



Millbay
Academy

Attendance Policy

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Policy Owner	M Beard (previous)/ J Trevarthen (Current)
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Introduction

Regular and punctual school attendance is important. Students need to attend school regularly if they are to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them by law. Millbay Academy recognises its responsibilities to ensure students are in school and on time, therefore having access to learning for the maximum number of days and hours.

Our policy applies to all children registered at this school and this policy is made available to all parents/carers of students who are registered at our Academy on our Academy website.

This policy has been written to adhere to the relevant Children Acts, Education Acts, Regulations and Guidance from the Department for Education in addition to advice from the Local Authority. (See *Legislation and guidance* below)

Although parents/carers have the legal responsibility for ensuring their child's good attendance, the Headteachers and Governors at our Academy work together with other professionals and agencies to ensure that all students are encouraged and supported to develop good attendance habits. Procedures in this policy will aim to ensure good attendance.

Children who are persistently late or absent soon fall behind with their learning. Children who are absent from school frequently develop large gaps in their learning which will impact on their progress and their ability to meet age related learning expectations. A child whose attendance drops to 90% each year will, over their time at Millbay Academy, miss two whole terms of learning.

Aims and Objectives

This attendance policy ensures that all staff and governors in our Academy are fully aware of and clear about the actions necessary to promote good attendance.

Through this Policy we aim to:

- Improve students' achievement by ensuring high levels of attendance and punctuality.
- Encourage 100% attendance and achieve a minimum of 97% attendance for all children
- Create an ethos in which good attendance and punctuality are recognised as the norm and seen to be valued by the Academy.
- Raise awareness of parents, carers and students of the importance of uninterrupted attendance and punctuality at every stage of a child's education.
- Work in partnership with students, parents and staff, so that all students realise their potential, unhindered by unnecessary absence.
- Promote a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which students feel safe, secure, and valued, and encourage in students, a sense of their own responsibility.
- Establish a pattern of monitoring attendance and ensure consistency in recognising achievement and dealing with difficulties.
- Recognise the key role of all staff, but especially class teachers and tutors, in promoting good attendance.

**Note - If a pupil has 90% or below attendance, they are recorded as a PA pupil (Persistent Absence). Schools have to report PA Pupils to the Local Authority. If a pupil has an overall*

attendance record of 90% this means they are missing 1/2 a day a week, or for an academic year, they have missed over 4 weeks of education at school.

We maintain and promote good attendance and punctuality through:

- Raising awareness of attendance and punctuality issues among all staff, parents and students.
- Ensuring that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on them for making sure their child attends regularly and punctually.
- Equipping children with the life skills needed to take responsibility for good school attendance and punctuality appropriate to the child's age and development.
- Maintaining effective means of communication with parents, students, staff and governors on school attendance matters.
- Developing and implementing procedures for identifying, reporting and reviewing cases of poor attendance and persistent lateness.
- Supporting students who have been experiencing any difficulties at home or at school which are preventing good attendance.
- Developing and implementing procedures to follow up non-attendance at school.
- Rewards for the best attending tutor groups are given out termly at Celebration Assemblies.
- Students with over 97% and 100% attendance receive termly certificates.
- Students with 100% attendance for the year are entered into a prize draw.

Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the school attendance guidance from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the Department of Education's statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures. These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- The Education Act 1996
- The Education Act 2002
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- The Education (Student Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010
- The Education (Student Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2011
- The Education (Student Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- The Education (Student Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold. This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

School procedures

Our Academy will undertake to follow the following procedures to support good attendance:

- To maintain appropriate registration processes.
- To maintain appropriate attendance data.

- To communicate clearly the attendance procedures and expectations to all staff, governors, parents and students.
- To have consistent and systematic daily records which give detail of any absence and lateness.
- To follow up absences and persistent lateness if parents/carers have not communicated with the school.
- To inform parents/carers what constitutes authorised and unauthorised absence.
- To work with parents to improve individual student's attendance and punctuality.
- To refer to the Admissions and Attendance Officers any child whose attendance causes concern and where parents/carers have not responded to school initiatives to improve.
- To report attendance statistics to PCC/ Reach South Trust and the DfE where requested.
- All staff should be aware that they must raise any attendance or punctuality concerns with the Leadership Team with responsibility for monitoring attendance.

