



**NEW
SILKSWORTH
ACADEMY**

ALLIANCE • AMBITION • ACHIEVEMENT

Attendance Policy & Procedure

Subject Leader	Mrs N Potts
Date of Policy	
Review Date	To Be Ratified

Attendance Policy and Procedure

New Silksworth Academy believes that there is a strong link between good attendance and attainment and therefore aims to encourage and maintain a good level of attendance in all year groups.

Principles:

This Policy and Procedure document sets out the academy's procedures to support the children around attendance, punctuality and ensuring parents and staff work together to make a positive difference to the educational wellbeing and welfare of the children.

Children should be at school, on time, every day the school is open, unless the reason for absence is unavoidable. Good attendance is a shared responsibility of the academy, the parents and carers and the Local Authority.

Every half day has to be classified by the school (not by the parents) as either **AUTHORISED** or **UNAUTHORISED**. This is why it is vital that parents inform the academy on the first day of their child's absence from school.

AUTHORISED ABSENCES – Days missing from school for a genuine reason, e.g. genuine reported illness, medical appointments, etc.

UNAUTHORISED ABSENCES – Term time holidays (unless exceptional circumstances), truancy, parents keeping their children of school without good reason and unexplained/unreported absence.

LATENESS – Any pupils arriving after 8.55am will be classified as late and be given an 'L' mark on the register. The number of minutes late will also be recorded.

New Silksworth Academy – Attendance Monitoring Procedure & Responsibilities

Element	Responsibilities and Duties	Rewards
<p>SCHOOL AND PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES Letter sent to all parents and carers detailing the schools and their responsibilities in respect of their child's attendance.</p>	<p>Academy Office and Social Inclusion Officer Contacting parents of any pupil whose absence has not been reported.</p> <p>Parents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact the school to provide a reason for their child's absence, on the first day of the absence. If your child is going to be absent for more than 1-school day, you can inform the office of this and they will update the register accordingly. • Provide proof of medical appointments in advance. 	<p>Assemblies to develop the importance of attendance and punctuality.</p> <p>Weekly attendance reward assemblies.</p> <p>Rewards to support 100% Attenders</p> <p>Newsletter – details attendance total for each Key Stage as well as a total percentage for children with 100% attendance across the academy.</p>
<p>TRACKING OF ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY Formal tracking of every child's attendance commences in September, at the beginning of the academic year.</p> <p>NEW SILKSWORTH ACADEMY will;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor pupils with 90% or lower attendance (persistent absentees) from start of academic year to each half-term. • Issue termly Red, Amber & Green Attendance letters to children. • Follow up pupils with 9 or more late marks from start of academic year to each half-term. • Follow up unauthorised or unreported absence (Missing Marks letters) every week. 	<p>Academy Office and Social Inclusion Officer Dealing with unexplained absence by contacting parents. Sending attendance or punctuality concern letters</p> <p>Class Teacher Ensuring electronic registers are taken accurately and on time, ensuring each child is marked either present, absent or late.</p> <p>Headteacher and Social Inclusion Officer Scheduling meetings with parents or carers to discuss concerns.</p>	<p>Rewards given to persistent absentees for improved attendance.</p>
<p>Half-termly and termly report taken from SIMS (Management Data System) to determine;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Persistent absence (90% or below) • Continued failure to provide explanations for absence. • Holidays in term time. • Any other unauthorised absence. 	<p>Academy Office and Social Inclusion Officer Analyse attendance data and flag those pupils whose attendance has fallen below 90% (half-termly or overall). Send the appropriate letter to parents</p> <p>Social Inclusion Officer Arrange and attend meetings where necessary to discuss absence issues with parents.</p>	

Additional Procedures and Referrals

Term Time Holidays and Leave of Absence Requests

Background

Schools are required to provide education for their pupils for 190 days a year and as parents/carers/guardians you are required under the Education Act (1996) to ensure your child attends school regularly. Extol Academy Trust believes that excellent attendance at school is vital for all pupils to ensure they reach their full potential both academically and socially.

