

ATTENDANCE POLICY

2020 - 2021

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| Author: | Mrs A E Jeffery |
| Reviewed by The Local Governing Body: | November 2020 |
| Adopted (date): | November 2020 |
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At the de Ferrers Academy we believe that high attendance rates are a significant factor in maintaining the quality of education that we provide. If we are to maintain the continuity of education for all our students, maximise their potential and prepare them for the world of work, we must ensure that absenteeism is kept to an absolute minimum.

The Governors and employees at the Academy will do all they can to ensure that students attend regularly and that any problems which impact on their attendance are quickly identified and acted upon.

EXPECTATIONS

We expect that all students will:

- Aim for 100% attendance.
- Arrive on campus at 8.45a.m. and be ready to start tutor time promptly at 8:55 a.m. each day except Thursday – alternative timetable
- Take pride in their appearance and be dressed appropriately in the academy uniform and adhere to the rules relating to piercings and make-up.
- Arrive at the academy fully prepared for the day ahead.
- Speak to a member of Support and Guidance, Additional Support or the Attendance team regarding any problems that may affect their attendance at the academy.

We expect that all parents/guardians will:

- Encourage their child to attend the academy every day and on time.
- Ensure that your child adheres to the academy rules on uniform, piercings and make-up.
- **Ensure that you report your child's absence daily before 8:30 a.m. to the relevant campus**

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| Years 7 & 8, | Telephone: 01283 247750 | Email: doveattendance@deferrers.com |
| Years 9 10 and 11 | Telephone: 01283 247700 | Email: trentattendance@deferrers.com |
| Sixth Form Centre | Telephone: 01283 372580 | Email: khobson@deferrers.com |

- Provide the academy with up-to-date home, work and mobile numbers, and notify us in writing of any changes of address or circumstances. **The academy request that more than one emergency contact is given.**
- Inform the relevant member of Support & Guidance about any problem which might affect your child's attendance and work with us to resolve it.
- Try to avoid making medical appointments during the academy day as this does affect your child's attendance. If your child does have an appointment that requires them to be absent during the academy day, it is requested that you provide a copy of the appointment letter and minimise the amount of time they are away from lessons.

- If leave from the academy is needed, then a 'Request for Leave' form **must** be completed at least 4 weeks in advance. **Please note that the academy can no longer authorise any leave of absence (holiday) during term-time. Any leave of absence that totals 6 or exceeds 5 consecutive days, or leave of absence plus unauthorised absences exceeding 5 days, over a continual 12 school week period will mean that a referral has to be made to the Local Authority where a fine may be issued.**

Please see the academy's website for more details.

Parents/Guardians can expect that the academy will:

- Provide an excellent level of education and opportunities for all students.
- Encourage students to arrive at their classrooms on time and prepared for the lesson ahead.
- Record a student's attendance within 10 minutes of the start of the lesson.
- On the first day of a student's absence the Attendance Team will make every reasonable effort to contact the parent/guardian to ascertain the reason for the absence if the parent/guardian has failed to do so.
- Act on any issues which may affect student's attendance, which the academy has been made aware of, as soon as possible and feed back to relevant parties.
- Support parents/guardians when their child is refusing to attend the academy by making a referral to the relevant campus attendance team and Academy Attendance Link Worker. Depending on the circumstance, a referral may be made to the safeguarding team.
- Encourage and reward good attendance and punctuality using the new reward/achievement system – introduced September 2020 **See Appendix 1 for a comprehensive list**

PROMOTING GOOD ATTENDANCE

The de Ferrers Academy will monitor attendance daily by registering students during tutor time and at the beginning of every lesson. This will be closely overseen by the relevant Key Stage Clerical Assistant – Attendance.

We will encourage good attendance by:

- Endeavouring to accurately complete attendance registers at the beginning of every lesson and aiming for these to be completed within 10 minutes.
- Following up any unexplained absence on the first day by alerting parents/guardians using the absence text message. If there is no contact from parents/guardians following the text message then if possible, a telephone call may be made before lunch time.
- If no contact has been made after three days of absences a referral will be made to the Academy's Attendance Link Worker, where a home visit will be carried out.