Attendance Register

Each class teacher has the responsibility for keeping an accurate record of attendance. Any student who is absent must be recorded at the beginning of every session.

All attendance records are documented using Arbor software, which is supported by the Reach South Trust. Attendance registers are legal documents and these must be kept secure and preserved for a period of three years after the date they were last used.

Unplanned absence

Parents/carers should contact the school on the first day of their child's absence. When parents/carers notify us of their child's absence it is important that they provide us with details of the reason for their absence. Contact should be made before 9.00am (or in exceptional circumstances, as soon as practically possible).

Parents/carers can either notify us in person at the front desk, by phone on 01752 221927, by email on attendance@millbayacademy.org

All absences are recorded as either authorised or unauthorised absences on the Arbor data system. It is important that we receive accurate information from parents with reasons for the child's absence. This information is used to determine whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised. The Headteacher or Headteacher designate has the responsibility to determine whether absences are authorised or unauthorised.

Where we have not received a reason for a child's absence, contact will be made with parents/carers requesting these details. If required information is not returned by a specified date, then the absence will be recorded as an unauthorised absence (Attendance Code O).

First Day Contact - Where a child is absent from school and we have not received any verbal or written communication from the parent, then we initiate a first day contact process. The Attendance Officer checks all of the registers from 9.00am to 9.30am on a daily basis, to identify those students who are absent. There are occasions when we are unaware why the child is absent and we will contact the parent to check the reasons for the child's absence.

Where, over the course of an academic year, a child has repeated periods of illness, the school will write to parents to ask them to provide medical evidence for each future period of illness related absence. This evidence could be a Doctor's note, appointment card or copy of a

prescription. We may seek written permission from you for the school to make their own enquiries.

Medical or Dental Appointments

Medical and dental appointments should be made out of school hours wherever possible. Where this is not possible, the student should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

Parents/carers can either notify us in person at the front desk, by phone on 01752 221927 or by email on attendance@millbayacademy.org

Evidence of the appointment can be provided to school in person, by post or by email. Applications for other types of absence in term time must also be made in advance through our absence request procedure – see Academy Website

Lateness and Punctuality

If a student is absent for morning registration and lessons 1 and 2, unless a message explaining the absence has been received, the parent / carer will receive notification from the Academy.

If a student is persistently late or absent, the Tutor/Pastoral Team may place them on report and/or write to the parents/carers to invite them into an Attendance planning meeting.

Students who arrive late either to Academy or to a lesson, may be required to make up the time after the lesson or after the Academy day, subject to parents' consent.

When a student is persistently late or absent without good reason and the Academy interventions to effect improvement have been unsuccessful, the matter will be referred to the inclusion, Attendance & Welfare Service) (IAWS) Reporting to Parents

Each child's attendance information is recorded on the Arbor data system and available for parents/carers to access.

Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

Authorised absence

- An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or carer. For example, if a child has been unwell and the parent telephones the school to explain the absence.
- Only the Academy can make an absence authorised. Parents do not have this authority. Consequently, not all absences supported by parents will be classified as authorised.

Unauthorised absence

- An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of the school.
- Therefore, the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent.

Any application for term-time absence is considered individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Parental Request for Absence from School for Holiday

With effect from September 2013 the government abolished the right of the Headteacher to authorise absence specifically for holidays. Millbay Academy does not support holidays taken during term time. Holidays in term time are not a universal entitlement. They are only granted at the discretion of the Headteacher and only in exceptional circumstances.