In line with DfE guidelines, it is the policy of Extol Academy Trust and those schools within the Trust to discourage all avoidable absence during term time.

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England Amended Regulations September 2013) An amendment was made to the regulations by removing references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. The amendments make clear that Headteachers may not grant leave of absence, including absence for family holidays during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The dictionary definition of exceptional is "unusual" or "rare" and each request will be considered individually.

Exceptional Circumstances could (but do not necessarily) include:

1. Armed Forces, Fire and Police Service personnel with fixed annual leave
2. Where an absence from school is recommended by a health professional as part of a parent or child's rehabilitation from a medical or emotional issue
3. When a family needs to spend time together to support each other during a terminal illness or death of a family member (compassionate grounds)

Evidence would be required in these instances.

Circumstances that may NOT be considered exceptional include and will not be authorised:

1. Parents' employment restrictions
2. Visiting family and friends who have different school holidays
3. Availability of cheap holidays and cheap travel arrangements
4. Celebrations of birthdays

No absences will be authorised within the first two weeks of a new academic school year and no absences will be authorised during test/exam/assessment periods.

Procedure for requesting Holiday in Term time or leave of absence for any other reason

1. Parents/carers complete the relevant proforma and return to school at least **2-weeks** before the anticipated start date. Please note the relevant forms are available from the school office or downloadable from the school website.
2. The completed form will then be processed and parents may be invited into school to discuss the application further.
3. Parents will be notified in writing of outcome. Any absence, which has not been agreed in advance by the Head Teacher, is marked as unauthorised absence. Where term time holidays are unauthorised, a letter will be sent from school or telephone call will be made to parents/carers to advise that the absence from school will not be authorised and that where attendance is below 90% in the 39 school weeks prior to the start of the holiday, the case will be forwarded to the Local Authority School Attendance Officer and a penalty notice will be issued. This letter is used as an exhibit in court, if a penalty notice is issued and payment is not received.

4. Penalty Notices will be issued to parents where the child is in irregular attendance at school (prior to the holiday), since further time away from school will be significantly detrimental to the child's education. Irregular attendance will be considered at anything below 90% in the 39 weeks prior to the holiday. However, as a school we will continue to monitor attendance below 90%. The penalty notices issued are £60 per parent, per child, if paid within 21 days. This penalty notice will double if paid between 22 and 28 days after the penalty notice has been issued, e.g. a two-parent family with 2-children receive 2 x £60 notices, as each parent would receive one notice per child. This family would need to pay £120 to the Local Authority if paid within 21 days or £240 if paid between 22 and 28 days. Where payment is not received within 28 days, the case is forwarded to court.
5. School monitor/address any pupils with attendance that falls below 96%. Referrals can be made to the Local Authority School Attendance Officer where attendance falls below 90%.

The Local Authority Attendance Team

Referrals are made to the Local Authority Attendance Team when a period of **unauthorised absence** triggers a potential FPN (Fixed Penalty Notice), an example of this would be holidays in term time, regardless of whether or not an official request has been made to the school.

Referrals will also be made for unauthorised or unreported absence from school; including where a request for leave of absence has been made in advance by the parent and has been subsequently classed as unauthorised.

For full information and guidance surrounding the Fixed Penalty Notices', see the following documents (also available on the academy and Local Authority websites)

FIXED PENALTY NOTICES - Code of Conduct & Policy

Fixed Penalty Notice for Unauthorised Absence - Parent FAQ's

Together for Children (Sunderland City Council)

Referrals to Together for Children are made when there has been no engagement with the school on the part of parents or carers and that the school considers the wellbeing of the child to be at risk from non-attendance, having followed the school attendance procedures.

Transfers between schools

Whether you are moving your child away from, or to New Silksworth Academy, a **School Transfer Application Form** must be completed. These can be obtained from the School Office or by clicking on the link below.

