



**GEORGE  
SALTER  
ACADEMY**



**ACHIEVING MORE TOGETHER**

## **Attendance Policy**

**Policy Prepared by: OAT**

**Responsible for policy: Mr M Cadwallader (Assistant Principal – Behaviour & Attendance)**

**Date reviewed: 7<sup>th</sup> October 2019**

**Date of next review: October 2022**

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# I. Policy statement and principles

## 1.1 Policy aims and principles

We believe that in order to facilitate teaching and learning, good attendance is essential. The academy aims to raise standards in education and to ensure that students achieve their full potential. We recognise that this aim is not possible if they do not regularly attend the academy, or are persistently late.

Students are expected to attend the academy every day. It is the responsibility of parents to perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age who are registered at the academy attend regularly and are punctual. The academy endeavours to support parents and students in this.

Attendance and punctuality issues can have a detrimental effect on the education that a student receives. Evidence shows that missing out on lessons leaves students vulnerable to falling behind and the tendency for them to achieve less than those students with a good attendance record.

We are committed to:

- Promoting good attendance and reduce absence
- Ensuring every student has access to full-time education
- Act early to address patterns of absence and poor punctuality

This policy is consistent with all other policies adopted by OAT / the academy and is written in line with current legislation and guidance.

## 1.2 Complaints

All complaints are dealt with under the **Academy Complaints Policy**.

Complaints should be made in writing and will follow the OAT complaint procedures and set timescales. The handling of complaints may be delegated to an appropriate person.

The outcome of the complaint will be communicated in writing.

## 1.3 Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed every three years or in the following circumstances:

- Changes in legislation and / or government guidance
- As a result of any other significant change or event
- In the event that the policy is determined not to be effective

If there are urgent concerns these should be raised to the Assistant Principal Mr M Cadwallader, in the first instance for them to determine whether a review of the policy is required in advance of the review date.

## 2. Roles and responsibilities

### 2.4 Key personnel

Assistant Principal		Michael Cadwallader
Contact Details	Email	m.cadwallader@georgesalter.com
	Telephone	0121 553 4665
Attendance Officers		Amarjit Parmar Lindsay Lonergan (Mon, Tues)
Contact Details	Email	<a href="mailto:a.parmar@georgesalter.com">a.parmar@georgesalter.com</a> <a href="mailto:l.lonergan@georgesalter.com">l.lonergan@georgesalter.com</a>
	Telephone	0121 553 4665 Ext 5230

#### It is the responsibility of Students:

- To attend school regularly and arrive on time.
- To be on site by 8.38am and in classrooms by 8.40am.
- To tell a member of staff (e.g. Form Tutor, SWM, Attendance Officer) about any problem which is making it hard for them to attend school regularly and on time.
- To record their attendance % in their planner weekly and know what their current attendance figure is.

#### It is the responsibility of Parents/Carers:

- To encourage their children to attend school every day and on time
- To ensure that they contact school on first day of absence whenever their child is unable to attend school and every subsequent day they are absent from school
- To ensure that their children arrive in school fully prepared for the school day and provide the school with up to date home, work and emergency contact numbers and not arrange family holidays during the school term.
- To inform the school, in confidence, about any problem which might affect their child's attendance or behaviour.
- To ensure that their child aspires to attend the Academy at all times and achieve 100% attendance.

#### Parents/carers can expect that the Academy will:

- Provide a good quality education appropriate to their child's needs via a published timetable which necessitates regular and punctual attendance.
- Accurately complete attendance registers at the beginning of each session using SIMS ATTENDANCE.
- Record late arrival accurately on SIMS and ensure that the school's sanctions policy is followed with regard to the allocation of negative points and detentions (where appropriate).
- Make every reasonable effort to contact the parent when their child fails to attend school without good reason.
- Deal discretely and properly with any problem notified to the school by the parent.
- Make every effort to encourage excellent attendance, punctuality and behaviour.

#### Form Tutors:

- Have the responsibility of registering pupils' attendance at the beginning of the morning session.
- Will ensure that the registers are completed in accordance with the appropriate regulations.
- Have a major role to play in encouraging pupils to be punctual and to attend school each day.

- Will check absence notes from parents for their authenticity and will be passed to the attendance manager for filing/action.
- Will bring to the attention of the SWM those pupils who are either late for registration or who are absent on a persistent basis
- Will monitor and apply intervention for students with attendance concerns as directed by the attendance officer and Student Welfare Managers. These will centre mostly on students who have broken weeks and fall into the threshold of **93%-96%** attendance.
- Will welcome back students after absence but challenge all absences on the students return to the academy.

