



Lime Tree Primary Academy

BRIGHT FUTURES EDUCATIONAL TRUST

Attendance Policy

Date	Review Date	Coordinator	Nominated Governor
May 2021	May 2023	Debbie Rea	Joanne Egerton

Introduction:

Regular attendance at academy is essential if children are to get the best possible start in life. It enables them to access, and engage in, appropriate educational opportunities that provide them with the knowledge and skills to achieve their full potential. Children who fail to attend regularly are very likely to underachieve and may become victims of anti-social or criminal behaviour.

Lime Tree Primary Academy believe that regular and punctual academy attendance is the key to enabling children to maximise the educational opportunities available to them through enjoying and achieving; becoming healthy young people; being and feeling safe; whose emotional well-being is addressed; and who are able to make a positive contribution to their academy and community.

The academy values all pupils and staff will work with families to identify the reasons for poor attendance and try to resolve any difficulties. However, the academy will challenge pupils and parents who give low priority to attendance and punctuality.

To meet these objectives the academy has established an effective system of communication with parents to provide mutual information, advice and support

Legal Framework:

When a pupil of compulsory academy age is on the academy's register parents are required by law to ensure that their children attend academy regularly and that they arrive on time. A child is of Compulsory Academy Age at the beginning of the term following their 5th birthday. It is important that children from an early age get into good habits of regular attendance that set positive patterns for the future.

Absence from academy should only occur when a child is unfit to attend due to illness; has a day of religious observance or leave of absence has been granted by the academy.

If a pupil does not attend regularly the local authority has a statutory responsibility to enforce parental responsibility and may issue a penalty notice or take legal action if they fail to do so.

- **Penalty Notices:** The Academy recognises the use of penalty notices as an early enforcement measure that are used by the authority in accordance with Trafford Councils Penalty Notice Protocol. The notice can be issued if a child has 10 sessions or more of unauthorised absence, during an academic year. A Penalty Notice is to the value of £60, rising to £120 if not paid within 21 days.

- **Prosecution:** Legal action in the Magistrates Court may be taken. This is to ensure that parents realise their own responsibilities in ensuring attendance at academy and most importantly about returning children to education.

Support Systems:

It is recognised that poor attendance is often an indication of difficulties in a child's life. This may be related to problems at home, in the community or in academy. Parents and Carers should make academy aware of any difficulties or changes in circumstances that may affect their child's attendance and or behaviour in academy, for example, bereavement, divorce/separation, incidents of domestic abuse. This will help the academy identify any additional support that may be required.

The academy works closely with the authorities Education Welfare Officer in matters relating to poor academy attendance and continuing late arrival at academy. Other support services are requested to provide assistance on a needs led basis.

Arrival and registration:

The registers are taken twice a day at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions. Each academy day counts as two attendances.

All children should be in the playground and ready to come into academy at 8.50am each day. The academy gates are open from 8.40am and this enables pupils to socialise with their friends and helps start the day calmly. Pupils should not arrive before 8.40a.m.

Morning registration starts at 8.50 am. If a child arrives after the end of the registration period, 9.00am they will be marked **late**. After 9.30 am they will become an **Unauthorised Absence**.

Afternoon registration begins at 1.00pm and ends at 1.15pm after which a pupil will be marked **late** in the register. Children arriving after 1.40pm will be marked as **Unauthorised Absence**.

Lateness:

When children arrive in academy late, or if they have to leave academy early, the parent or carer should call at the academy office to sign them in or out. The signing in/out register is used as an appendix to the class register as part of the academy's health and safety procedures.

Categorising absence:

When a pupil is absent, the register must show whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised. Absence can only be authorised by the academy and **cannot be authorised by parents**. All absences will be treated as unauthorised unless a satisfactory explanation for the pupil's absence has been received.

Illness: The academy office should be **informed before 9.30 am on the first day of a child's absence** due to illness with an expected date of return. Parents should keep in regular contact with the academy if the absence continues. Children should return to academy as soon as they are well enough to attend. Parents may be asked to provide medical evidence where there are repeated absences due to reported illness. This will usually be in the form of an appointment card, prescription, GP's note, etc.

Medical appointments: Parents should make every possible effort to make medical and dental appointments outside of the academy day so as not to disrupt their child's education. If it is absolutely necessary to make an appointment during academy time pupils should attend academy for part of the day. Parents should show the appointment card to academy.

Other Authorised Circumstances: The academy will consider authorising absence on occasions where there is absence due to exceptional circumstances, for example a family bereavement.

Lateness: Late absence will only be authorised if a satisfactory explanation for the late arrival can be provided, for example, attendance at a medical appointment. The absence will be recorded as **unauthorised** if the pupil has arrived late without justifiable cause, for example, if they woke up late or were waiting for their uniform to dry.

Exclusion from academy: Exclusion is counted as an authorised absence. Parents are responsible for educating their child during the first 6 days of exclusion and the child's class teacher will make arrangements for work to be sent home.

Leave of Absence: The academy is unable to authorise holidays during academy time in line with national regulations. Parents **do not** have an automatic right to remove their child from academy during term time for leave of absence. If your child is absent for 10 academy days they will miss 5% of their education during the academic year.

The Head of Academy has the discretion to authorise leave of absence. Leave of absence can only be granted in **exceptional circumstances**.

Parents wishing to take their child on leave of absence during term time must submit a request form to the Head Of Academy. In all cases parents will be required to justify why the leave of absence needs to be taken during term time.

Each request will be considered individually and will take the following factors into account; -

- The age of the pupil and their attendance record;
- The reason for the leave of absence during academy time;
- The length of the proposed leave of absence;
- Leave will not be authorised during any tests, SAT's or public examinations.