Click here for the [School Transfer Application Form](#)

Click here for the [School Transfer Process Flow Chart](#)

Dual Registration

When a child is dual registered, the appropriate mark on the register will be given to ensure absences, when not attending New Silksworth Academy for regular lessons, are recorded as **authorised** and not as **unauthorised** or **unreported**.

Runaways

The school educate children about the dangers of running away and encourage them to seek support rather than run away; some children run away because they feel there is no other option. Children and young people need to know where they can access help if they are thinking of running away and what alternatives are open to them. As a school, we are well placed to advise young people about the dangers of running away and to point them to available support.

An appropriate **CMOOE** (Children Missing Out on Education) referral may be made to the Local Authority or Together for Children.

Young Carers

In many families, children contribute to family care and well-being as part of normal family life. A young carer is a child who is responsible for caring on a regular basis for an adult or a sibling who has illness or disability. Caring responsibilities can significantly impact upon a child's health and development.

We will endeavour to support any child who has a lone or shared responsibility to care for a parent, carer or other family member, by way of flexible schooling hours or other appropriate support. A referral can be made to the Young Carers Service for additional support or the Academy can be contacted directly.

Appendices:

- *Appendix 1: Letter to Parents – Attendance, Lateness and Reporting Absence Procedures (Expectations)*
- *Appendix 2: LEA FIXED PENALTY NOTICE – Code of Conduct & Policy*
- *Appendix 3: LEA FIXED PENALTY NOTICE for Unauthorised Absence – Parent FAQ's*
- *Appendix 4: School Transfer Process*
- *Appendix 5: Attendance Codes – Descriptions and Meanings*
- *Appendix 6: Red, Amber, Green Attendance Status Letters*

Appendix 1

Letter to Parents - Attendance, Lateness and Reporting Absence Procedures

Dear Parent or Carer

ATTENDANCE

The law requires all parents and carers to ensure that their child regularly attends school. If your child is absent then you will **must** notify the Academy Office on the first day of the absence (informing us of how long your child is likely to be absent). You can do this by calling into the Office in person or by telephoning **0191 500 0015** no **later than 9.15am**. In cases where absences remain unexplained, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and may be referred to the Local Authority Attendance Team for further investigation.

MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS

Wherever possible, we would ask that you try to make appointments outside of academy hours. However, we do understand that this isn't always possible. If your child needs to miss part of the day to attend an appointment then please notify the Academy Office and if possible, advise us if your child will be present during the lunch break (between 12pm and 1pm). A valid doctor's letter or medical appointment card **must** be presented to Office staff, where a copy may be taken.

You will need to collect your child from the Academy Office and sign them out. If you are planning to return your child to school on the same day then they must also be signed back in.

SICKNESS DURING THE SCHOOL DAY

If your child becomes unwell during the school day, or if we have any concerns about an injury your child has sustained, then we will make every effort to contact the parent or carer. Therefore, it is vitally important that you inform the Academy Office immediately if you have changed any of your contact information (e.g. mobile/home telephone number, address, etc.)

TERM TIME HOLIDAYS AND LEAVE OF ABSENCE REQUESTS

Leave of absence and/or holidays in term time will not be authorised except in exceptional circumstances. If you require any time off during normal term time you must request a form from the Academy Office. This will be passed to the Headteacher for a final decision to be made. Unauthorised absence will be reported to the Local Authority Attendance Team and a Fixed Penalty Notice may be issued for such absences, depending on length of absence and the level of your child's attendance prior to the leave being taken.

LATENESS

Children arriving late to school (after 8.55am) must access the building at the Main Reception entrance. This is to ensure that your child receives a mark on the register. Persistent lateness will now also be referred to the Local Authority Attendance Team where a fine may be imposed.

Registers are open between 8.55 and 9.15am. If your child arrives at school after 9.15am, they will be given an 'L' mark on the register.

Please remember that the school day commences at 8.55am. Once the bell has gone to signal the start of the day the main gates to the school yard will be locked.

