

ATTENDANCE MATTERS: A Guide for Parents and Carers

At Academy Transformation Trust, we believe **every day in school counts**. Good attendance is vital for pupils to make strong progress, feel confident, and be part of the life of their academy. This guide summarises our Attendance Policy.

Why is attendance important?

Children who attend school regularly:

- Do better academically
- Form stronger friendships
- Are more likely to stay mentally healthy and confident

Even small amounts of missed time can have an impact – just 1 day off every 2 weeks adds up to a whole school year missed by age 16.

What is our attendance expectation?

We expect all children to aim for above **95% attendance**.

Attendance below **90% is classed as 'persistent absence'** and will lead to additional support.

Reporting an absence

Please call your academy **before 9:00am** on the first day your child is absent.

If your child is off for more than one day, keep the academy updated daily unless a return date is known.

If your child is unwell for **5 or more days**, we may ask for medical evidence (e.g. prescription, appointment card).

Authorised vs unauthorised absence

We can only authorise absence for:

- Illness (with appropriate evidence if required)
- Religious observance
- Exceptional family circumstances
- Medical appointments (ideally outside of school hours)

We cannot authorise term-time holidays.

If a holiday is taken without permission, this will be marked as **unauthorised**, and you may receive a **Penalty Notice** from the local authority.

Requesting a leave of absence

All requests must:

- Be submitted **at least 4 weeks in advance**
- Be made **in writing** to the Principal
- Show **exceptional circumstances** (not holidays or travel)

We will always consider individual situations, but approval is at the Principal's discretion and is not guaranteed.

What happens if attendance is a concern?

We will:

- Talk with you to understand any difficulties
- Offer support and make reasonable adjustments where needed
- Work with other professionals if appropriate

In some cases, we may agree a short-term **part-time timetable** (e.g. after illness), but our goal is always a return to **full-time education**.

Penalty Notices and legal action

If attendance does not improve, and no good reason is given, you may be issued a **Penalty Notice**:

- £80 if paid within 21 days
- £160 if paid within 28 days

If not paid, the case may go to court.

Working together

We know that sometimes families face challenges. Please talk to us early – we are here to help. We will always:

- Listen without judgement
- Work with you to remove barriers
- Celebrate improvements

Together, we can help your child thrive.

For full details, please read the complete Attendance Policy, available on our academy website or on request. If you have any questions, please contact your academy's Attendance Officer or Senior Attendance Champion.