



Attendance Policy

Policy Code:	SW12
Policy Start Date:	September 2016
Policy Review Date:	September 2018

Please read this policy in conjunction with the policies listed below:

- SW5 Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- SW4 Student Behaviour and Discipline Policy
- HS2 Medical Treatment Policy



1 Policy Statement

- 1.1 The mission of The Priory Federation of Academies Trust (The Trust) is to have the highest possible aspirations, achieve the highest standards, provide the best possible teaching and learning, and to encourage the expectations of behaviour and personal conduct that are expressed within The Trust's Contract. For The Trust to achieve this, it is vital that our students attend regularly and on time. Where the reason for absence is unavoidable, this must be communicated to the relevant Academy.
- 1.2 The Trust supports the principles enshrined in Articles 28 (right to education) and 29 (goals of education) of Unicef's Rights of the Child Charter. The Trust endorses the position that: "Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full. It must encourage the child's respect for human rights, as well as respect for their parents, their own and other cultures, and the environment."

2 Roles, Responsibilities and Implementation

- 2.1 The Education and Standards Committee has oversight of the effective operation of this policy in each academy and for ensuring compliance with the relevant statutory framework.
- 2.2 Teachers and the delegated members of staff have a specific responsibility to ensure the fair application of this policy.
- 2.3 Parents/carers and students have the responsibility to ensure they are aware of this policy and the procedures to be followed in cases of absence.
- 2.4 Where Academies are mentioned throughout, this also includes the Robert de Cheney Boarding House at The Priory Academy LSST, The Keyworth Centre at The Priory City of Lincoln Academy and the Early Years setting at The Priory Witham Academy, as well as the Trust's French Centre.

3 Lateness

- 3.1 Poor punctuality is unacceptable. A student who misses the start of the day, misses vital tutorial time and preparation for the day ahead and may not get their registration mark. Arriving late to lessons is also disruptive to learning and teaching and, again, the student may miss important explanations, instructions or tasks which prevent them from understanding the lesson objectives and making good progress in the lesson. The times of each academy's school day are listed on the academy's website and are available on request from the



academy.

- 3.2 All students are expected to be in their registration room by the time the Academy day begins.
- 3.3 The morning register is taken electronically and students will be marked as Late if they are not in registration by the time the register is taken, but have arrived shortly afterwards.
- 3.4 Once the morning register is closed, in accordance with the regulations on attendance, any student arriving after this time will receive a mark to indicate they are on the Academy site, but this mark may not count as a present mark and may be recorded as an unauthorised absence. Parents/carers face the possibility of a penalty notice if this becomes a persistent problem.
- 3.5 If parents/carers are experiencing difficulty in getting their child to school, they should contact the Academy in order that a member of staff can assist and support them. The House/Pastoral Manager, Attendance Officer or Senior Leader will request to meet with the parent/carer if the Academy recognises that there is a problem with persistent lateness.

4 Importance of Regular Attendance

- 4.1 A student's regular attendance is the legal responsibility of parents/carers and permitting absence from school without good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.
- 4.2 Any absence during term time affects the continuity of a child's schooling and more frequent absence seriously affects their learning. An attendance rate at school of 95% sounds good, but this equates to missing 10 school days during the academic year, or 50 lessons in total. If a child has 95% attendance over five years from Year 7 to 11, this means they will have missed 50 school days and 250 hours of teaching and learning time.

5 Promoting Regular Attendance

- 5.1 Encouraging and supporting good attendance is everyone's responsibility including parents, students and all Academy staff. The Trust and its academies may do this by:
 - (a) Progress Check Reports at least three times per year;
 - (b) Display of form/class attendance and termly prizes for the form/class with the best attendance and an end of year prize;



- (c) Termly certificates for students with 100% attendance;
- (d) Termly certificates for students with 96%+ attendance;
- (e) Presentation assemblies; and
- (f) Reward trips for good attendance.

6 Understanding Types of Absence

- 6.1 Each Academy is required by law to record each half-day of absence as either authorised or unauthorised. Therefore the cause of absence is always required, preferably in writing.
- 6.2 Reasons such as illness or medical/dental appointment are considered reasonable to warrant an authorised absence from the Academy, which fall unavoidably in school time.
- 6.3 Unauthorised absences are those which the Academy does not consider reasonable and no “leave” has been granted. This includes:
- (a) Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
 - (b) Truancy from school
 - (c) Absences which are not properly explained
 - (d) Students who arrive late at the Academy after the AM register has closed
 - (e) Shopping, birthdays or looking after other children
 - (f) Day trips and holidays in term time (which can only be agreed in exceptional circumstances).
- 6.4 The Trust actively seeks to support parents/carers where a child’s ‘illness’ is becoming a mask for reluctance to attend school. If a child is becoming reluctant to attend school, parents/carers are encouraged to contact the relevant House/Pastoral Manager at their Academy for support. Rather than give in to pressure to excuse their child from attending school, parents/carers can discuss their concerns with the House/Pastoral Manager to find a way forward.
- 6.5 Students with medical needs may require additional support with maintaining regular and punctual attendance. Parents/carers should contact the relevant



House/Pastoral Manager at their Academy for support.