#### **Student Welfare Managers:**

- Will liaise closely with Form Tutors in checking that registers are completed.
- Are responsible for notifying the Attendance Officer of attendance problems and patterns.
- Are responsible for discussing with Form Tutors problems relating to pupil attendance and intervention to date.
- Will undertake proactive intervention with a targeted group of students each half term that meet the threshold **below 93%**.
- Will work alongside the Attendance Officer to arrange and participate in home visits whenever necessary.
- Will welcome back students after absence but challenge all absences on the students return to the academy.

#### **Class Teachers:**

- Will ensure that any missed work due to absence is caught up on by:
  - Ensuring that the objectives for the lesson(s) that has been missed are recorded in the exercise book and any worksheets are included in folders.
  - Ensuring that students are aware of what they need to do in order to complete the catch up work and are given an appropriate timescale to do this.

#### **Progress Leaders:**

- Will ensure that any barriers preventing good attendance within the academy setting and therefore impacting on academic progress are identified and addressed for all students within their year group.

#### **Attendance officer will:**

- Liaise with the DSL, Pastoral Team and Progress Leaders on designing, implementing and monitoring strategies to support high levels of student attendance.
- Assist Student Welfare Managers in preventing students falling into the Persistent Absence category.
- Work alongside the students and families falling specifically into the PA category (below 90%) to improve attendance.
- Attend all Parents Evenings and other Pastoral Evenings as requested by the Academy.
- Liaise and engage with external agencies including the Local Authority, where appropriate to provide the most appropriate support for our student families.
- Attend student reviews as required, which are coordinated by outside services.
- Attend court as a witness as required and create court files in court proceedings involving students and families.
- Ensure all registers are completed and no missing marks or unexplained absences remain.
- Follow Academy Policy of 'first day contact' within the academy.
- Check and remind any necessary staff to complete registers.
- Input timely information i.e. exams, music trips, sporting events, work based learning appointments, absence reports etc and to keep Learning Coordinators and staff updated.
- Check accuracy and correct coding on registers.
- Follow Attendance policy and send out letters as required.
- Assist and check records prior to the Census to ensure Academy attendance is accurate and up to date.
- Produce and interpret information relating to attendance patterns.

- Monitor the attendance of vulnerable groups of students and liaise with appropriate staff.
- Co-ordinate the contacting of all absent students on a daily basis in line with the academy's Attendance policy.
- Assist with the identification of students who will receive support in improving their attendance record.
- Work with parents/carers and other agencies in improving their child's attendance record and coordinating parental support and training where appropriate.
- Collate, maintain and update attendance data.
- Undertake home and academy visits as designated by the Academy.
- Work alongside relevant staff, contact teachers, senior management, learning support assistants, Attendance and Prosecution Service to exchange information and determine appropriate levels of intervention.
- Work with students and families identified by the academy.
- Liaise with the designated colleagues for child protection

### 3.Key principles

The academy will keep an admission register and attendance register. The contents of which includes all students, their personal details, the date of admission (or re-admission), information regarding parents and carers and details of the school last attended.

The academy will take the attendance register at the start of the first session of each academy day (AM) and at the start of the second session (PM). On each occasion we will record student attendance using the national codes. Attendance will also be recorded each time a student attends a lesson.

Students will not be marked present if they were not in during the period when the register is open. If there are any absences then we will follow these up in order to ascertain the reason and record the absence using the correct code on the register.

**Students are expected to arrive in the Academy at 8.38am ready to be registered at 8.40am. Students will receive a late mark if they are not in their classroom by this time.**

**The register closes at 9.20am.** Students will receive a mark of absence if they do not attend before this time. Attendance after the register closes will receive a mark to show that they are on site, but will count as an absent mark.

Students arriving late to the Academy should report to the Attendance Officer based in the attendance office in main reception.

#### 3.1 Definitions

A student is classed as absent if they do not attend for any reason.

An authorised absence is:

- An absence for sickness for which the Academy has granted leave
- Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during the academy day for which the academy has granted leave.
- Religious or cultural observances for which the academy has granted leave
- Any other requests for authorised absence will be considered at the discretion of the Principal.

An unauthorised absence:

- Parents keeping children from attending the academy unnecessarily or without reason
- Truancy before or during the academy day
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Arrival at the academy after the register has closed
- Day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed
- Leaving the academy site for no reason and without permission during the day

All students own the responsibility of attending school and lessons on time and persistent absence is defined as missing 10% or more of school across the year for whatever reason. Persistent lateness is defined by the academy as having 5 or more late to school marks (AM / PM) recorded in one academic year. Poor attendance and punctuality are subject to the academy's behaviour stages document with sanctions and interventions in place to support this as appropriate.

