a staged system to ensure all students are supported to attend.

Stage	Threshold	Intervention
1	<p>Any session of absence</p> <p>Category: Expect</p> <p>Voluntary intervention</p>	<p>Universal Support</p> <p>This is the support all students receive to inform them of attendance expectations and to support their regular attendance.</p> <p>For example: tutor discussions, breakfast club, home visits, first day response, morning welcomes, return to school conversations.</p>

2	<p>7 sessions</p> <p>Category: Monitor</p> <p>Voluntary intervention</p>	<p>Early Intervention / Targeted Support.</p> <p>3.5 days of absence during the academic year.</p> <p>Our Pastoral Support Team will provide targeted intervention to children who reach this threshold. This includes discussions about absence, meet and greet, referrals to external agencies and mentoring.</p>
3	<p>7 sessions</p> <p>Category: Listen and Understand</p> <p>Voluntary Intervention</p>	<p>A phone call/message home will be made to notify you of our attendance concern.</p> <p>3.5 days of absence during the academic year.</p> <p>This will allow you to have a conversation with a member of staff about your child's attendance. We are more than happy to discuss any concerns you have no matter how small.</p>
4	<p>14 sessions</p> <p>Category: Facilitate Support</p> <p>Voluntary Intervention</p>	<p>A letter home is sent to notify you of our continued concerns.</p> <p>7 days of absence during the academic year.</p> <p>This letter will contain information relating to absences and will signpost support to increase attendance.</p>
5	<p>20 sessions</p> <p>Category: Formalise Support</p> <p>Statutory Intervention</p>	<p>All adults with parental responsibility will be invited into school to participate in a formal attendance support plan.</p> <p>10 days of absence during the academic year.</p> <p>The purpose of this meeting is to formally identify any barriers leading to the poor attendance of a child. Targets will be set during this meeting which will be reviewed in 4-6 weeks.</p>
6	<p>When required</p> <p>Category: Enforce</p> <p>Statutory Intervention</p>	<p>A referral will be made to the local authority for statutory support in the event of continued low attendance.</p> <p>If attendance does not improve following the attendance support plan.</p> <p>If our support system does not lead to an increase in attendance, we will seek further support from the local authority. The local authority will seek to identify formally the barriers to attendance and the support provided by the school. It is important to be aware that they may take further</p>

		<p>action if they feel absences were not for a statutory reason.</p> <p>Our school does not benefit financially from fixed penalty notices.</p>
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Home visits are conducted each week to have sight of pupils who have not attended recently or to confirm absence in the event we are not satisfied with the reason. We will make home visits if we have safeguarding concerns.

8. Alternative Provision

All professionals have a statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. The tracking and reporting of attendance at alternative provision is an essential component in achieving this.

Children at alternative provision are additionally vulnerable and will be closely monitored. The attendance ambition for children at alternative provision will be the same as they are for any other child.

The SLT member with responsibility for alternative provision are Deborah Noakes.

Most children at alternative provision will be D coded (dual registered at another school) and the academy is ultimately responsible for ensuring their safety and well-being, including home visits when necessary i.e., in the case of non-attendance

The arrangements for monitoring of attendance, contacting of parents and carrying out safe and well checks will form part of a written individual plan, agreed with the child, parents and alternative provider before the child begins their placement.

The alternative provider and the academy must communicate twice per day (AM and PM sessions) regarding attendance to ensure regular and effective information is provided to academy leaders.

Attendance at off-site alternative provision will be monitored daily and we will ensure that swift action is taken when a child does not attend their alternative provision place.

The academy will make regular visits to the alternative provision to meet the child, their link tutor and to check on their well-being, attendance and academic progress.

The senior leader with responsibility for alternative provision will ensure arrangements are in place to formally monitor, report on attendance at alternative provision to SLT on a weekly basis, liaising with the DSL, SENCo, Mental Health Lead, LAC coordinator or other key colleagues as necessary.

Children whose attendance falls below the academy's target will receive support and intervention in line with this policy. The academy will work jointly with the alternative provision to put in place a comprehensive, regularly reviewed, written plan to support better attendance.

9. Policy review arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by the Creative Education Trust Board. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full board.

10. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy

Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances

I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and traveller absence	Pupil from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-

		term/bank holiday/INSET day
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