If a student is vulnerable than absence will be followed up within the same academy day

- Tutors are required to follow up any absences where an explanation has not been provided. Student's absence will be coded as unauthorised until an explanation has been received.
- Students' attendance is checked hourly throughout the day to ensure that all students are attending their lessons. If there are inconsistencies in a student's attendance marks, a member of the Support

& Guidance team will investigate the reasons behind this and act appropriately by referring to the 'Missing Students during the Academy Day' procedure.

- Attendance and punctuality letters will be sent out at the end of each half term or when necessary. A meeting may be arranged with your child's Head of Year to discuss how improvements can be made in relation to your child's attendance.
- Maintain regular communication with the academy's Attendance Link Worker to discuss and monitor any students that may be a cause for concern. This information is discussed at the weekly campus meetings with the Head of Campus, Support and Guidance and Additional support.
- The Academy Attendance Link Worker will run regular workshops focusing on improving attendance with small groups of students that the academy feel needs additional intervention/support.
- Students with attendance under 96% will be identified and discussed within the Attendance Team meetings.
- Ensure all information pertaining to attendance and absences will be accessible on The de Ferrers Academy website.

RESPONDING TO NON-ATTENDANCE

When a student fails to attend the Academy without a satisfactory explanation, the Attendance Team will:

- Contact the parent/guardian on the first day of absence by sending a generic text message by 10:00 a.m. If the parent/guardian has not made contact by 11:00 am, a telephone call will then be made.
- Text messages and telephone calls will be made daily if there has been no contact from parents/guardians. After the third day of unexplained absences, a referral will be made to the academy's Attendance Link Worker and where possible, a home visit will be carried out.
- If the non-attendance continues beyond nine days, the Attendance Link Worker will inform the member of ALT responsible for attendance and actions will be escalated which may involve joint home visits being made. Year teams will be kept fully informed regarding these students. Where there are significant concerns a referral will be made to the safeguarding team.
- If a student is absence for 20 consecutive days with no contact from home, then the academy can take the decision to remove the child from the school's register and refer the student to the 'Children Missing Education' department along with a referral to the Education Welfare Worker. **The member of ALT responsible for admissions will be informed of these students, especially at the start of a new academic year.**
- If the student or parent/guardian fails to respond to all attempts of contact, the matter will be discussed further with the Attendance Team and Safeguarding Teams with a view to a formal referral to the Local Authority.

The return and reintegration of a student to the academy after a lengthy absence requires special planning. Prior to the student returning, a meeting will be arranged with the relevant Key Stage Support and Guidance Leader, Support Hub Manager, and the Attendance Team. The Academy Health Advisor will also be informed if a student has a medical issue which may require special consideration, and this will be added to the student's information in SIMS.

LATENESS

Lateness is monitored closely by the Head of Year and Clerical Assistant - Attendance. Tutors and teachers are required to record lateness on the registers.

Sanctions

- Students who arrive late for a lesson will receive a comment in the online Behaviour system
- Parents/guardians will be made aware of their child's persistent lateness and advised of how many minutes of education have been lost. Parents/guardians may be invited to the academy if concerns continue.
- If a student received 10 unauthorised late marks (U code) during a twelve-week period, the academy will refer to the Local Authority and you may receive a penalty warning notice and possibly a fine.

ORGANISATION

For this policy to be successful, all staff must make attendance a high priority and convey to the students the significant link between attendance and attainment.

RESPONSIBILITIES Governors and Principal

- To ensure that the academy has in place an attendance policy that is accessible by all.
- To be made aware of all strategies to help improve attendance and provide support to the Attendance Team.
- To receive annual reports from the Principal in respect of attendance data and trends.
- To monitor the effectiveness of the academy policy.

