



# Hope Federation of Church of England Primary Academies Attendance Policy

<b>Policy Type:</b>	<b>Academy Policy</b>
<b>Approved By:</b>	<b>Local Governing Body</b>
<b>Approval Date::</b>	<b>September 2020</b>
<b>Review Date:</b>	<b>March 2022</b>
<b>Person Responsible:</b>	<b>Executive Headteacher</b>



## Changes to the policy

Page	Changes	Agreed/Date
7	Addition of attendance ladders	Feb 2020
4	Lateness – change of register closing time	Feb 2020
Throughout document	Updates for Covid-19	September 2020
Appendices	Attendance letter sent to parents September 2020	September 2020
4	Updates on lateness and L/U marks and consequences.	January 2022

## Attendance Policy

Hope Federation of Church of England Primary Academies is committed to providing a full and efficient education to all pupils and embraces the concept of equal opportunities for all.



We will endeavour to provide environments where all pupils feel valued and welcomed.

For each child to reach their full educational achievement, a high level of attendance is essential. We will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents/carers the importance to regular and punctual attendance.

School attendance is subject to various education laws and this school attendance policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by the Department for Education.

Each year the Federation will set attendance targets.

Hope Federation of Church of England Primary Academies will review its systems for improving attendance at regular intervals to ensure that it is achieving its set goals.

This policy will contain within it the procedures that we will use to meet our target for attendance.

## **Promoting attendance**

The foundation for good attendance is a strong partnership between school, parents and children.

The Home/School Charter will contain details of how we will work together and our expectations of what parents will need to do to ensure their child achieves good attendance.

We will ensure that our pupils are made aware of the importance to good attendance and how this will benefit them.

## **Leave of absence in term time**

Leave of absence during term time is discouraged. Parents will be reminded of the effect that absence can have on a pupil's potential achievement. Hope Federation of Church of England Primary Academies will consider any application for leave of absence and will only agree to authorised absence in **EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES**; parents must apply in advance for permission for their child to have leave of absence. We are unable to authorise leave of absence during term time for holidays, although if you feel that there are exceptional circumstances as to why this could not be taken during a school holiday (such as a parent about to take a tour of duty or a charity paying for the break) please do discuss this with the Head teacher.

## **School Procedures**

Any child who is absent from school in the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity



(attendance out of school). If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence will be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised.

The coding for any absence will be in accordance with the guidance approved by the Department for Education.

## Registers

Teachers (or TA's if necessary) complete the online register on Pupil Asset and save this. The school secretary then picks up on any child who is absent from school. The Head teacher regularly checks that the attendance register has been completed by each class.

## Lateness

Morning registration will take place at the start of the school day (Rudham 9am, Brisley and Weasenham 8:45am). The register remains open for **15 minutes**. Any children arriving after this time will be marked with U mark. For any child who is late, will need to have a reason for their lateness. i.e. school transport was delayed. In cases for example, where the absence at registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment authorised absence code will be entered.

The afternoon registration will be at 1pm for Rudham and 12:45pm for Brisley and Weasenham. Children arriving after this time will follow the same procedure as for the morning registration.

Children who are persistently late and marked with an L code, will be referred to the Executive Headteacher and a meeting with the parents will be arranged. Those who arrive after the register has closed will be marked as a U. If the number of U marks exceeds 9 over a 6 week period, the case will be fast tracked to the Local Authority for a review.

## First Day Absence

Parents are expected to contact their academy if their child is not going to attend school on that day. If a child is away from school and we have not been contacted, we will call the parents using the numbers provided, leaving a message as well when there is no answer. This is undertaken on the morning for the first day of absence, usually by the academy secretary. If a reason is obtained by the secretary the appropriate code will be entered to the registers.

## Third Day Absence

We call each day over the first 2 days and if by the third day there has been no contact from the parents we would send out a letter to the parents. We would also contact the attendance officer as this would be most unusual. It would not be unusual for a home visit to be instigated.

## Continuing Absence

If there is continued absence and we still haven't heard from the parents, we would contact the Local Authority, by submitting a referral to the Children's Services Attendance Staff for the local area.



## Absence Notes

Notes received from the parents explaining absence should be kept for the remainder of the academic year. If there are attendance concerns about the pupil, that may require further investigation, then the notes may need to be retained for a longer period.

## Frequent Absence

Within Hope Federation of Church of England Primary Academies it is the responsibility of each academy secretary to be aware of and bring to the attention to any emerging attendance concerns. Class teachers will also raise a concern if they feel there is a pattern of absence emerging. In cases where a pupil begins to develop a pattern of absences, the academy will try to resolve the problem with the parent/s. If this is unsuccessful the school will refer to the relevant professionals, either Health or Attendance. In the result of frequent absence relating to health issues; copies of medical appointments or prescription evidence.

