



STUDENT ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY

Date:	Autumn Term 2018	Governing Body Signature
Review Date:	Autumn Term 2021 OR As required in line with changes in legislation if sooner.	

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SECTION 1: Introduction

I.1 Links with other Policies

This Attendance and Punctuality Policy has obvious links with the wider safeguarding agenda such as:

- Washwood Heath Multi Academy Trust (WHMAT) Safeguarding Policy
- WHMAT Equality Policy
- WHMAT SEND Policy
- WHMAT Supporting Students with Medical Conditions Policy
- Tile Cross Academy Curriculum Policy
- Tile Cross Academy Behaviour Policy
- Tile Cross Academy Admissions Policy

In drawing up this policy Tile Cross Academy has referred to the procedures of Birmingham City Council Education Legal Intervention Team.

Tile Cross Academy will fulfil their local and national responsibilities as laid out in the following documents: -

- The Education (Student Registration) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2016 Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- [Children missing education: statutory guidance for local authorities](#) (DfE)
- The most recent version of [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#): Statutory guidance for schools and colleges (DfE)
- The most recent version of [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) (DfE)
- School attendance parental responsibility measures: Statutory guidance for local authorities, school leaders, school staff, governing bodies and the police.

I.2 Statutory Duties

The Education Act 1996 requires parents or guardians to ensure their children receive full time education by regular attendance at a school or by other arrangements. Parents have the responsibility for making sure their children attend school on time.

SECTION 2: Aims

Tile Cross Academy is responsible for recording student attendance twice a day, once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session. We aim to:

1. Improve the overall percentage of students' attendance
2. Reduce the level of persistent absence (PA)
3. Make attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with Tile Cross Academy including students, parents/carers, teachers, support staff, governors and directors.
4. Develop a framework which defines agreed roles and responsibilities and promotes consistency in carrying out designated tasks.
5. Provide support, advice and guidance to parents/carers and students.

6. Develop a systematic approach to gathering and analysing attendance related data.
7. Further develop positive and consistent communication between home and the Academy
8. Implement a system of rewards and sanctions
9. Work in an effective partnership with students, parents/carers, school staff and with other relevant external services and agencies.

SECTION 3: Purpose

At Tile Cross 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 our students, maximise their potential and prepare them for the world of work, we must ensure that absenteeism is kept to an absolute minimum.

Tile Cross Academy aims to ensure that all students receive a full-time education which maximises opportunities for each student to realise his/her full potential.

Tile Cross Academy expects the students in our schools to have exemplary attendance and punctuality and will put in place appropriate procedures to encourage and support this.

We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is the development of positive attitudes towards school. To this end, Tile Cross Academy strives to make school a welcoming, happy, caring environment, which provides a rewarding experience for all children, which meets their needs and enables them to thrive.

Tile Cross Academy will monitor attendance and punctuality tightly, engage effectively with outside agencies and offer a range of support strategies in order to ensure our students maximise their attendance and aspire to outstanding levels of attendance at least in line with, or above, the most recent national guidelines.

Tile Cross Academy will establish an effective system of incentives and rewards which acknowledge the efforts of students to improve their attendance and timekeeping, and will challenge the behaviour of those students and parents/ carers who give low priority to attendance and punctuality.

To meet these objectives Tile Cross Academy will establish an effective and efficient system of communication with students, parents and appropriate agencies to provide mutual information, advice and support.

SECTION 4: Roles and responsibilities regarding attendance

4.1 Parents

Tile Cross Academy expects all students to be punctual and maintain high levels of attendance. Students should arrive at Tile Cross Academy ready to learn.

Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 states that:

'If a child of compulsory school age, who is a registered student at a school, fails to attend regularly at the school his/her parent(s) are guilty of an offence'.

Once a child is enrolled at Tile Cross Academy it is the legal responsibility of parents/carers to ensure that their child attends school on time every day, ready and willing to learn, unless prevented from doing so by illness or other exceptional circumstances for which absence is authorised by the school.