Associate Leadership

- To oversee the policy.
- To have particular regard to the equalities aspects of the policy especially in relation to Pupil Premium, SEND, gender, ethnicity, Looked after Children and Young Carers and will work with the Groups Achievement Leader in promoting high attendance within these groups
- To report to Governors on attendance issues on a regular basis.
- To produce an annual attendance action plan which is regularly reviewed.
- To liaise with the Attendance Team and chair calendared meetings.
- To oversee the collation and analysis of attendance data and share as appropriate with the Attendance team, Support and Guidance and ALT.
- To produce an attendance profile for the academy using regular SIMs reports which indicate the number of unauthorised absences, authorised absences and any attendance patterns.

- Ensuring that appropriate strategies are implemented to make the necessary improvements.

The academy no longer has an EWO. The Attendance Link Worker has now moved to full-time employment as of September 2020

Attendance Link Worker

- To contribute to and implement the annual attendance action plan and review.
- To lead Attendance Team meetings in the absence of ALT and feedback.
- To identify key concerns from the analysis of attendance data and suggest relevant interventions
- To produce an attendance profile for the academy using regular SIMs reports indicating unauthorised absences, persistent absences and attendance percentage.
- Ensure the appropriate strategies are implemented to improve attendance.
- To be fully aware of the Local Authority policy on attendance issues and take appropriate action when needed. This will include all Penalty notices/Court action
- To know the students who have requested Elective Home Education or those Missing in Education. Current DfE guidelines and academy procedures must be followed.
- To fully support all aspects of work within the Attendance Team

Attendance Team – KS3 and KS4 Clerical Assistant – Attendance, Attendance Link Worker

- To ensure all registers are completed for every lesson and run a daily absence report for their relevant Key Stage years.
- Record any telephone, email or text messages received from parents/guardians who have advised the academy of their child's absence.
- To follow up on any absences that have not been explained by either a text message, telephone call or home visit.
- To check that all registers have been taken within the first 30 minutes of a lesson and contact individual teachers if these have not been done. If there are inconsistencies in a student's marks, checks will be made to see if the student is present. The marks on SIMs will be amended if the student is present or the relevant Year Head will be notified if a child is suspected of truanting.
- If a student is found to be truanting from a lesson, the Behaviour Policy will be followed, and the student will be sanctioned following discussion with the appropriate Head of Campus. **Appendix 2**
- To attend regular meetings with the Attendance Manager to discuss students with attendance of less than 96%.
- To feedback any attendance issues to the Support and Guidance team at the weekly Key Stage meetings.
- To maintain regular contact with the member of ALT responsible for attendance and informed them of all students who are presenting with attendance concerns. To also notify the Attendance Link Worker and Head of Campus of all students requesting home education or those who are missing from education.

- To raise the profile of attendance at appropriate times such as assemblies, tutor time or during Parents' Evenings. **See Appendix 3 for suggestions.**
- To set up attendance intervention groups and 1:1 support for specific students following discussions with the appropriate Head of Year.
- To reward all students and tutor groups with good attendance at the end of each half and full term. 100% attendance accrues points with the new rewards system – September 2020

Head/Assistant Head of Year

- To identify early any student whose attendance is causing concern.
- To communicate with parents/guardians of the academy's initial concerns.
- Speak with the individual student to ascertain reasons for absence and encourage good attendance.
- Refer to the Attendance Team if concerns persist.
- To act swiftly when made aware of any issues affecting attendance.
- Raise awareness of good attendance during assemblies.
- Reward excellent attendance to individuals and tutor groups.

Subject Teachers

- To complete registers accurately and on time for every lesson. Request a paper copy of the register if the internet is not working.
- To ensure the registers are saved appropriately or, if using a paper register, taken to the Support and Guidance office.
- To update the register when students arrive late to lesson, making a note of the number of minutes late. If this is not possible due to the lesson starting, direct the student to the Support & Guidance office to update their mark.
- To advise Support & Guidance as soon as possible if you feel that a student has truanted from your lesson.
- To identify any student who is developing a pattern to their absences or whose attendance is becoming problematic.

Form Tutor

- To complete the register accurately and on time. Request a paper copy if the internet is not working and return to the Support & Guidance office as soon as possible.
- To collect absence letters from students and remind students that a letter must be received within 5 school days following an absence. Reinforce that absence will remain unauthorised until the explanation has been received.
- To regularly remind students of the importance of attendance and good time keeping.

