



Serlby Park Academy

Attendance Policy

Setting Standards for Success

Date of Last Review/update:	January 2017
Reviewed by:	MC
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1.0 Roles and Responsibilities

The responsibility for the implementation of this policy and provision rests with the Principal. On an operational basis, the management, responsibility and evaluation of this policy will be undertaken by the **Associate Assistant Principal**.

2.0 Suggested Audience

All teaching and support staff, parent/carers and pupils. As part of their academy induction programme or professional development all teaching and support staff will become familiar with the academy's admission procedures.

3.0 Related policies

This policy is part of a suite of policies which should also be referred to:

- Admissions Policy
- Inclusion Policy
- Pastoral organisation
- Behaviour Policy
- Attendance Procedure

4.0 Academy Mission Statement

Setting standards for success

5.0 Introduction

The sponsor, Delta Academies Trust and the Principal are committed to maximising the progress and attainment of every pupil. The Academy will work closely with colleagues in other Delta Academies and with Delta Academies Core Team and other personnel to ensure this statement is fully implemented. The Academy believes sincerely that all students benefit from the education it provides and therefore from regular Academy attendance. Serlby Park Academy will do as much as it can to ensure that all students achieve maximum possible attendance and that any problems, which may impede full attendance, are acted upon as quickly as possible.

6.0 Aims

Serlby Park Academy is committed to maximising educational opportunities and achievement for all students. For students to gain the best from their time at Serlby Park Academy, it is vital that they achieve excellent attendance and punctuality. We

strive for 100% attendance for all students. Our Academy attendance target of 96% is the minimum that we expect for all students. It is recognised that:

- All students of statutory school age have an equal right to access an education in accordance with the National Curriculum regulations.
- No student should be deprived of his/her opportunity to receive an education that meets their needs and personal development.
- In the first instance, it is the responsibility of students and their parents to ensure attendance at Serlby Park Academy as required by law.
- Some students and their parents may need to be supported at some stage in meeting their attendance obligations and responsibilities.
- Situations beyond the control of students and/or parents may impact on attendance. We will, with the agreement and support of parents, work in partnership with external agencies to resolve these.

Above 97%: Less than 6 days absence a year

Excellent attendance. These young people will almost certainly get the best grades they can, leading to better prospects for the future. Pupils will also get into the habit of attending school which will help in the future.

95%: 10 Days absence a year

These pupils are likely to achieve good grades and form a habit of attending school regularly. Pupils who take a 2 week holiday every year can only achieve 95% attendance.

90% and below: 19 days + absence a year

The Government classes young people in this group as 'Persistent Absentees' and it will be almost impossible to keep up with work. Parents of young people in this group could also face the possibility of legal action being taken by the Local Authority.

- Full attendance maximises learning opportunities and research suggests that just **17 days'** absence in any one year = 1 GCSE grade drop in achievement.

Local authorities and all schools have legal powers to use parenting contracts, parenting orders and penalty notices to address poor attendance and behaviour in school. In addition to using these powers, local authorities and schools can develop other practices to improve attendance.

7.0 Expectations

We expect the following from all our students:

- That they attend Serlby Park Academy regularly.
- That they will arrive on time and be appropriately prepared for the day. School starts promptly at 8.30am for secondary students and 8.50am for reception to year 6.
- That they will inform a member of staff of any problem or reason that may prevent them from attending Serlby Park Academy Academy.

We expect the following from parents:

- Ensure that their child attends Serlby Park Academy regularly and that they arrive on time.
- Contact Serlby Park Academy EVERY DAY before 8:25am on 01302 742535 whenever their child is absent, giving details of the reason for the absence and the length of time the child will be away.
- If their child is absent and they see a medical practitioner, please provide the academy with evidence of this on their return (appointment card, prescription packet etc.).
- Contact Serlby Park Academy if problems arise which may keep their child away from the academy so that we can help.
- Not to take family holidays in term time. Term time absences, especially during examination periods, may seriously affect the progress of the child. We do not authorise holidays in term time. If parents / carers remove their child from school during term time for the purpose of a holiday, a Penalty Notice (fine) may be issued.