### 3.2 Absence Procedures

It is the responsibility of the parent to inform the academy of any student absence and also to inform us of any changes to contact details.

Parents / carers are asked to contact the academy as soon as possible but before 8.30am on EACH day that their child is absent, informing them the reason for absence and when their child will be returning to the academy.

If the Academy does not receive notification of an absence then the attendance team will use a range of communications to confirm the absence and obtain an acceptable reason. This will be through telephone in the first instance followed by e-mail, text message and home visit.

**The academy will conduct home visits whenever it deems appropriate for students whose absence is for 3 or more consecutive school days.**

#### 3.2.1 Appointments

As far as possible, medical and dental appointments should be made outside of the academy day. Where this is not possible, a note and appointment card should be sent to the academy prior to the appointment. Students must attend the academy before and after the appointment wherever possible. If the appointment requires the student to leave during the day, they must be collected by either an adult listed on the student's record or an adult with permission from the adult on the record (via verbal or written consent).

Before leaving the academy, students must 'sign out' via the Attendance Officer and on their return to the academy after the appointment, the student must report to the Attendance Officer before attending their lesson.

#### 3.2.2 Religious Observations

Parents / carers must inform the academy in advance if absences are required for days of religious observance. The academy will authorise absences for 1 day where a reasonable request has been made.

#### 3.2.3 Term Time Leave

We require parents to observe the term times of the academy and the academy will not authorise leave of absence during term time unless this is due to exceptional circumstances. If the academy grants a leave request we will determine the length of time that the student can be away from the academy.

Any requests for leave during term time will be considered on an individual basis. Requests for leave will not be granted in the following circumstances:

- During year 7 when a student is settling into the academy
- Immediately before and during assessment / exam periods
- When a student's attendance record shows any previous unauthorised absence

If term time leave is not granted, taking a student out of the academy will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and will be referred to the attendance and prosecution service for consideration of a penalty notice.

### 3.3 Intervention

The academy recognises that early intervention can prevent poor attendance and we monitor attendance and punctuality throughout the year to identify students who may require these interventions. We recognise that certain groups of students may be more at risk of poor attendance and will provide support and assistance in collaboration with parents and carers.

If a student's attendance becomes a concern, then parents / carers will be invited to attend a School Attendance Review Meeting (SARM) with the Attendance Officer. The purpose of this meeting is to support the student and parents / carers in improving attendance.

Our policy is to place more emphasis on rewards rather than sanctions although we recognise that in a minority of cases effective sanctions are necessary. We will encourage good attendance by:

- following-up absence on the first day wherever possible (via text/phone call)
- undertaking attendance checks at appropriate times
- recording good attendance on students' records, e.g. school report
- acknowledging individual's improvements in attendance
- providing feedback on individual attendance data to students and, where necessary, parents
- encouraging informal liaison between the school, EWO and other agencies wherever possible
- welcoming and supporting children returning to school after a long term absence and, where necessary, provide support via our Pastoral Team
- reward attendance for individual students on a half termly basis
- encouraging improvement
- collecting weekly data on attendance for the whole school and by year group and making this available to governors and to parents

If parents and carers have any concerns regarding their child's attendance or family circumstances are impacting on attendance, then please don't hesitate to contact the Attendance Officer or their child's Student Welfare Manager.

### 3.4 Academy Actions

#### 3.4.1 Attendance

The academy's attendance target is **98%** and we rely on close collaboration between the parents / carers, students and staff to ensure that this target is met.

When a student's attendance falls between **93% and 96%** a conversation will take place between the student and their Form Tutor and a letter will be sent **by the SWM** outlining the support that is available for them to ensure good attendance.

If a student's attendance falls between **90% and 93%**, a concerns letter will be sent **by the SWM**. If no improvement is seen then the decision will be made to unauthorise any further absences unless medical evidence is provided. Wherever possible, a meeting will be arranged between parents / carers and the child's Student Welfare Manager.



If a student's attendance falls **below 90%**, they will be identified as being persistently absent (PA) and a further concerns letter will be sent by the **Attendance Officer**. A meeting will be arranged between parents / carers and the Attendance Officer. If there is no improvement in the attendance record then a referral to the Local Authority may be made, from which legal action may be taken.

### **Child Missing in Education (CME)**

Where a pupil has not returned to school for ten days after an authorised absence or is absent from school without authorisation for twenty consecutive school days, the pupil can be removed from the admission register. This only applies if the school does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend because of sickness or unavoidable cause.

#### **3.4.2 Punctuality to school**

It is expected that all students arrive to the academy on time for learning to start during AM and PM (period 5) registration (see section 3 above).

If a student does not arrive for AM registration by 8.40am then they receive a late code and a 30 minute after school detention on the same day. If a student is late for a 2<sup>nd</sup> occasion in the same week they receive a 30-minute same day detention. If they are late for a 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> occasion within the same week then they will receive a 1-hour same day detention each time.

#### In addition (per half term)

- 3 lates =Phone Call Home
- 5 lates = Letter Home
- 7 lates = Parent Meeting
- 10 lates = Isolation

The school gate will be locked at 8.38am and any student arriving after this time will be expected to attend the attendance office (in main reception) where they will be marked as late for the AM session. Any student arriving after 9.20am will be marked as absent for the AM session.

### **Punctuality to lessons**

If a student does not arrive to periods 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 or 6 within a reasonable period of time at the start of the lesson then they will also receive a late code on the individual register. Any student receiving 2 or more late marks to individual lessons in 1 week will be placed on punctuality report. Each time they are late to lesson they will subsequently receive 30 minute detention on the same day. We reserve the right for class teachers to also sanction students appropriately within the academy structures if they are late to their lesson.

### **3.5 Rewards**

The academy acknowledges outstanding attendance and punctuality in the following ways:

- Certificates (Termly)
- Award of CREDIT (the academy's reward points system)
- Eligibility for rewards trips (where attendance drops below 96%, eligibility may be removed)
- Termly reward eligibility

## **4. Leave of Absence Request Form**





**Attendance & Prosecution Service**

**Leave of Absence Request Form**

**\*See Leave of Absence Request – Guidance Notes attached\***  
**\*\*ALL sections MUST be fully completed in CAPITAL LETTERS\*\***  
**\*\*\*If 'None' write 'None'\*\*\***  
**\*\*\*\*One Application Per Child\*\*\*\***

School			Class	
Child's Full Name			Date of Birth	/ /
Address		Post Code		
		Landline Tel. No.		
		Mobile Tel.		

**I would like to request a Leave of Absence for the above-named child: (One Application Form per Child)**

First day of Absence from school  Returning to school on

Number of school days' absent

Head teachers can only Authorise a Leave of Absence if they consider that the detail and information **you provide** constitutes an **“exceptional circumstance”**. You **MUST** provide **the details and information** you would want the Head teacher to consider in deciding if your request can be granted.


(please attach any further detail)

By signing this application, I understand and agree the following:

1. That I have read the Leave of Absence Request - Guidance Notes.
2. That I am a Parent/Carer with whom the child 'normally resides'.
3. That I understand it is the Head teacher's decision as to what is and what is not an "exceptional circumstance".
4. That I will ask for and know the Head teacher's decision **before** my child is absent.
5. That if I take my child on an Unauthorised Leave of Absence the school can request that I and any other Parents/Carers of my child are issued with a Penalty Notice. (a fine of up to £120 in respect of each child and each Parent/Carer,) and/o be subject to further legal proceedings in the Magistrates Court)

Parent/Carer Applicant PRINT NAME		Date of Birth of Applicant	/ /
Relationship to child			
Parent/Carer Applicant SIGNATURE		Date of Application	/ /

**You must enter the Names / Dates of Birth and Address details of every ADDITIONAL adult who holds Parental Responsibility and /or Care of your child.**

Parent/Carer's Full Name		Date of Birth	/ /
Relationship to child			
Address (if different from child's home address)		Postcode	

Parent/Carer's Full Name		Date of Birth	/ /
Relationship to child			
Address (if different from child's home address)		Postcode	

**For School Use Only**

Request Form Complete and Received	Date	/ /	School Staff	
Head Teacher's review	Date	/ /	Outcome	Agreed / Rejected
Applicant advised of outcome	Date	/ /		
How applicant was advised of outcome (i.e. verbally, by letter, by telephone) School staff may need to provide evidence of the above should Court proceedings follow				

# Schools Request for Penalty Notice

I have read the Leave of Absence Request - Guidance Notes and understand that once requested and issued a Penalty Notice cannot be withdrawn other than in the circumstances detailed. Yes  No

Agreed by Head Teacher Date

Referral to Attendance & Prosecution Service Date

Name  Position in school

Have you attached a copy of the student's Attendance Summary/Certificate? Yes  No

Have you attached a copy of the rejection letter sent to Parents/Carers? Yes  No

**Note**  
**You do not need to complete a Request for Support Form if all the above details are provided. A Leave of Absence Referral can be accepted when you WEBXCHANGE together a fully completed Leave of Absence Request Form, a copy of the school's rejection letter to parents/carers (or confirm agreement to provide a Section 9 Witness Statement) and the student's Attendance Summary/Certificate.**

## Leave of Absence Request – Guidance Notes

**Section 1 For Parents/Carers • Section 2 For Schools • Section 3 Penalty Notices**

### **Section 1 For Parents/Carers**

Under the Education (Pupil Registration) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 absence **may not** be Authorised unless:

- (a) An application has been made in advance to the Head teacher by a Parent/Carer with whom the pupil normally resides (lives with most of the time); and
- (b) The Head teacher, or a person Authorised by them, considers that Leave of Absence should be granted due to the exceptional circumstances relating to that application.