A copy of the 'Attendance Policy & Procedures' is available upon request and also on our website at www.newsilksworthacademy.co.uk

Yours sincerely,



Mrs E. Robins
Headteacher

Appendix 2

FIXED PENALTY NOTICE – Local Code of Conduct & Policy

For an electronic copy of this policy visit the link below.

[**FPN - Code of Conduct Policy for Local Authority**](#)

Appendix 3

FIXED PENALTY NOTICE for Unauthorised Absence – Parent FAQ's

Introduction

Section 23 Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 gave the Local Authority the power to introduce Education Penalty Notices aimed at reducing the levels of unauthorised absence from schools, where a parent/carer is considered able but unwilling to ensure their child's school attendance. As with all Attendance Enforcement legislation Fixed Penalty Notices are not issued as a punishment to parents but as a means to improve a child's attendance. This is an additional strategy to be used as a sanction when parents do not fulfill their responsibility to ensure their children attend school regularly.

Why introduce Fixed Penalty Notices?

Reducing absence from school is a key priority nationally and locally because missing school damages a pupil's attainment levels, disrupts school routines and the learning of others, and can leave a pupil vulnerable to anti-social behaviour and youth crime. Whilst a FPN is a way of speeding up sanctions for unauthorised absence consideration needs to be given to "every aspect of a pupil's case" before considering whether a FPN would be appropriate. If a parent fails to pay the FPN the case must be progressed to court under a S444(1).

What is a Fixed Penalty Notice?

You commit an offence if your child fails to attend school regularly and those absences are classed as unauthorised. Depending on the circumstances, such cases may result in prosecution under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996. A Fixed Penalty Notice can be used within certain criteria as an alternative to prosecution, which does not require an appearance in Court unless the fine is unpaid after 28 days. Full payment of the penalty means that you can avoid being prosecuted and convicted.

Who can decide that a Fixed Penalty Notice should be issued?

Sunderland's Local Code of Conduct states that the final decision as to the issue of a penalty Notice rests with the Attendance Manager. The Attendance Manager must ensure that a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued fairly and consistently across the City and complies with legislation. Fixed Penalty Notices can only be issued within the parameters of the Local Code of Conduct.

Where can I find a copy of the Local Code of Conduct?

https://www.sunderland.gov.uk/media/19816/local-code-of-conduct/pdf/Local_Code_of_Conduct.pdf?m=636473716019500000

What is the cost?

If paid within 21 days of receipt of a Notice, the cost is £60, but if paid after this and up to 28 days of receipt of the Notice, the cost is £120. Fixed Penalty Notices' **must** be paid in full.

How are they issued?

Fixed Penalty Notices will always be issued by post.

When will penalty notices be used?

They are used as a measure to address unauthorised absence at an early stage before non-attendance becomes entrenched, but they can also be used as a response to unauthorised term time absence.

What is an unauthorised absence?

An unauthorised absence occurs when a parent fails to give a reason for their child's absence or the Head teacher does not agree to accept a parent's reason for a pupil's absence. The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (Regulation 7) states that only a head teacher or their representative can determine if an absence is to be authorised.

'Authorised absence' means that the school has either given approval in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be away, or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for absence.

Is a warning given?

Yes, written warning of the possibility of a Notice being issued will be sent to the parent. This will inform the parent of the extent of their child's absences and give them 15 school days in which to bring about an improvement. In that time, the pupil should have no unauthorised absences from school. There is no limit to the number of formal warnings, which can be issued.

In the case of unauthorised term time leave the warning will be the Head teacher's letter confirming that requested leave of absence has not been authorised. This letter includes a warning that a penalty notice may be issued.

Can a parent receive a Fixed Penalty Notice for more than one child?

Multiple Fixed Penalty Notices can be issued to the same parents during the year.

Is there an appeal process?