All requests for leave of absence will be responded to in writing. If leave of absence is granted you must make sure that your child attends on the expected date of return. The parent must contact the academy if there is an unavoidable delay. If the permission to take leave is not granted and the pupil is absent from academy, the absence will be **unauthorised**.

Unauthorised absence due to a holiday may result in the issuing of a Penalty Notice to the parent or carer.

If a pupil fails to return and contact with the parents has not been made or received, the academy may take the pupil off the academy's roll in compliance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. This means that the child will lose their academy place.

Religious Observance: The academy acknowledges the multi-faith nature of British society and recognises that on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside academy holiday periods or weekends. The academy will authorise absence on parental request for absence or special leave for religious observance. Parents are requested to give advance notice to the academy if they intend their child to be absent.

Unauthorised absence: Absence will not be authorised unless parents have provided a satisfactory explanation and that it has been accepted as such by the academy. Unsatisfactory explanations include: Shopping for uniforms; A pupil's or family members birthday; Unauthorised holidays; Closure of a sibling's academy for INSET (or other) purposes; "Couldn't get up"; Illness where the child is considered well enough to attend academy; Having their hair cut; Looking after the house or a sick member of the family. This is a general list and is not exhaustive. Repetitive unauthorised absence may result in the issuing of a Penalty Notice to the parent or carer.

Roles and Responsibilities:

Lime Tree Primary Academy believe that improved academy attendance can only be achieved if it is viewed as a shared responsibility of the academy staff, governors, parents, pupils and the wider academy community.

The Governing Body

in order to ensure that the academy is complying with its statutory duties, will:

- Review the academy's Attendance Policy and ensure the required resources are available to fully implement the policy;
- Monitor the academy's attendance and related issues through termly reporting at Governing Body Meetings;
- Ensure that there is a named senior member of staff to lead on attendance;

The Academy Council

will be involved in: -

- Discussing improvements to the academy attendance policy when it is due for review;
- Reviewing the effectiveness of the policy in its support to young people.

The Academy will:

- Ensure that there is a whole academy approach which reinforces good academy attendance; with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all pupils to attend and to achieve;
- Monitor Attendance effectively and follow up absence appropriately;
- Raise awareness of regular academy attendance by highlighting expectations in ParentMail, newsletters, publish on the school website, assemblies and parent meetings;
- Encourage a welcoming and positive atmosphere in which pupils feel safe, secure and their presence is valued;
- Reward pupil's successes in achieving high attendance standards;
- Discuss appropriate strategies with pupils and parents to support those with attendance difficulties;
- Use appropriate resources and advise parents on accessing support to aid their child's social, emotional and behavioural development;
- Ensure staff receive training regarding supporting pupils with academy attendance difficulties;
- Consider individual circumstances and discuss strategies with parents and pupils in the event of a child returning to academy after a lengthy absence.

Academy response to Absence and lateness:

- The Academy will operate a first day calling system; where a parent has failed to report their child as absent before 9.30am. This is in line with our Safeguarding Policy.
- The academy will work closely with the Trafford Pupil Absence Team to monitor all pupils absence;
- Parents of pupils who are regularly late for academy or are consistently poor attenders will receive a letter from the academy expressing concern;
- If there is no improvement in attendance following a letter the parents will be invited into academy to discuss the situation with the Attendance Lead/Head of School;
- If academy interventions fail to resolve issues of poor attendance and punctuality the matter will be referred to the Trafford Pupil Absence Team.
- If a pupil is subject to a child protection plan the Trafford Pupil Absence Team will be notified on the first day of absence.

Parental Expectations:

Parents have a very important part to play in supporting their children's education. Ultimately all those with parental responsibility are accountable for the regular and punctual attendance of children. In order to make a valuable contribution to their attendance parents are expected to: -

- Talk to their child about academy and what goes on there. Take a positive interest in their child's work and educational progress;
- See themselves as partners with academy's in the education of their children and must endeavour to instil respect for education and those who deliver it;
- **Contact the academy by 9.30 a.m. on the first day of absence** to let them know the reason why and the expected date of return. Follow this up with a note to the academy;
- Try to avoid unnecessary absences. Wherever possible **make appointments for the Doctors, Dentists etc. outside of academy hours** or during academy holidays;
- Parents are urged to contact the **Head of Academy or Pastoral Manager** should their child seem worried or upset about coming to academy;
- Encourage good routines at home, for example, bed times, homework, preparing academy bag and uniform the evening before;
- Not keep their child off academy to go shopping, to help at home or to look after other members of the family;
- Ensure that their children arrive at academy on time, appropriately dressed, and in a condition to learn;
- Ensure the academy are kept informed of the progress during continued absence at regular intervals;
- Avoid taking their children on holiday during academy time;

Academy Expectations of Pupils:

- Children should try their best to attend academy regularly and punctually;
- Pupils arriving after 9.00am should always report to the academy office.

Equality Impact Assessment

Under the Equality Act 2010 we have a duty not to discriminate against people on the basis of their age, disability, gender, gender identity, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

This policy has been equality impact assessed and we believe that it is in line with the Equality Act 2010 as it is fair, it does not prioritise or disadvantage any pupil and it helps to promote equality at this school. (See Initial Equality Impact Assessment)

Monitoring the Implementation and Effectiveness of the Policy

The practical application of this policy will be reviewed every 24 months or when the need arises by the coordinator, the Head of School and the nominated governor.

A statement of the policy's effectiveness and the necessary recommendations for improvement will be presented to the Governing Body for further discussion and endorsement.

Head of School:	Clare Larkin	Date:	20 th May 2021
Chair of Governing Body:	Dan Jagger	Date:	20 th May 2021