

Inspirational Learning Academies Trust
ATTENDANCE POLICY
Revised 1st February 2018

Inspirational Learning Academies Trust is committed to raising the achievement of all pupils. One of the ways we do this is by promoting good attendance and punctuality. We expect our pupils to attend regularly, so that they benefit fully from all the opportunities we provide for their education, progress and achievement.

Parental Responsibility

Under section 444 of the Education Act of 1996, parents, or those who have parental responsibility for children of compulsory school age, are required to ensure that their children receive an efficient full time education. Children are required to attend and to stay at the academy. This responsibility also extends to ensuring that the children arrive at the academy on time, suitably dressed and in a fit condition to learn. It is also the parent's responsibility to inform school of the reasons for their child's non-attendance as soon as possible, by 9.30am on the first day of absence.

Procedures for reporting absence

By telephone, no later than 9.30am on the first day of absence.

By letter, delivered to the office.

In person, at the office.

By showing an appointment card or letter in advance, at the office.

By completing an application of leave of absence in exceptional circumstances in term time, which is available from the office.

It is requested that reasons for absence are not sent as a message via a child or another parent/carer as they tend not to be passed on.

Please note that it is academy policy that in situations where no contact has been made with parents/carers and children are not in school, then ATTEND will carry out a home visit to ensure that all of the household are safe and well.

Authorised Absence

The head teacher has the ultimate responsibility for authorising absences and will do so when a valid reason is given for the child's absence.

Low Attendance

Attendance levels are monitored regularly. If a child's attendance falls between 95% and 90% this is deemed as low attendance and a letter will be sent home informing the parent. Help and support may be offered if required to aid an improvement in attendance.

Unauthorised Absence

An unauthorised absence will be given when a child does not attend school and a valid reason is not given for the absence or the trustees refuse to authorise a leave of absence request. If a child's attendance drops below 90% at any point throughout the year we will not authorise any further illness absence without medical evidence from a medical professional. Continued unauthorised absence may require further action from the Educational Welfare Department who may send a penalty warning notice which outlines the level of action which could be taken if attendance does not improve over a period of 20 school days. This could be a penalty fine or prosecution under s444(1) Education Act 1996.

Medical and Dental Appointments

We expect parents to make medical and dental appointments for their children before or after school or during the school holidays whenever possible. If this is not possible then authorisation will be given where confirmation of the appointment is received via one of the methods already listed. Children are expected to attend school prior to the appointment and parents expected to return their children to the academy following the appointment whenever possible.

Procedure for taking a child out of school during the school day

Parents/carers report to the office. The child is collected from class by the office staff. The absence is recorded in a book with the reason, time and whether the child is returning to school.

Special Occasions

A request to attend a special occasion during school time e.g. family wedding, must be made in advance and the head teacher will make the decision as to whether to authorise the absence. Parents will be notified of the head's decision.

Bereavement

The Academy is sensitive to family requests for a child's attendance at funerals or associated events. The head teacher will offer the family advice over absence in this instance.

Days of Religious Observance

Attendance at a religious observance held by a religious body will be granted authorised absence. The head teacher should be consulted in advance of the event. A maximum of two days' absence during any academic year will be granted for religious observance.

Lateness

Parents are expected to bring their children punctually at 9.00 am for the start of the school day. Registration is at 9 o'clock. Children arriving after 9 o'clock must report with their parents to the office where they will be registered via the late book. They will receive a late mark in their class register. Children arriving after 9.30 am without an adequate explanation from their parents will be given an unauthorised absence for the session. Families who regularly arrive late will be contacted by the head teacher. Education Welfare may become involved if the problem cannot be quickly resolved.

Leave of Absence in Exceptional Circumstances

The Law states that parents DO NOT have an automatic right to take their child out of school in term-time.

By prior application, you may apply for a Leave of Absence in Exceptional Circumstances. This will be considered in line with Government and Local Authority guidance. The parent/carer should apply for a leave of absence by completing an Application for Leave of Absence in Exceptional Circumstances in Term Time form, available from the school office. The school will notify the parent/carer of the decision. The Head Teacher is

unable to authorise leave of absence if the request is for holiday during term time.

Where permission has been given for a leave of absence and it is later found that the child has spent the time at home this will then be counted as an unauthorised absence.

Where leave of absence has been requested for a holiday, or other unauthorised reason, a child's attendance level must remain over a level of 95%. If their attendance drops below this we will not authorise any further absence for illness unless we receive medical evidence from a medical professional or there is an underlying medical illness.

Inspirational Learning Academies Trust Procedures

In managing the attendance and punctuality of its pupils, the school will:

1 Keep appropriate attendance records.

Registers are taken at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session. Marks are regularly entered on to the computerised register on the office computer. Accurate information on attendance is available to designated employees and data gathered will be used to inform the trustees of attendance and punctuality trends. This information will enable trustees and senior staff to effectively target attendance and punctuality as necessary. The Attendance Team will monitor and review the requests for Leave of Absence in Exceptional Circumstances in Term Time.

2 Monitor patterns of attendance.

The head teacher in liaison with administration staff and the Education Welfare Officer will regularly review registers in order to work with families whose patterns of attendance or punctuality are unsatisfactory. All parents will be informed, via the annual report, of their child's overall attendance and their attendance compared to the average for the school.

3 Involve the Education Welfare Officer

The head teacher and Attendance Team, through regular meetings with the EWO will discuss issues surrounding attendance and punctuality. If there is cause for concern, the following procedures will be followed:

The Attendance Team will speak to the parents of the child;

A letter may be sent home raising the concerns by either the school or the Education Welfare Service as is most appropriate.

Parents may be invited into school to talk to the head teacher and the EWO informally. If informal intervention is unsuccessful, then an official

referral to the EWO will be made by the school. The EWO may visit the home.

Throughout these procedures, the head teacher and the EWO will regularly discuss ongoing cases.

Strategies for Improving Attendance and Punctuality

Class with best weekly attendance is praised in Awards Assembly and has a certificate for their door.

The class with the best annual attendance has a reward of an all expenses paid trip.

Termly 100% attendance badges for pupils with full attendance.

Termly certificates for pupils with over 95% attendance.

An Annual certificate and badge for pupils with full attendance.

Attendance Week focusing on promoting regular attendance and celebrating success.

Attendance improvement group for those showing a pattern of low attendance.