## Persistent Absence (PA)

A child is deemed to be persistently absent if their attendance falls below 90%. It is the responsibility of the school to promote good attendance and punctuality and therefore take action when attendance of a pupil causes concern.

During the Autumn Term, there is a higher possibility that a child's attendance can fall to this level due to the number of days they have been in school. We will consider each case on an individual basis. For initial concerns about dropping attendance figures, we will correspond with parents via a letter, informing them of their child's attendance and offering them an opportunity to come and discuss their concerns with academy staff.

If attendance figures continue to cause concern and the child is also deemed to be persistently absent with no apparent valid reason, we will put an action plan into place and contact the AIO for further advice.

## Attendance Rewards

Each week children will receive a small gift for attendance and the class with the best attendance will also be rewarded.

### Responsibilities of our PSA (Parent Support Adviser):

- Oversee, direct and co-ordinate the school's work in promoting regular and improved attendance ensuring the attendance policy is consistently applied throughout the school.
- Ensure that attendance is both recorded accurately and analysed.
- Ensure that attendance issues are identified at an early stage and that support is put in place to deal with any difficulties.
- Check weekly any children whose attendance is below 90%
- Contact families where concerns are raised about absence including arranging meetings to discuss attendance issues
- Make referrals to the Attendance Officer



- Provide reports and background information to inform discussion with the school's Attendance Officer □ Liaise with other professionals to determine potential sources of difficulties and reasons for absence.
- Instigate Fixed Penalties or the Fast Track to prosecution process as required
- Sending out standard letters regarding attendance

In liaison with the administration staff, keep an overview of class and individual attendance looking particularly for either poor overall attendance, anomalies in patterns of attendance and/ or unusual explanations for attendance offered by children and their parents/ carers

## The registration system

The school will use a computerised system for keeping the school attendance records.

The following national codes will be used to record attendance information.

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
D	Dual registration (i.e. pupil/student attending other establishment)	Approved Education Activity
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence



<b>J</b>	Interview	Approved Education Activity
<b>L</b>	Late (before registers closed)	Present
<b>M</b>	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
<b>N</b>	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
<b>O</b>	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence

<b>P</b>	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
<b>R</b>	Religious observance	Authorised absence
<b>S</b>	Study leave	Authorised absence
<b>T</b>	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
<b>U</b>	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence
<b>V</b>	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
<b>W</b>	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
<b>X</b>	Untimetabled sessions for non-compulsory school-age pupils/students  ** Covid-19 related absence	Not counted in possible attendances
<b>Y</b>	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
<b>Z</b>	Pupil/student not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
<b>#</b>	School closed to pupils/students	Not counted in possible attendances



Attendance letter sent to parents in September 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

16<sup>th</sup> September 2020

## Attendance at school and legal intervention

[Research](#) commissioned by the Department for Education shows missing school for even a day can mean a child is less likely to achieve good grades, which can have a damaging effect on their life chances. At Rudham Church of England Primary Academy our aim is to work with parents to ensure that all our pupils receive the most from their education and reach their full potential.

This letter is to remind all parents/carers regarding the law that requires them to ensure that their child attends school regularly. The Government remains very clear that no child should miss school apart from in exceptional circumstances and schools must continue to take steps to reduce absence to support children's attainment.

In the DfE policy document entitled, 'School Attendance: Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities' it states, '*Head teachers should not grant leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances. **The application must be made in advance and the head teacher must be satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances based on the individual facts and circumstances of the case which warrant the leave. Where a leave of absence is granted, the head teacher will determine the number of days a pupil can be away from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the head teacher's discretion.***

If the school does not receive a request for leave, the head teacher will be unable to consider your individual circumstances and the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. There will be no obligation on the head teacher to reconsider authorising the leave if an application has not been made in advance.

The Local Authority operates a system where any pupil will meet the criteria for legal intervention where they have:

- at least 9 sessions (4.5 school days) lost to unauthorised absence by the pupil during the last 6 school weeks

The intervention could be in the form of a fixed penalty notice. Any pupil at Rudham Church of England Primary Academy, who meets the criteria, will be referred to the Local Authority for action to be considered.





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If a fixed penalty notice is issued the arrangement for the payment will be detailed on the penalty notice. The penalty is £60 if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice, rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days of the receipt of the notice. The fixed penalty notice is per parent per child. You should be aware that failure to pay the total amount within the timescale will result in legal action being taken.

I hope we can count on your support in this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Belinda Allen  
Executive Headteacher  
Hope Federation of Church of England Primary Academies



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