- To liaise with the Support & Guidance Team/Attendance Team of any concerns.
- To identify any student who is developing a pattern to their absences or whose attendance is becoming problematic.

Attendance - Dealing with exceptional circumstances

DfE Guideline December 2015 – Supporting students at school with medical conditions

The academy must ensure that any student who falls into the above category, short or long-term is supported through their educational establishment. This must be supported by written medical evidence. Referrals will be made to the local authority Alternative Provision Panel (Staffordshire) where a suitable package of support which is appropriate to the students age, aptitude, ability, and any special educational needs.

Covid 19 - Students returning to full time education

Work with government guidance as provided and updated. The pandemic is having a huge impact on children's education and in line with government expectations we are continually working to provide a safe learning environment for all students. The policy and procedures are the same but there are additional measures that must be implemented.

Full reopening of schools from September 2020 following the period of lockdown due to the Covid pandemic.

- The academy is working to the government guidelines and all Covid related absence is being coded appropriately and closely monitored across the whole academy.
- New information is shared across the teams and implemented.
- Remote learning procedures are in place for students who are absent due to Covid issues either as individuals or within households.
- Contact with families is a high priority and all Covid issues are followed with consistent messages from the academy
- The strategic arrangements in place to protect staff and students are there to minimise the impact of a positive case being reported.
- The Attendance Team are fully aware of their responsibility in providing accurate information on the Covid Attendance Log – specifically set up as a shared document. This includes current/new absence with reason and the date of return.

Appendix 1: Attendance recognition and rewards

The De Ferrers Academy acknowledges the importance of recognising and rewarding students with excellent school attendance. As a result, in line with academy's behaviour policy, the academy will adopt a range of strategies to ensure that students are encouraged to attend school.

This may include:

- Verbal praise from Tutors, Head of Year, Academy Leadership Team and/or Principal.
- Letters home to Parent/ Carers regarding excellent and improved attendance.
- Praise letter or postcards.
- Telephone or emails home regarding excellent attendance
- Certificate of commendation for attendance.
- Recognition in assemblies and other public occasions.
- Recognition in newsletters and on attendance notice boards.
- Nomination for awards at Awards Evenings.
- Invitations to participate in extra-curricular activities
- Class or form prizes for attendance competitions.
- Individual attendance awards, entrance into prize draws and individual personalised awards.

Appendix 2: Procedure for Missing Students during the Academy Day (inc. Truancy)

Addressing issues around missing students during the academy day is a priority for all stakeholders. These include the student, academy staff, parents, carers, and other agencies where necessary.

Detailed documents will be completed and kept on file as a record.

Appendix 3: Strategies for raising the profile of “Attendance Matters”

Raising awareness of both individual and whole school attendance is vital to ensure that attitudes to learning and its links to attainment are recognised by students, parents and the wider community alike. As an academy we aim to promote the importance of attendance through the following methods:

- High Profile Attendance Ethos which is communicated through our Information Booklet for all new students, Student Planner and academy website.
- Ensure that all parents/carers and students are aware of their current attendance percentage and its equivalent lost hours of learning through the SIMS Parent App
- Ensure all students are aware of expectations and links between attendance and future expectations
- All staff understand their role in managing and supporting student’s academy attendance.
- Newsletters
- Posters/Banners – use of the TV Display screens
- Posters and banners are displayed around the school site promoting the importance of excellent school attendance.
- Attendance display boards
- Attendance display boards are highly visible in the academy and within classrooms and will include the follow:
 - Information on current attendance including whole school, form groups, year groups and houses
 - Attendance competitions and winners
 - Information on attendance incentives and rewards
 - Recent newsletters and updates.
- Assemblies and Reward Events
- Raising awareness of attendance through assemblies encouraging students to participate in attendance discussion and policy
- Awards and presentation in recognition of excellent attendance.
- Letters to all academy pupils identifying their attendance to be red, amber or green and detailing future expectations regarding attendance.
- Student focus groups
- Enable students to take ownership of attendance in school and attendance policy.
- Ensure that the voice of the student is heard in target setting, and identification of prizes and rewards.