Students are expected to adopt an appropriate, mature and responsible approach to their own attendance and punctuality, and understand the consequences to their achievement if they do not attend regularly and punctually.

It is a parent/ carer's legal responsibility to ensure their child receives appropriate education. Failing to send their child to school regularly, without good reason, is a criminal offence.

It is a parent/ carer's responsibility to know, understand and comply with the procedures of Tile Cross Academy for reporting absence.

Parents/carers are expected to know what absences are acceptable, this is outlined in the "Spotlight on Attendance" letter to all parents (Appendix I).

Any absence will only be authorised at the discretion of the Head of the Academy.

Parents should be aware of the legal consequences of non-attendance, as detailed the "Spotlight on Attendance" letter to all parents (Appendix I).

Parents/carers should be aware that poor punctuality may result in an unauthorised absence being recorded which could lead to intervention via the Academy, or prosecution for unauthorised absence through Birmingham City Council's Education Legal Intervention Team.

It is the responsibility of parents/carers to inform Tile Cross Academy of any barriers to their child attending the Academy.

It is the responsibility of all parents/carers to inform the Academy's Attendance team on their child's first day and every day of absence by 8.40am, stating the reason for absence and the likely date of return. **The Attendance Team phone number is 0121 566 6413.**

If the Academy is not informed of the reason for a child's absence on the first day, the Academy will follow up all absences with an appropriate level of response on the first and subsequent days. This includes texts, phone calls or home visits.

It is the parent/carer's responsibility to ensure that all contact details are accurate and up to date.

On the fifth day of absence the parent/carer is requested to contact their child's Academy immediately to discuss additional support needs. If contact is not made by the parent/carer by the fifth day of absence, Tile Cross Academy has a legal duty to inform Birmingham City Council.

In order for the Academy to authorise absence, medical evidence may be requested if non-attendance is due to illness. This could include:

- Medical appointment card with one appointment entered, stamped by a doctor's surgery;
- Letter from a qualified medical professional;
- Medical/doctors note;
- Medication prescribed by a GP;
- Copy of prescription;
- Print screen of medical notes;
- Letters concerning hospital appointments;
- Slip with date, students name and surgery stamp, signed by GP Receptionist.

Medical evidence may also be requested, at the discretion of the Academy, if there is a pattern of non- attendance due to illness or medically related issues.

4.2 Students

As a student in a Tile Cross Academy, you are expected to come to school every day that school is open, on time and ready to learn. Tile Cross Academy's values support you to build resilience. Even if you feel a little unwell you are expected to attend school every day. Should it be necessary, Tile Cross Academy will contact your parents/ carer if there is a reason for you to be sent home.

4.3 Form Tutor and teachers

Form Tutors and teachers are expected to encourage good punctuality and set an example by not being late. Tile Cross Academy expects all Form Tutors and teachers to encourage punctuality through the appropriate meeting and greeting of groups.

It is the responsibility of all Form Tutors and teachers to formally take their class register, in silence, accurately and within 5 minutes of the start.

All lateness to form and lessons must be challenged appropriately and recorded both on Go4Schools and in student planners.

Tile Cross Academy expects all Form Tutors to support the regular attendance of their students by addressing any barriers that may prevent their good attendance.

Teachers should support absent students, and those who are returning to school following an absence, by ensuring that adequate resources are provided for their positive re-integration. This can include the use of online resources in addition to paper based work.

Form Tutors and teachers are expected to monitor their form and class attendance and identify patterns and report any concerns to the student's Head of House or the Attendance Team.

The link between attendance and attainment should be actively promoted.

Having received information from the Pastoral team, Form Tutors should set or reinforce realistic attendance targets with each member of the form group. Form Tutors are expected to act on the attendance data provided by the Pastoral Team to monitor the attendance of their students and report any concerns to the Head of House.