Parents and students can expect the following from Serlby Park Academy:

- Regular, efficient and accurate recording of attendance.
- Early contact with parents when a student fails to attend the Academy without providing good reason. If your child is absent from school, a member of staff may contact you to see how we can support you to ensure you child is able to come back to school as soon as possible.
- Immediate and confidential action on any problem notified to us.
- We will reward good attendance.

8.0 Encouraging Good Attendance

Attendance is encouraged in the following ways:

- An “open door” policy where parents are encouraged to contact the Academy staff with any concerns regarding attendance.
- Students rewarded for good attendance (Please refer to Attendance Procedure for examples)
- Improvements in attendance shared between students, staff and parents.
- Recording of attendance on individual student reports.

GOOD PRACTICE

At Serlby Park Academy we endeavour to adopt the following elements of good practice as highlighted by research:

- A senior teacher being charged with specific responsibility for student attendance.
- The devising of a sensitive scheme for the immediate follow-up of absentees - e.g. either by texting, telephoning home, home visits or sending out letters to parents or guardians.
- Form tutors, subject teachers, class teachers, Home Liaison Officer and the Pastoral Team ensuring that records of attendance are as accurate as possible and explanations for absence are produced when students return to the academy.
- Learning Managers monitoring the attendance records of tutor groups.
- Learning Managers, Associate Assistant Principal, Primary Inclusion Lead and Head of primary having regular meetings with Home Liaison Officer.
- Rewards introduced for individual students or classes with an excellent attendance record in the form of praise or prizes.
- Consequences being introduced for secondary students who are late.
- Absentees and truants being quietly welcomed back to Serlby Park Academy upon their return and efforts made to reintegrate them socially and academically.
- Attendance monitoring and tracking.

- Partnership with external agencies such as Family Services and Targeted Support

How Parents/Carers can help, for example:

- **Illness** – only keep your child at home for genuine illnesses, not minor ailments. Keeping your child off school with minor ailments such as a headache or slight cold is not acceptable. If you are not sure, send them to school with a note and the Academy can contact you if there is a problem.
- **Medical/dental appointments** – make routine appointments out of school time. If this is not possible, please notify us in advance and ensure that your child attends school both before and after the appointment as appropriate, signing in and out at student reception.
- **Family Holidays** – please arrange holidays during the school holidays, not during term time. The Academy will not authorise any holidays during time term unless there are exceptional circumstances. If parents / carers remove their child from school during term time for the purpose of a holiday, a Penalty Notice (fine) may be issued. **If you feel there are exceptional circumstances please write to the Principal providing full details.*

9.0 Responding to Non-Attendance

- Student is absent from Academy - Parents make contact with Academy. Reason for absence logged on system.
- No parental contact - Absence contact made with parents via phone call, text message or home visit. Social services informed if student is subject to Child Protection Plan. Police may be informed if safeguarding concerns.
- Academy unable to contact parents by third day of absence – Home visit takes place. Social services or the police may be informed if safeguarding concerns.

Persistent Absenteeism (PA):

A student becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 11% or more of their education during the current academic year, regardless of the reason for absence. Absence at this level will have a considerable negative impact to a child's educational prospects and development. Therefore, the Academy requests Parents/Carers full co-operation to support your child's attendance in the best interests of their development.

PA students are tracked and monitored by the Pastoral Team, who are able to offer a variety of support strategies, prior to formal action being instigated where appropriate. In order to prevent persistent absenteeism the Academy will carry out the following procedures in addition to the procedures described above:

- Written contact with parents / carers expressing concerns about attendance.
- Written invitation to parents / carers to request parental meeting to discuss attendance concerns
- Written letter to parents informing them that their son / daughter will be on a monitoring period in accordance with Nottinghamshire County Council procedures prior to a Fixed Penalty Notice being issued
- Serlby Park Academy implements the Fixed Penalty Notice system in conjunction with Nottinghamshire County Council
- Nottinghamshire County Council issue Fixed Penalty Notices on behalf of the Academy. Penalty Notices are £60.00 per parent per child if paid in full within 21 days, or £120 per parent per child within 28 days. Failure to settle the Penalty Notice within the specified time period may result in legal proceedings being taken by the Local Authority. This may result in a summons to the Magistrates Court, where if found guilty you may be fined up to £1,000 per parent per child.