Fixed Penalty Notice fines are set by government regulation and are not based upon ability to pay. There is no provision for payment instalments nor is there a statutory right of appeal once a fixed-penalty notice has been issued. Fixed Penalty notices can only be withdrawn if they were issued in error or to the wrong person or there is material evidence of error.

How do parents pay the Penalty Notice?

Details of payment arrangements will be included on the Fixed Penalty Notice.

Can a parent be prosecuted if they pay the Penalty Notice but their child is still missing school?

Not for the period stated in the Fixed Penalty Notice, since payment of the penalty discharges their liability for that period. However, it could be the case that a prosecution could be considered for further periods of poor attendance not covered by the Notice, depending on the circumstances.

How many penalty notices can be issued to a parent?

Each parent can receive up to two penalty notices for the same child in any one academic year.

What happens if the Penalty is not paid?

Parents have up to 28 days from receipt to pay the Penalty in full, after which the Authority is required under the legislation to commence proceedings in the local Magistrates' Court for the original offence of failing to ensure the child attended school regularly. If proven, this can attract

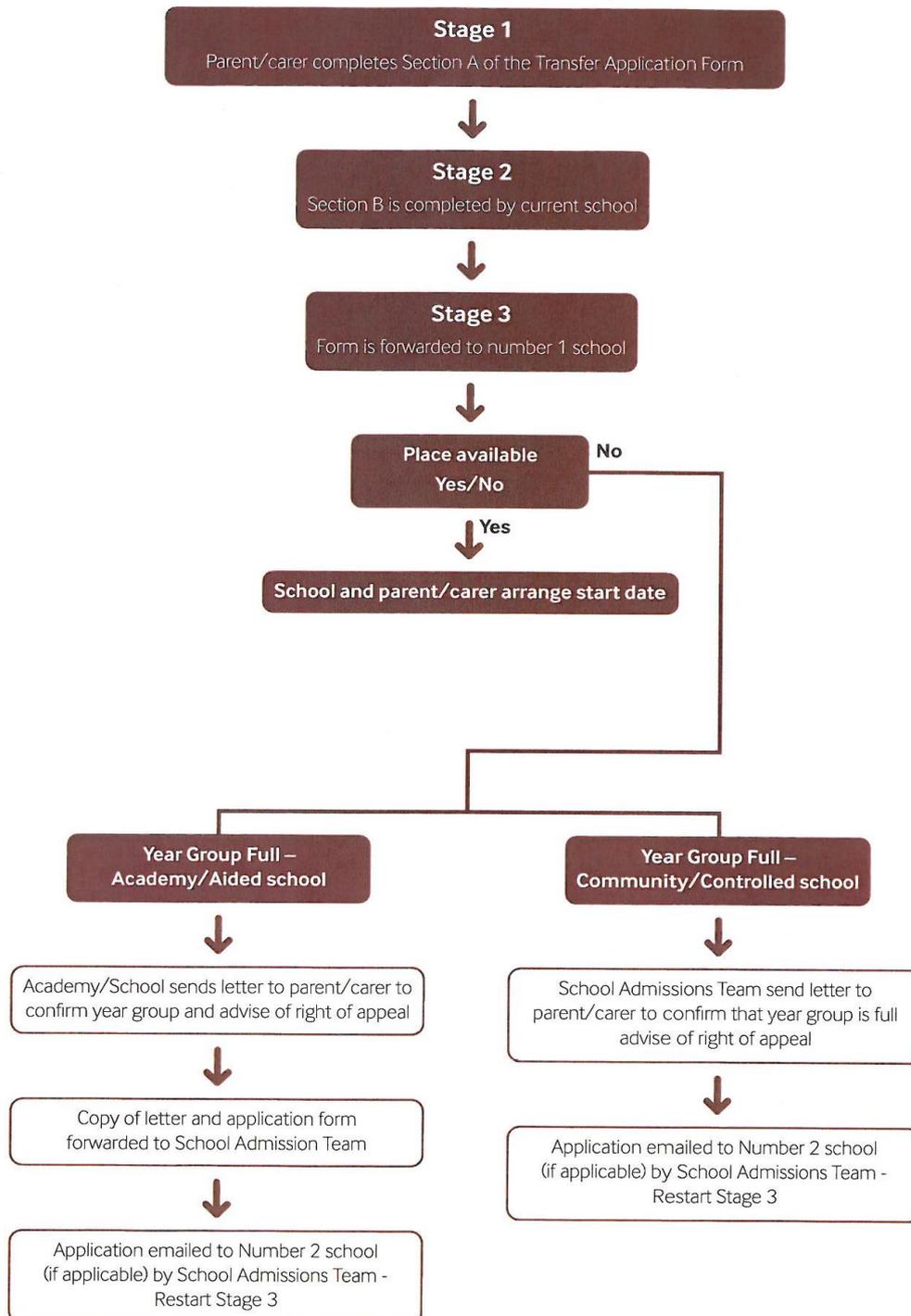
a range of sentences including fines of up to £1,000. Costs may also be imposed and the parent will be the subject of a criminal record.