7 Persistent Absenteeism

- 7.1 Students who have an absence rate of 10% or more across the academic year, or who have an absence rate of 10% or more in any six-week period, regardless of the reason, are categorised as a 'persistent absentee' (PA). Each Academy monitors and tracks absenteeism meticulously. However, any student identified as having been absent for 10% of the school time or is at risk of moving towards that figure, will be treated as a priority and parents/carers will be notified of this immediately and the Attendance Officer informed.
- 7.2 Identified PA students and parents are given an individual action plan to support and assist in meeting their needs in improving their attendance. The action plan may include a reduced or revised timetable, a mentor, individual incentives or the involvement of the Education Welfare Service. The devising of the action plan may involve an Attendance Panel meeting.

8 Absence Procedures

- 8.1 If a child will be absent from school, their parent/carer must:
- a) Contact the Academy on the first day of absence, stating a reason for the absence;
 - b) Contact the Academy on each subsequent day of absence; and
 - c) Send in a written note detailing the reason for the absence on the child's first day of return to their Academy.
- 8.2 **When a student is absent their Academy will:**
- a) Telephone parents/carers if they have not been in contact with the Academy;
 - b) Send a letter requesting a written explanation of the child's absence if the parent/carer has not contacted the Academy and/or the Academy has been unable to reach the child's parents/carers through first-day calling;
 - c) Invite the parent/carer to discuss the situation with the House/Pastoral Manager, Attendance Officer or Senior Leader if the absence persists;
 - d) Access the service and support of the Attendance Officer if attendance begins to fall below 90%; and, in such an eventuality, request that the



parent/carer attend an Attendance Panel Meeting. The Academy may also seek the support of the Education Welfare Service.

9 Parent/Carer Contact Details

- 9.1 To ensure each Academy can contact students' parents/carers quickly and efficiently, a data collection sheet is sent to parents/carers at the start of each academic year for completion and prompt return.
- 9.2 If there are any changes to contact details during the year, parents/carers must notify the Academy immediately in order to ensure the Academy's records are up to date.

10 Attendance Officers

- 10.1 The Trust values working in close partnership with parents/carers and encourages them to get in contact at an early stage to resolve any attendance problems which are becoming apparent. Working in this way is very effective and ensures a high level of success. However, if an Academy feels a situation would benefit from more focused intervention, a student may be referred to the Attendance Officer.
- 10.2 The Attendance Officer will work in partnership with the parent/carer/Academy. It should be noted that if unauthorised absence persists, and other methods of intervention have been unsuccessful, the Headteacher or authorised senior member of staff may instruct the relevant authorities to:
- a) Issue Penalty Notices; and/or
 - b) Progress a case to prosecution in the Magistrates Court as it is a legal obligation of the parent/carer to ensure regular attendance of the child at school.

11 Holidays in Term Time

- 11.1 There is no legal entitlement for parents/carers to take their children out of school for holidays during term time. The Trust and each Academy expect support from parents/carers by not taking their children out of school during term time.
- 11.2 Academies will only consider holidays in term time in exceptional circumstances. With exceptional circumstances in mind, any such holiday requests must be made no less than one month prior to the holiday. Any requests should be marked for the attention of the Academy Headteacher.



11.3 If the circumstances are not considered to be exceptional and permission to take a term-time holiday is not granted by the Headteacher, but the holiday is still taken, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and a Fixed Penalty Notice may be issued by the Local Authority.

12 Penalty Notices

12.1 Following a period of unauthorised or persistent absence, any parent/carer may be considered for a penalty notice. This is issued through the courts to both parents/carers and any fine is paid to the local authority.

13 Monitoring attendance in The Robert de Cheney Boarding House

13.1 In addition to this policy The Robert de Cheney Boarding House have specific procedures for monitoring attendance of boarders out of Academy hours. These procedures can be made available upon request.

14 Children Missing from Education (CME)

14.1 Children missing education are children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school. Children missing education are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation, and becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training) later in life.

14.2 The Trust is committed to intervening early in the lives of vulnerable children, including those missing from education, to help prevent poor outcomes. Academy staff will therefore share information appropriately with parents/carers, other schools and local authorities to ensure that all children of compulsory school age are safe and receiving suitable education.

14.2 In order to fulfil their statutory duties The Trust will work to the guidelines provided in the DfE's *Children missing education; Statutory guidance for local authorities (September 2016)*.

15 Key People Responsible for Attendance

15.1 A list of the key people responsible for attendance at each Academy and for The Trust as a whole is available through each Academy's Reception Team.

16 Policy change

This policy may only be amended or withdrawn by The Priory Federation of Academies Trust.



The Priory Federation of Academies Trust Attendance Policy

This Policy has been approved by the Education and Standards Committee:

Signed..... Name..... Date:

Trustee

Signed..... Name..... Date:

Chief Executive Officer

Signed..... Name..... Date:

Designated Member of Staff

Please note that a signed copy of this agreement is available via Human Resources.