Form Tutors should support students who are returning to school following an absence.

4.4 Heads of House

Tile Cross Academy expects all Heads of House to promote the regular attendance of students by addressing any barriers that may prevent good attendance.

Heads of House should set attendance targets for each tutor group with Form Tutors,

Heads of House should rigorously monitor attendance and liaise regularly with the Academy's Attendance Team and Welfare team.

Attendance and punctuality should appear as an item on all Heads of House meeting agendas.

In all cases of absence (whether an explanation for an absence has been received from parents/carers or not) the Head of House is responsible for making contact with parents/carers to confirm the nature of the absence.

It is the responsibility of the Heads of House and Attendance Manager to promote and celebrate good attendance and punctuality through the use of the Academy's reward system.

4.5 Attendance Team (Attendance Manager and Senior Leadership Team Attendance Lead)

It is the responsibility of the Academy's Attendance Manager to maintain the day to day running of attendance procedures and to regularly update procedures, in liaison with the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) Attendance Lead and the WHMAT Director of Safeguarding and Attendance.

It is the responsibility of the Academy's Attendance Team to track and monitor all students' attendance and to implement the Absence Procedure (See 5.5) and to ensure that students who are Persistent Absentees (below 90% attendance) are tracked and monitored and are referred to the student support team initially, or Education Legal Intervention Team where appropriate.

In all cases of absence (whether an explanation for an absence has been received from parents/carers or not) the Head of House is responsible for making contact with parents/carers to confirm the nature of the absence. Where contact is not made by parents/carers, the Attendance Manager will coordinate home visits on the Day 3 of absence; on Day 4 they will organise for a police safe and well check; on Day 5 they will contact BCC Children Missing Education team.

The Attendance Team should analyse attendance data to identify any patterns of concern and liaise with the relevant parties e.g. Form Tutor, Subject teachers, Pastoral Managers and Deputy Head teacher (Behaviour, Attendance and Safeguarding).

The Attendance Team is expected to liaise with Form Tutors, Subject Teachers, Pastoral Managers, parents, and other relevant members of staff and agencies, including the WHMAT Director of Safeguarding and Attendance, on matters of attendance.

The Attendance Team will provide daily, weekly, monthly or termly data as required to SLT, Heads of House, Heads of Faculty and Form Tutors.

The Attendance Team will support the Academy and WHMAT in raising the profile of attendance through publicity including the use of notice boards, newsletters, local media, feeder primary schools, open evenings, parents' evenings and Induction evenings for new students and at all other opportunities.

4.6 Senior Leader with responsibility for Attendance

It is the responsibility of the Senior Leader with responsibility for Attendance to oversee the implementation of Tile Cross Academy's Attendance and Punctuality policy.

In collaboration with the WHMAT Director of Safeguarding and Attendance, the Senior Leader with responsibility for Attendance will monitor, evaluate and review the policy and its impact annually.

The SLT Attendance lead will produce both an Academy Half-Termly report on Attendance and complete a WHMAT attendance return to the Director of Safeguarding.

The Senior Leader with responsibility for Attendance will produce an annual report to the Local Governing Body on matters of attendance.

In each WHMAT Academy, the Senior Leader with responsibility for Attendance will meet with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Pastoral Managers, Attendance Manager and Heads of House to discuss attendance issues and monitor the progress made towards the meeting of agreed attendance targets. They will also meet with the WHMAT Director of Safeguarding and Attendance on a regular basis.

4.7 Middle Leaders

Attendance should appear as an item on Department, House or Pastoral meeting agendas as and when this is necessary. The link between attendance and attainment should be promoted via data provided to staff.

It is the responsibility of Middle Leaders to have an overview of attendance within their departments and act upon any concerns raised by teachers.

4.8 Local Governing Body

The Local Governing Body are responsible for making sure the Academy keeps an attendance register that records which students are present at the start of the morning session and during the afternoon session. This register will also indicate whether an absence was 'authorised' or 'unauthorised'.