Appendix 4

School Transfer Process

(Transfer application forms are available from the Academy Office)

Transfer Process – Primary Schools (not Academy 360 and Grindon Hall Christian School)



Appendix 5

Attendance Codes – Descriptions and Meanings

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
D	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)	Approved Education Activity
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc appointments)	Authorised absence
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental Appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved Sporting Activity	Approved Education Activity
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
X	Non-compulsory school age absence	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendances

Appendix 6

Red, Amber, Green Attendance Status Letters

RED

CONCERNS REGARDING ATTENDANCE
DATE FROM – DATE TO

Dear Parent or Carer of **[Forename] [Surname]**

Child: [Forename] [Surname]

Class: [Reg]

Following a register check, concerns have been raised over **[CHILD]'s** attendance at New Silksworth Academy. It is vital that your child is in school regularly in order to access the full curriculum. **[CHILD]'s** attendance for the academic year to date is **[Percentage]%** which is below our expectations of 96%. The Department for Education describe children who attend school for less than 90% of the time as “persistent absentees”.

We understand that children are often poorly and are genuinely unable to attend school. However, it is vital that **[CHILD]** is in school regularly in order to access the full curriculum.

[CHILD]'s attendance will be monitored closely and may be referred to the Local Authority Attendance Team if it does not improve. If you are experiencing any difficulties, or have any concerns regarding this letter, please do not hesitate to contact me on 0191 5000015.

AMBER

ATTENDANCE
DATE FROM – DATE TO

Dear Parent or Carer of **[Forename] [Surname]**

Child: [Forename] [Surname]

Class: [Reg]

I am writing to inform you of **[Child's Forename]'s** attendance for the academic year to date. Although your child's attendance is not yet 'concerning', they have attendance below 96%. **[Child's Forename]'s** attendance is **[%]**%.

We understand that there may be issues outside of your control and that some of the absences may be related to medical appointments or illness, but we feel you should be aware of your child's attendance and we would encourage you to make every attempt to help your child to improve this.

Please encourage your child and reinforce excellent attendance habits in order that they achieve their full potential.

I would also like to acknowledge your role in our education partnership. With your influence and strong support, I am sure your child's attendance will improve.

GREEN

EXCELLENT ATTENDANCE
DATE FROM – DATE TO

Dear Parent or Carer of **[Forename] [Surname]**

Child: [Forename] [Surname]

Class: [Reg]

It is with great pleasure that I am writing to inform you of **[Child's Forename]**'s excellent attendance for the academic year to date. **[Child's Forename]**'s attendance was a commendable **[%]%**.

I know from experience that there is a strong link between good attendance and academic progress and I am sure that this will help your child to fulfil their potential.

Please take the opportunity to congratulate your child and reinforce the excellent attendance habits they have developed.

I would also like to acknowledge your role in our education partnership. Without your influence and strong support I am sure it would be more difficult to achieve such a positive result.