Legal Sanctions

It is a criminal offence for a child not to attend school regularly and, as a parent, this is a legal responsibility. A Penalty Notice may therefore be issued, requiring payment of a fine of up to £60/£120 per parent/carer, per child if their attendance is below an acceptable level. In certain circumstances a parent may be prosecuted and be required to attend the Magistrates Court where they could face up to 3 months imprisonment and/or a fine of up to £2,500. Parents will be given every opportunity to improve their child's attendance and will receive a written warning before any legal action is taken.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice ultimately rests with the Headteacher, following the Local Authority's code of conduct for issuing penalty notices. This may take into account:

- A number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year including arriving persistently late for school after the register close.
- An unauthorised holiday during term time.
- Where an excluded student is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason.
- A student is found during a truancy sweep.
- Failure by parents/guardians to provide evidence and reasons for their child's absence.

Attendance Monitoring

The Attendance Team monitors student absence on a daily basis. If a child is absent due to sickness, parents/carers must contact the school promptly before 9.00am on the first day of illness **and** on a daily basis for any subsequent days of sickness. Prompt and regular notification of absence ensures children are kept safe at all times, and also reduces time spent by staff following up student absences unnecessarily.

After 9.00am, if no communication has been received from home regarding the student's absence, the Primary Contact(s) home will be contacted. If there is no response, all contacts listed will be called. If the student is absent with no contact from home, this will be recorded as a safeguarding concern and other relevant agencies may be contacted.

If any student's attendance falls below 97%, the following procedures will be put into place. Information from ALL meetings below is logged on the Arbor data system.

97%-93%	Tutor Phone call and information logged Tutor discusses attendance with student. Tutor identifies issues affecting student and supports appropriately. Attendance will become a student target to improve. Tutor Initial phone call to parents/carers	Phonecall Logged
92.9%- 92%	Pastoral Team Intervention - phone call and letter A Head of KS OR Pastoral Manager Phone call home	Letter A

	Tutor support for student continues. KS Leader discuss attendance with student. Threshold Letter A A variety of pastoral support strategies will be used to improve attendance.	Pastoral Manager Phone call
91%- 91.9%	Pastoral Team Intervention, phone call and letter B Head of KS Phone call home or meeting Tutor support for student continues. KS Leader discuss attendance with student. Threshold Letter B A variety of pastoral support strategies will be used to improve attendance. Penalty Notice discussed. Deadline set for improvement. Pastoral Support Programme continues and involvement of Additional Services if needed.	Letter B Head of KS Phone call or meeting
90.9 – 90%	Pastoral Team Intervention, send letter C and Head of KS meeting Tutor support for student continues. Letter C issued– Attendance certificate included. Head of Year, SLT/ Attendance officer meeting with parents/carers to discuss strategies to improve attendance – notes of the meeting to be recorded. Penalty Notice discussed. Deadline set for improvement. Pastoral Support Programme continues and involvement of Additional Services if needed. If there is no improvement the Attendance Officer/EWO recommend that Penalty Notice issued.	Letter C Head of KS/SLT Meeting
10 Further Sessions	Attendance Officer - 1st Warning and Attendance Panel Meeting	Attendance Officer/EWO Involvement
10 Further Session	Attendance officer - EPM Final Warning	EWO Involvement

See Appendix for letter A/B/C. The key purpose of ANY meeting is to make sure that there's a clear plan to support the improvement of attendance*

Roles and Responsibilities

The Trust Governing Board

The governing board is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the Headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy. Accountability for attendance is devolved to the Deputy Headteacher who reports to Governors on attendance on a termly basis.

The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the school through devolved responsibility to the Deputy Headteacher, who is responsible for monitoring school-level absence data and reporting this to governors.

The Deputy Headteacher and Attendance Team also support other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual students, involving the EWO, where necessary.

The Attendance Team

- Monitors attendance data at the school and individual student level.
- Reports concerns about attendance to the Deputy Headteacher.
- Works with Education Welfare Officers and other Additional Needs team staff to tackle persistent absence.
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues.
- With the Education Welfare Officer, advises the Deputy Headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices.

Front Office/Reception Staff

Front office/reception staff are expected to take calls and process messages from parents about absence and record it on the school system accurately and promptly.