The Local Governing Body should monitor and evaluate attendance and ensure the policy is adhered to.

SECTION 5: Absence from school

5.1 External Agency Support

Tile Cross Academy will seek to work with Family Support agencies, Children's Services, the School Health Advisory Service, GPs, hospitals, James Brindley School, Police, YOT and other relevant external agencies if appropriate.

5.2 Students with medical conditions

Any student with a diagnosed medical condition is expected to maintain full attendance at school unless advised by qualified medical practitioners that to do so would compromise either their medical condition, or their recovery.

Tile Cross Academy understands that at times some children may need additional support in order to be able to attend school regularly when medical conditions impact upon their normal routines.

Medical evidence may be requested by the Academy in order to ensure that the appropriate support can be put in place.

As part of Tile Cross Academy's commitment to Working Together to Safeguard Children, consent is expected to be granted by parents to enable the Academy to liaise with medical professionals and other associated external agencies.

5.3 Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.3.1 Authorised absence

An absence is classified as authorised when the school has ascertained that a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or guardian. For example, if a child has been unwell, the parent telephones the school to explain the absence and writes a note.

Exceptional cases of religious observances or particular family circumstances may also result in an authorised absence being granted by the school.

Only the Head of Academy can make an absence authorised. Parents and carers do not have this authority. Consequently, not all absences supported by parents and carers will be classified as authorised. Examples where this happens include where a parent takes a child out of school to go shopping during school hours, or allows a child to stay away from school to celebrate a family birthday or go on a family outing or does not provide appropriate medical certification as requested.

The following examples are circumstances where the Head of Academy may authorise an absence:

- Sickness
Where sickness is in excess of a period of 5 days, medical evidence **MUST** be provided.
In some situations, absences less than 5 days **MAY** require medical evidence.
- Unavoidable medical/dental appointment (half day maximum) proof should be provided, letter or appointment card etc.
- Days of religious observance such as main religious days of Eid/Orthodox Church celebrations (agreed with Head of Academy beforehand)
- Exceptional family circumstances, such as bereavement of a direct relative
- Going on approved educational interviews or examinations, or an educational visit organised by a third party

5.3.2 Unauthorised absence

An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of both the school and a parent.

Therefore, the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent.

It is at the discretion of the Head of the Academy as to whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised.

A telephone call on the first day of absence, followed by a letter on return from parents/carers does not, in itself, authorise an absence; only the Head of Academy's acceptance of the explanation authorises the absence.

The following examples are some of the circumstances where the Head of Academy will not authorise an absence, although this list is not exhaustive:

- Looking after brothers, sisters and others

- Shopping
- Celebrating a birthday
- Sleeping in
- One child is ill, so all are kept off
- Minor ailments such as tummy ache or headache
- Because it is the end of the week or the term, or a day with few lessons, or personal study or it is a non-uniform charity day or a collapsed timetable day.

5.4 Leave of absence in term time including Holidays

Parents/Carers do not have the right to remove students from Tile Cross Academy for holidays.

Only in exceptional circumstances are schools allowed to authorise leave of absence during term time. In exceptional circumstances, requests by parents/carers are to be made to the Head of the Academy in writing, either by completing a Term Time Leave of Absence request form (Appendix 2) or by providing a letter giving at least 4 weeks' notice. Proof of dates of travel will be required.

If students are taken out without the Head of Academy's permission, their absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be liable for prosecution.

If extended leave of absence during term time is taken the student may lose their place on the school roll.

(Please note that the reference in law to Headteachers being able (at their discretion) to agree to leave of absence (for holidays) was removed from 1st September 2013).

