



Manchester  
Communication  
Primary  
Academy

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# Manchester Communication Primary Academy

## Attendance Policy

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## Approval History

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## Revision History

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### 1. Aim

The aim of Manchester Communication Primary Academy’s (MCPA) Attendance Policy is to enable the academy to provide a consistent practice, which encourages and facilitates the regular attendance of all pupils. Regular attendance at school is key to pupils’ academic and social success, for this reason the academy is dedicated to ensuring its Attendance Policy is adhered to as much as is possible.

MCPA takes a whole-school approach to maintaining excellent attendance and it is the joint responsibility of parents, pupils and all staff members to ensure that children are attending school, as they should be. We endeavour to work with families to make sure that any problems or circumstances, which may lead or be leading to poor attendance, are given the right attention and appropriate support.

This document is supported by our policies on safeguarding, behaviour, accessibility and SEND

### 2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education’s (DfE’s) statutory guidance on working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024) and school attendance parental responsibility measures. The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set 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, and 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

## Governing Body

As part of our academy-wide approach to maintaining high attendance, the governing body will:

- ensure that the importance of attendance is made clear by promoting the relevant policies and guidance directed at parents and staff
- annually review the academy's attendance rules and ensure that all provisions are in place to allow staff, parents and children to implement the rules effectively
- identify a member of the governing body who will take the lead role in safeguarding, this includes monitoring attendance and coordinating provision and policies for attendance
- ensure that all legislation regarding attendance is complied with and that up-to-date guidelines are communicated to parents, children and staff
- work out appropriate and accurate annual attendance numbers and future attendance targets, and submit these to the LA (where applicable) within an agreed timescale each year
- take time at governors' meetings to regularly review and discuss attendance issues which have arisen in order to stay on top of expected attendance targets for the year
- ensure that the academy is implementing effective means of recording attendance and organising that data, including for children who are educated off-site
- ensure that they are clear on how to analyse attendance data and how to communicate the findings effectively to parents and staff

The Education Act 1996 states that:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable

- (a) to their age, ability and aptitude, and
- (b) to any special educational needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

A person begins to be of compulsory school age

- (a) when they attain the age of five, if they attain that age on a prescribed day, and
- (b) otherwise at the beginning of the prescribed day next following their attaining that age.

Prescribed days are 31 August, 31 December and 31 March

A person ceases to be of compulsory school age at the end of the day which is the school leaving date for

any calendar year (the last Friday in June) —

(a) if they attain the age of 16 after that day but before the beginning of the school year next following,

(b) if they attain that age on that day, or

(c) (unless paragraph (a) applies) if that day is the school leaving date next following his attaining that age.

- ensure that senior leaders make the necessary referrals to the local authority and other relevant agencies in individual cases of non-attendance

- use any data gathered to devise solutions to problems, make the proper adjustments to attendance coordination and target set for the future.

- **Sharing effective practice on attendance management and improvement across schools**

- **Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy**

- There is a nominated governor responsible for attendance, this is Christina Djebah.

#### Senior Leadership Team

As part of our academy-wide approach to maintaining high attendance, the senior leadership team will work **alongside the designated senior leader for attendance, also known as the senior attendance champion, to:**

- **Set a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance**

- be active in their approach to promoting good attendance to pupils and their parents, which includes forming positive relationships with families

- ensure that the academy's teaching and learning experiences encourage regular attendance and that pupils are taught the value of high attendance for their own progression and achievement

- coordinate with the governing body to monitor the implementation of the attendance policy and its effectiveness, with an annual full review

- ensure that all staff are up to date with the attendance process, legislation and government guidance, and that staff are fully trained to recognise and deal with attendance issues

- ensure that legislation and government guidance on attendance is complied with and that they (the leadership team) are up to date with any legislative changes and how to implement them

- report to the governing body and the sub-committee for teaching, learning and outcomes on attendance records, data and provision

- ensure that systems to record and report attendance data are in place and working effectively

- develop and engage with multi-agency relationships to help with poor attendance and support families who are having difficulties getting their child to attend
- document any specific interventions or steps taken to work with families to improve their child's attendance in case of future legal proceedings.

- Issuing fixed-penalty notices where appropriate

- The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Darren McClean and can be contacted by email at [darren.mcclean@mca.manchester.sch.uk](mailto:darren.mcclean@mca.manchester.sch.uk)

#### Teaching staff

As part of our academy-wide approach to maintaining high attendance, the teaching team will:

- be active in their approach to promoting good attendance to pupils and their parents, which includes forming positive relationships with families
- ensure that the processes set-out in this policy are adhered to
- promote the value of learning, providing high quality teaching, so that children want to attend school
- ensure that they are fully aware and up to date with the academy's attendance process, legislation and government guidance, and that they will speak to another member of staff or seek support if they are unsure how to deal with an attendance issue
- ensure that they are following the correct systems for recording attendance and that attendance is taken twice daily in an accurate and timely manner.

#### Parents and carers

As part of our whole-school approach to maintaining high attendance, we request that parents:

- engage with their children's education – support their learning and take an interest in what they have been doing at the academy
- promote the value of good education and the importance of regular attendance
- encourage and support their children's aspirations
- ensure that their children arrive at school **every day** on time, appropriately dressed and with the necessary equipment
- follow the set school procedure for reporting the absence of their child (see section 4), and include an expected date for return
- do everything they can to prevent unnecessary absences, such as making medical and dental appointments outside school hours
- use the academy as a support when they or their child are having difficulties, and work to form a positive relationship with the academy so that there is easy communication when a problem arises
- keep the academy informed of any circumstances which may affect their child's attendance
- enforce a regular routine at home in terms of homework, bedtime, etc. so that the child is used to consistency and the school day becomes part of that routine. It is vital that the child receives the same message at home as they do whilst at the academy about the importance of attendance

- do not take their children out of school for holidays during term time. If parents would like to make a special request for a leave of absence, they may do so to the Headteacher (see section 4.5)

- sign a home–academy agreement which outlines the support which MCPA expects from its parents, in addition to the provision and support which parents and children can expect from the Academy

**- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance by contacting school.**

#### Pupils

As part of our academy-wide approach to maintaining high attendance, we request that pupils:

- be aware of the attendance rules, and when and what they are required to attend. This will be communicated to them through the academy staff, parents, the website and the school timetable

**- Attend school every day, on time**

- speak to a member of staff if they are experiencing difficulties at school or at home which may impact on their attendance

- follow the correct set academy procedure if they arrive late (see section 4.8). This will help the academy to monitor attendance and keep accurate records for the child's individual attendance, and is also vital for health and safety in the event of a building evacuation.

#### 4. Categories of absence and procedure for reporting absences

Absences will be treated as unauthorised unless a satisfactory explanation for the pupil's absence is given to

the academy. Parents cannot authorise absences.

Teaching staff should complete an accurate register by 9am and 1:10pm each day, using only the / mark for present and N mark for absent. Where a teacher or TA receives news of the reason for a child's absence (e.g. a contact from home), they should relay this to the office team who will update the register accordingly.

When a child is to be absent without prior permission, parents should inform the academy by telephone on the first day of absence, explaining the reason and notifying what date they expect the child to return. In the event of a child's absence involving a visit to a medical professional (e.g. an absence due to sickness, resulting in a trip to the doctors), written evidence should be provided. Alternative arrangements will be made individually with non-English speaking parents or carers.

#### Illness/ **Unplanned absence**

Most cases of absence due to illness are short term, but parents will need to make a phone call before 8.45 am to alert the academy on each day of absence.

For prolonged absence due to illness, parents may be asked to provide the academy with medical evidence such as a note from the child's doctor, an appointment card or a prescription paper. If these are not provided on request it may result in the absence continuing to be classed as unauthorised.

### Medical or dental appointments

Parents should make every effort to ensure these appointments are made outside school hours. Where it cannot be avoided, children should attend for as much of that day as possible, their attendance will be recorded to reflect this, as an 'M' on the register if the child misses the registration period due to the appointment. Parents will be required to provide written evidence of these appointments, such as an appointment card otherwise the absence will be unauthorised.

### Prior-arranged absence

There may be some exceptional instances in which parents know that their child will be unable to attend the academy in advance of the date of absence. In this instance, the academy should be notified as soon as possible, parents will be invited to meet with the attendance lead, who will endeavour to provide support to ensure attendance.

### Exclusion

Exclusion is treated as an authorised absence and is recorded as an exclusion for the number of sessions

stated on the exclusion notice.

### Extraordinary leave

Parents should make every effort to ensure that family holidays and extended leave are arranged outside of term time. Parents may request a leave of absence during term time where there are exceptional circumstances. Requests for leave of this type must be made in writing on the 'extraordinary leave request form' (appendix one) at least 1 week in advance of the leave being taken. In the case of unforeseen circumstances, such as a family bereavement that requires the child to travel to another country, this will be taken into consideration.

Retrospective applications will not be considered and this time taken will be processed as unauthorised absence. The Headteacher may only grant such requests in exceptional circumstances and the Headteacher's decision is final on whether the request is approved and the length of absence approved.

All requests for authorised absence will be responded to in writing, and will outline the details of when the child is expected to return to school. Parents should contact the school immediately if there will be a cause for delay from the stated date of return.

It remains the Headteacher's decision whether to authorise any request for absence during term time.

If permission is not granted, but the child is still absent, the absence is classed as unauthorised and parents may be subject to prosecution by the local authority.

### Religious observance

MCPA recognises that there may be times where children of different faiths observe religious festivals that fall outside of school holidays and weekends, and will allow 2 days per year authorised absence for these times. Only 1 day per festival can be used, and must be used on the day of the celebration. Parents will be aware of these dates and should give the academy written notification in advance.

### Education offsite



MCPA can also allow pupils to be absent from the school site for certain approved educational activities or to attend other schools or settings

#### Late arrival

The academy doors open at 8:30am with lessons starting at 8:45am. An attendance register will be taken at the start of the school day and again in the afternoon. In the morning registers close at 8:50am. Pupils who arrive after this time will be marked as late on the register. However, all children who arrive after 8:45am and must come through the office will be noted as late (before close of registers) so that accurate tracking can be implemented and targeted support offered [see section 5].

Pupils who arrive once the doors have been closed (8:45am) should go straight to the main entrance/reception with their parents to sign in and give a reason for their lateness. Any unjustifiable reason for absence will be marked as unauthorised. It is vital that pupils sign in at the office to ensure that appropriate health and safety regulations are followed and that all pupils are accounted for.

The academy also takes the attendance register during the afternoon of each school day. If a pupil is not present at the time that the afternoon registration takes place they will be marked absent. Any unjustifiable reason for absence will be marked as unauthorised.

Persistent lateness may result in disciplinary action being taken against the pupil and/or criminal action being taken against the parents.

#### Attendance codes

/	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

#### Attending a place other than the school

K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority provision	Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip visit or trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting

	activity	activity approved by the school
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered

Absent – leave of absence

M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
C2	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time Timetable
C	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances

Absent – other authorised reasons

T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a 'mobile child' who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)

E	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
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Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause

Q	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
Y1	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
Y3	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open
Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
Y7	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes

Absent – unauthorised absence

G	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
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N	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
O	Absent in other or unknown Circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session

Administrative codes

Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered
#	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holiday