10.0 Organisation

In order for the attendance policy to be successful, every member of the staff must make attendance a high priority and should convey to students the importance and value of education. In addition to these, there are specific responsibilities allocated to individual staff:

Principal

- To oversee and demonstrate ownership of the whole attendance policy.
- To oversee the reporting of progress on attendance to governors, students and parents.

Associate Assistant Principal

- Strategic oversight of attendance at Serlby Park Academy, including review of attendance policy and procedures.
- Quality assurance and oversight of regular attendance meetings, directing resources and communications as required.
- Maintenance of attendance as a high priority at Serlby Park Academy.
- Reporting to Senior Leadership Team and Governors / Interim Executive Board on all matters relating to attendance and punctuality.

Home Liaison Officer

- Liaison with all people involved in monitoring and tracking attendance, working pro-actively to support students and families before attendance falls below an unacceptable level.
- To work with students and families with other members of staff to encourage and support good attendance. Assist with low-level attendance and punctuality concerns by discussion with targeted students.
- Carry out supported home visits.
- To liaise as appropriate with other agencies.

Learning Managers / attendance administrator / Primary Inclusion Lead

- Make contact with parents of students with attendance/truancy concerns to develop relationships and inform of interventions.
- Monitor and track students' attendance, be proactive with poor attendance and good attendance, specifically students who fall below 95%. Use and understand the attendance data available, providing key information and data on their Year Group to the weekly Inclusion meeting.
- Use intervention strategies and attendance initiatives and keep subject staff, tutors and class teachers informed e.g. of students on report and those likely to truant.
- Provide weekly attendance information to tutors and class teachers. Encourage tutors and class teachers to be proactive in monitoring group attendance and to take an interest in individual students' pattern of attendance. E.g. encourage

target setting, display of tutor / class group attendance figures on displays in classrooms and letters home from the academy regarding improvement.

- Maintain high profile of attendance in assemblies and by keeping it on the agenda at meetings
- Encourage good punctuality and monitor 'lates' via lesson monitor, chasing missing marks and flagging up patterns of internal absence.
- The production of data for assemblies and organising rewards for attendance.
- To Liaise with Associate Assistant Principal, SENCO and Home Liason Officer, concerning return of long-term absentees.

Tutors / Class teachers

- To ensure accuracy of registers taken during tutor time / class time
- Discuss the importance of good attendance with their tutor group / class and take an active interest in the attendance competition and rewards.
- Discuss with students in cases of poor attendance, truancy or patterns that cause concern and to communicate this with Learning Managers and SLT.
- Enquire in cases of absence and missing marks and note these on the computer in SIMS.
- Include attendance and punctuality as part of the target setting discussions during reviews.
- Actively deal with poor punctuality in tutor time and discuss concerns with students and Learning Managers and SLT.

Teaching / Supervision staff

- To take accurate registers according to guidance given, within the lesson time concerned.
- To ensure at ALL TIMES that no student is registered as present unless they are physically in the room when the register is taken.
- To flag up to Learning Managers / SLT where it is apparent that a student has been in previous session, yet has not turned up for the current one.

- To use the right click / 'flag comment' facility to pass on relevant information on SIMS.
- To ensure that students taken for individual or group intervention are registered properly, according to guidance, either by adding to an existing group register or by marking and commenting on the student's regular register for that period.
- To flag up repeated absence to subject areas with both attendance / Pastoral team and the relevant Subject Leader.

11.0 Liaise with External Agencies

Research has shown that schools in partnership with the full range of support services have a greater impact on attendance than when they act alone or when the support services are uncoordinated or disjointed.