It is only a Parent “with whom the child normally resides” (lives with most of the time) that can apply for a Leave of Absence for their child. A Parent/Carer who does not live with the child **cannot** apply for a Leave of Absence. Any application they might make should be rejected by the school.

Parents/Carers should ensure that any Leave of Absence application is made in advance of any Leave of Absence to be taken. (Schools may have specific timescales for processing Leave of Absence applications. Parents/Carers should make sure they know what these are. Different schools may have different timescales.)

Parents/Carers should ensure that they know if their Leave of Absence application has been Authorised by the Head teacher before planning, booking or paying for anything in relation to that Leave of Absence application.

Parents/Carers should ensure they provide the Head teacher with all the detail and information they would want the Head teacher to know in deciding if a Leave of Absence can be Authorised.

Head teachers can only Authorise a Leave of Absence if they consider that the detail and information provided by a Parent/Carer in the application can be considered as an “exceptional circumstance”.

It is at the Head teacher’s discretion to decide if the detail and information provided by a Parent/Carer can be considered as an “exceptional circumstance” and agree if any Leave of Absence can be Authorised.

Disagreements between Parents/Carers and schools in relation to what is and is not an “exceptional circumstance” cannot be considered by the Attendance & Prosecution Service.

## **Section 2 For Schools**

Schools should consider having a clear, detailed and published policy or process that Parents/Carers should follow in applying for any Leave of Absence at their school.

Schools should decide on the format of their Leave of Absence Application Form.  
(The Attendance & Prosecution Service provide a template document for consideration)

Schools should decide on the timescales for accepting, processing and responding to any Leave of Absence applications received.

Such a timescale would need to consider how the school might inform the Parents/Carer of the outcome of the Head teachers decision so that it is received by them before any planned Leave of Absence starts.

Schools should decide that if any late or incomplete application is received if they will process this or if the Leave of Absence application cannot be considered and the Absence recorded as Unauthorised.

Schools should decide how they will advise Parents/Carers of the Head teachers decision and if the Absence is to be Authorised or not.

Schools should mark all Absences in accordance with the Pupil Registration Regulations.

Schools can Request that a Penalty Notice be issued to Parents/Carers should any Unauthorised Leave of Absence be taken. (Such a request should be made within 5 school days of the child’s return to school after the Leave of Absence is taken)

The Attendance & Prosecution Service cannot issue a Leave of Absence Penalty Notices unless a Request is made by the Head teacher to do so, that the school can provide the required information and detail that allows for the Penalty Notice to be issued in accordance with the Penalty Notice Code of Conduct. [http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/downloads/download/1990/penalty\\_notice\\_code\\_of\\_conduct](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/downloads/download/1990/penalty_notice_code_of_conduct)

### **Section 3 Penalty Notices**

If a Leave of Absence is not Authorised and the child is then absent from school, the Head teacher can request that the Attendance & Prosecution Service issue Parents/Carers with Penalty Notices.

The Attendance & Prosecution Service can only issue Penalty Notices for Leave of Absence following receipt of a request to do so by the school.

Penalty Notices are issued based on the information and detail provided by the school and in accordance with the Penalty Notice Code of Conduct

[http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/downloads/download/1990/penalty\\_notice\\_code\\_of\\_conduct](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/downloads/download/1990/penalty_notice_code_of_conduct)

Once issued a Penalty Notice cannot be 'withdrawn' unless it meets the criteria detailed in Section 4 of the Code of Conduct (see below):

*A penalty notice may be withdrawn if the local authority determines that:*

- a) It ought not to have been issued, or issued to the person named as the recipient.*
- b) The notice contains material errors, e.g. sent to the wrong address.*
- c) Where the issuer did not comply with this code of conduct*
- d) Where after the expiry of 28 days the penalty notice is unpaid and the local authority has not started legal proceedings, or wishes to take such action under section 444.*

**Unpaid Penalty Notices can result in Parents/Carers being put before the Magistrates Court and fined up to £1,000 per Parent/Carer per child plus Court costs.**