Deputy Headteacher

- Overall monitoring of school attendance.
- Monitors trends in authorised and unauthorised absence.
- Contacting families where concerns are raised about absence including arranging meetings to discuss attendance issues.
- Monitoring individual attendance where concerns have been raised.
- Making referrals to the EWO service via Attendance Officer as required.
- Meeting parents/carers in danger of being issued a first warning.
- Liaising with other professionals to determine potential sources of difficulties and reasons for absence.
- Keeping an overview of class and individual attendance looking particularly for either poor overall attendance, anomalies in patterns of attendance and/ or unusual explanations for attendance offered by children and their parents/ carers and reporting concerns.

Admissions and Attendance Officers

- Keeping an overview of class and individual attendance looking particularly for either poor overall attendance, anomalies in patterns of attendance and/ or unusual explanations for attendance offered by children and their parents/ carers.
- Informing the Deputy Headteacher where there are concerns and acting upon them.
- Providing background information to support referrals.
- Monitoring follow-up once actions have been taken to correct attendance concerns.
- Following up absences with immediate requests for explanation.
- Discussing attendance issues at consultation evenings where necessary.
- Collating and recording registration and attendance information.
- Liaison with families including completing home visits.
- Mentor and run group work for students with poor attendance.

Admissions and Attendance – Admin Tasks

- Daily meeting with the Admissions and Attendance Officer to discuss and look at daily absences.
- Agree and issue letters A,B,C or as required.
- Liaise with Heads of KS regarding parent contact and Letter C.
- Liaise with DHT regarding parent meetings.
- Liaise with DHT regarding Educational Planning Meetings.
- Record daily absences and letters sent and issue to DHT and Head of KS at the end of the week.
- Record monthly interventions.

Attendance Support Staff

- Taking and recording messages from parents regarding absence.
- Ensuring the Absence/Late Book is completed.
- Contacting parents of absent children where no contact has been made.
- Recording details of children who arrive late or go home.
- Sending out standard letters regarding attendance.

Heads of Key Stage

- Oversee intervention and support strategies directing Pastoral Intervention Managers
- When relevant, unauthorise attendance and inform parents of the consequences.
- Attend EPMs and attendance clinics.

Tutors and Teachers

- Tutors are the child's first point of contact and will monitor daily attendance.
- Teachers/tutors are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the Attendance team (Via Arbor) accurately and promptly at the start of session.
- Teachers/tutors will monitor the attendance of their students and identify any difficulties which they can raise with the student and/or their parents/carers in the first instance. For persistent issues and/or where intervention from other agencies may be necessary Teachers/tutors and phase leaders will discuss this on an individual basis with the school Attendance Team

Pastoral Intervention Managers

- Run attendance groups for students with low attendance setting individual targets and rewards for improvement.
- Provide and offer support for families and students including phone calls
- Lead attendance clinics for families and students at risk of persistent absence.

Parents

Parents/Carers are responsible for:

- Parents and carers have a legal duty to ensure that their children of compulsory school age (statutory school age) receive a suitable full-time education. It is also vital that they encourage their child's regular and punctual attendance at school. If a child is registered at a school then it is vital that they attend on a regular basis.
- Contacting the school office on the first morning of absence.

- Informing the school in advance of any medical appointments in school time. For the absence to be recorded as a medical absence we do require evidence from the doctor or dentist. (Appointment card/letter/prescription paperwork or packet).
- Making requests for authorised absence in term time, only if absolutely necessary as these are not automatically authorised.
- Talking to the school as soon as possible about any child's reluctance to come to school so that problems can be quickly identified and dealt with.

Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Deputy Headteacher. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

Links with other policies

This policy should be read in connection with our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

This Policy will be applied and adapted in relation to COVID 19 and regular National Guidance from DFE and Public Health England

Appendix – Attendance Codes

The following codes are taken from the Department of Education’s guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Student is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Student is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Student arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Student is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Student is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Student has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Student is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Student is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Student is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Student has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Student has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Student has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a student will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Student is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Student is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 student is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Student from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Student is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Student is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if

		no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for student's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Student arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Student of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or student is in custody
Z	Student not on admission register	Register set up but student has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

***Covid 19 Update**

Code X: not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19) This code is used to record sessions where the pupil's travel to or presence at school would conflict with: • guidance relating to the incidence or transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19) from Public Health England or the Department of Health and Social Care¹² or • any legislation (or instruments such as statutory directions) relating to the incidence or transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19).