At Serlby Park Academy we work closely with a full range of services:

- Family Services
- Educational Psychologists
- Social Services
- Careers
- Local Police
- Youth Offending Team
- School Nurse

Data Protection Act

The Data Protection Act places obligations on all agencies that process, store and share information on any individual. It is important to have full regard to the requirements of the Act. Each has a Data Protection Notification which details the circumstances under which data is managed. Nothing in the legislation prevents us sharing information with the police or social services where it is believed that a child or young person under the age of 18 is at risk of harm or is in need of safeguarding.

12.0 Types of Absence

Understanding types of absence:

Every half-day absence from educational provision is required to be classified by the Academy, as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required. **Parents/Carers are not able to determine whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised**, but are expected to notify the Academy of any reason for a student's absence. The Academy cannot accept reasons for absence provided by a student.

Authorised absence:

Authorised absences are when a student has been absent for a substantial reason, for example, some illnesses, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall within the Academy day, emergencies or other unforeseen circumstances. Verification may be requested for any such instances.

Unauthorised absence:

Unauthorised absences are absences which the Academy does not consider reasonable and/or cannot be verified. Whilst the Academy is committed to supporting students and their families this type of absence can lead to the issuing of a Fixed Penalty Notice or legal proceedings. Below are some examples of unauthorised absences, however, this list is not exhaustive.

- Parents/Carers allowing children to be absent unnecessarily
- Truancy
- Absences without an explanation deemed acceptable by the Academy
- Students who arrive at their educational provision after the register has closed
- Shopping, looking after other children, birthdays or for translation purposes
- Students who do not attend owing to lack of uniform
- Day trips and unauthorised leave taken during term time
- Persistent absence for minor ailments

Illness of over 2 days may not be authorised without medical evidence. During an academic year, when a student has had three separate illness related absences, any subsequent absence may not be authorised unless medical evidence is provided. This

could be in the form of a date stamped compliment slip confirming your visit, or prescription or medicine bottle.

Should your child be reluctant to attend it is essential that Parents/Carers contact the Academy in order to identify any support, which may be required and/or address any underlying issues. The Academy has a large support network and a dedicated team of professionals able to assist.

Leave of Absence (for holidays):

Taking time off for holidays interferes with students' learning and progress. In addition, students' exam results may be affected, they may miss important exams or controlled assessments. No leave of absence for holidays will be granted during term time, except in exceptional circumstances. Absence taken without authorisation will lead to your child having unauthorised absences and may lead to a Fixed Penalty Notice being issued by the Local Authority.

Leave during term time:

From September 2013 the Principal is not permitted to authorise leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances, for which verification should be provided. This means that should your child(ren) take leave during term time, the absence **will not be authorised** and a Penalty Notice of up to £60 per parent per child may be issued. Should leave be granted under exceptional circumstances, students must return on the agreed date.

Religious Observance:

Absence owing to religious observance will be coded as "authorised absence". In general, one day will be authorised per occasion when the day is exclusively set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the Parent/Carer belong.

Where necessary, the Academy will liaise with, and seek advice from, the relevant local religious bodies.

13.0 Punctuality

High levels of punctuality are expected at all times, in order to ensure students are ready to learn. The Academy day starts promptly at 8.30am for secondary students and 8.50am for primary students and we expect your child to be present at the start of this session. Should your child miss the start of the day, they may miss work and vital information/news for the day. Students arriving late also disrupt lessons, which can be embarrassing for your child and can encourage absence.

How we manage lateness:

In accordance with Regulations, if your child arrives after the register has closed they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site, but this may **not** count as a present mark and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence. This may mean that you could face the possibility of a Penalty Notice and/or prosecution if the problem persists. The Academy takes punctuality very seriously and addresses lateness in conjunction with the behaviour policy.

14.0 Approval by the Education Advisory Board and Review Date

This policy has been formally approved and adopted by the Education Advisory Board at a formally convened meeting

Policy approved: _____

(Chair of Education Advisory Board)

Date: _____

Date of Policy review: _____