5.5 Triggers for low attendance

The school has set the following indicators for cause of attendance concern:

In any ½ term period	Or across 1 term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 periods of absence Or • 2 absence periods extending to 6 or more days Or • 1 absence of 5 or more days 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 periods of absence Or • 8 or more days in a term

Where attendance falls below 94% or activates the above trigger points it becomes a cause of concern. This will lead to a parental meeting with a member of staff e.g. Pastoral Manager or Head of House being arranged. Should a student again hit one of the trigger points then a School Attendance Review Meeting (SARM) with the Attendance Manager will ensue, which is the start of the legal process to bring about an improvement in attendance.

Where attendance falls below 92% a parental meeting will be arranged with the SLT Attendance Lead. The decision may be taken at this meeting to immediately advance the proceedings to initiate a School Attendance Review Meeting (SARM) with the Attendance Manager, which is the start of the legal process.

SECTION 6: The legal consequences of non-attendance

Legal proceedings and Penalty Notices have been introduced to try and ensure the regular attendance of children in education. Tile Cross Academy ensures that parents are notified of their legal obligations through the “Spotlight on Attendance” letter (Appendix I)

6.1 Students arriving after the close of registration

Students arriving after the close of registration, without a valid reason, risk that session being recorded as unauthorised and this will affect their overall attendance.

6.2 Legal Proceedings

Legal proceedings will be considered after Tile Cross Academy has tried to engage with, and offered Early Help support to the family of a student who has attendance issues.

If the poor/non-attendance of a student is not resolved, Tile Cross Academy may decide to take legal action against the parents, or responsible adults of the child.

If found guilty by a Magistrate, a parent/responsible adult could be fined up to £2500, or a Parenting Order could be issued, which lasts for up to a year.

6.3 Penalty Notices

The Academy can request that the Education Legal Intervention Team issue a notice for students who have a minimum of 10 days, or twenty sessions, unauthorised absence (see appendix I).

6.4 Costs of Penalty Notices

Year 11 prosecutions are taken straight to Court, receiving fines from £100 to £2500 per parent, depending on the outcome of the hearing.

Other Penal notices follow the route outlined below:

If paid within 21 days, the penalty is £60 per parent per child.

If paid after 21 days but within 28 days, the penalty is £120 per parent per child

If the penalty notice is not paid within the 28-day period, prosecution through the courts will be initiated.

SECTION 7: Attendance and Punctuality Reward Systems

Attendance and punctuality will be rewarded the end of each half term. Students with 100% attendance and punctuality for that term will be recognised and rewarded.

At the end of the year all students with 100% attendance and punctuality for the whole year will be given a reward.

Students with the most improved attendance and punctuality will also be rewarded termly and annually.

Attendance incentive weeks may be held every term and rewards may be given for attendance and punctuality.

7.1 Individualised approach to rewards

Tile Cross Academy prides itself on its ability to offer tailored support to children experiencing extreme hardship or difficulties. All parents and carers are reminded that they are expected to notify us without delay, of any change in home or family circumstances that may have an impact on a child's ability to come to school ready to learn.

Students with chronic or debilitating medical conditions will not be penalised from any programme of rewards if their only absences from school are directly associated with their medical condition.

Students who have responsibilities as Young Carers, are children of Service Personnel, or who may have exceptional home circumstances requiring unavoidable attendance at statutory organisations e.g. Children's Services, courts, immigration offices, prisons, solicitors' appointments, will also not be penalised from this programme of rewards if their only absences from school are directly associated with their known circumstances.

SECTION 8: Punctuality

Every student is expected to be sitting in their Form class room at 8.40am.

Form Tutors are expected to be in their classroom on time.

Any student arriving to registration after the advertised time is late and Tutors are expected to mark them as such.

Members of staff will be stationed at student entrances. They will record all the late students, having verified their identity.

- 1 x lateness to registration = 15 minute detention.
- 2 lates to registration in a week = 1 hour detention
- 3 or more lates to registration = 2 hour SLT detention
- Arrival after 9am without good reason = 1 hour detention the same day

Parents/carers will be informed via text or phone if students are to be kept in longer than 15 minutes at the end of the same school day.

Lateness will be recorded in Go4Schools and a list of names can be downloaded by Pastoral Managers for follow up.

A whole WHMAT approach to Attendance and Punctuality is essential. It is the responsibility of ALL staff in WHMAT to promote and encourage positive attendance and punctuality.

Review of policy

3 years from ratification by the Local Governing Body

OR

As required in line with changes in legislation if sooner.

Appendix I: Spotlight on Attendance letter to parents

(Please note that an updated copy of the letter below, relevant to the appropriate academic year, is issued to parents on an annual basis)



Head of Academy: Mr C Etheridge
CEO: Mrs B Mabey

Gressel Lane
Tile Cross
Birmingham
B33 9UF
Tel: 0121 566 6400
Fax: 0121 566 6423
Email: enquiry@tilecrossacademy.com
Website: www.tilecrossacademy.com

January 2019

Dear Parent/Carer

School Attendance - A very important message for all Parents/Carers

Tile Cross Academy is working in partnership with parents to improve school attendance.

We would like to congratulate the many parents who make sure their children attend school regularly.

Absence disrupts the education of the individual student and the whole class. Are you aware that children who do not attend regularly:

- do not achieve well in exams
- find it difficult to maintain friendships
- are more likely to become involved in crime
- miss out on opportunities in further education and the world of work

How does your child compare?

Attendance during one school year	equals this number of days absent	which is approximately this many weeks absent	which means this number of lessons missed
95%	9 days	2 weeks	50 lessons
90%	19 days	4 weeks	100 lessons
85%	29 days	6 weeks	150 Lessons
80%	38 days	8 weeks	200 lessons

Absence can only be authorised by the Head Teacher, within the boundaries set by the Education (Student Registrations) (England) Regulations 2006. **Head Teachers may not authorise leave during term time except where the circumstances are exceptional.**

Please remember that parental illness, going shopping, visiting family, truancy, not wanting to go to school, alleged bullying (speak to school immediately to resolve the issue) are not acceptable reasons to be absent. All of these will be recorded as unauthorised absence, including if your child arrives at school after the close of registration.



Family emergencies need careful consideration. It is not always appropriate or in the best interests of the child to miss school for emergencies which are being dealt with by adult family members. Being at school, friendship with peers and support from staff can provide children with stability. The routine of school offers a safe and familiar background during times of uncertainty.

It is a parent's legal responsibility to ensure their children receive appropriate education. Failing to send your child to school regularly without a good reason is a **criminal offence**.

Legal action that may be taken includes:

- **Issuing penalty notices:** Each parent receives a penalty notice for each child who has unauthorised absence. The penalty is £60 or £120 depending on how soon payment is made. So, if there are two parents and two children the total penalties could be up to £480. Failure to pay may result in prosecution.
- **Taking parents to court for unauthorised absence:** Education Act 1996 Section 444(1) - magistrates can fine each parent up to £1000 per child, add costs and impose Parenting Orders.
- **Taking parents to court for persistent unauthorised absence:** Education Act 1996 Section 444(1A) - magistrates can fine each parent up to £2,500 per child, impose Parenting Orders and/or impose a period of imprisonment of up to three months.

Being taken to court could result in you having a criminal record. Frequent absence can add up to a considerable amount of lost learning and can seriously disadvantage your child in adult life.

If your child's level of absence is of serious concern you will receive another letter advising you about improving attendance. After this, any further unauthorised absence may result in the Local Authority taking legal action.

Again, we would like to thank those parents who make sure their child is attending school regularly and are therefore benefitting fully from their educational opportunity.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "S. G. H. S.", is written over a horizontal line.

Lead Attendance Officer

Head Teacher

Education Legal Intervention Team
Alternative Provision, Attendance
and Independent Education Service
Birmingham City Council

Tile Cross Academy