** Pupils are statutory school age from the school term after their 5th birthday and the last Friday in June in the school year they turn 16.*

Appendix - Letter A

Dear

High attendance at school improves your child's chances of success. Students who have high attendance are more likely to be able to sustain good friendships and make good progress towards qualifications.

Millbay Academy is very concerned that your child's attendance has fallen below 95%. If this high level of absence continues they are more likely to:

- find it hard to make good friendships
- make poor progress and achieve lower GCSE or subject grades
- find school stressful

Sometimes absence from school is caused by medical issues or worries about school or friendships. Millbay Academy is committed to supporting student's welfare. If you feel there is anything we can do to support «chosen_name» please contact their tutor or our pastoral team.

Your child's pattern of absence has caused Millbay Academy concern because it may;

- show occasional absence of one or two days for minor ailments
- be that Millbay Academy is unaware of the reason for absence
- be that you have taken an unauthorised holiday
- be that their attendance is close to or below the government's definition of persistent absence

Please support our high expectations for your child's attendance and progress. Millbay Academy will monitor your child's attendance and provide support if needed. I enclose «chosen_name»'s registration certificate.

If «chosen_name» has to attend a medical appointment where possible please try to make this out of school hours.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can do anything to help improve «chosen_name»'s attendance.

Yours sincerely

Letter B

Dear

I wrote to you on date to express our concern with «chosen_forename»'s attendance. «chosen_forename»'s attendance is still below 95% and is now likely to damage their education and progress. I enclose a copy of «his_her» registration certificate. Please note that being late to school after 9.00 am counts as being absent from school for a morning.

Here at Millbay Academy, we recognise that there are occasions when it is appropriate to authorise an absence, such as when a pupil is genuinely too ill to attend school, has a medical appointment that cannot be taken outside of school hours or a request for leave has been agreed on exceptional circumstances. Please let us know of any medical reason for absence or any school based factor.

Millbay Academy is closely monitoring «chosen_forename»'s attendance. It is becoming very hard for **him/her** to learn effectively and progress in their learning and friendships. If their attendance fails to improve Millbay Academy will have to take urgent action with the Local Authority. This can include a legal warning and/or fines for parent.

Millbay Academy is committed to supporting students and families before requesting legal action. Please phone attendance on 01752 221927 or email Attendance@millbayacademy.org to improve «chosen_forename»'s attendance and increase their chances of better progress and happiness at school.

Yours sincerely

Letter C

Warning of intention to unauthorise your child's absence.

Dear

«chosen_forename»'s attendance remains a very serious concern. Millbay Academy is unaware of any significant or compelling reason for such a high level of absence and the pattern of absence is now sustained and worrying. Millbay Academy has offered you and your child support.

Millbay Academy will only authorise «chosen_forename»'s absence where we have reasonable evidence that there is a medical reason or for any other exceptional circumstances. Please share any medical evidence you have so that we can support your child's welfare and education and authorise their absence. If you decide to still take your child out of school, without permission, you will be committing an offence under the Education Act 1996. If your child's absence is unauthorised you will be committing an offence. If there are 10 more sessions (each session meaning being recorded at morning or afternoon registration) unauthorised you will be referred for legal proceedings.

We will refer the matter to Plymouth City Council regarding legal action against you. Section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 introduced new powers for designated Local Education Officers, Headteachers and the police to issue penalty notices for unauthorised absence from school. This carries a fine of £60 if paid within 21 days or £120 if paid after this but within 28 days. Failure to pay the penalty notice will result in Court action. Persistent absences not authorised by the school may result in a prosecution in the Magistrates Court, leading to fines up to £2,500 and / or custodial sentences.

Please contact the school to discuss any concerns you may have regarding this or if you feel you would like advice or support in helping your child attend more regularly. Millbay Academy is committed to maximising the education of all its pupils and aims to work with parents to ensure this can be achieved.

Please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely