

Macmillan
Academy

**ATTENDANCE AND
PUNCTUALITY POLICY**

POLICY DETAILS

Policy Title:	Attendance and Punctuality Policy
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POLICY REVISION AND APPROVAL HISTORY

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Macmillan Academy, part of the Endeavour Trust, is committed to raising standards in education and ensuring that all students can fulfil their potential. For students to gain the best from their time at Macmillan Academy it is vital that they achieve excellent attendance and punctuality. We strive for 100% attendance for all students. Macmillan Academy recognises that promoting good attendance and punctuality prepares students to flourish in the disciplines of life, learning and work. We work proactively with parents, carers, students, staff and external agencies to secure this aim.
- 1.2 To gain the greatest benefit from education it is vital that students attend regularly which means being at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for absence is authorised by the Principal or Head of School/Headteacher.
- 1.3 The academy is required to differentiate between authorised and unauthorised absence. Parents are expected to contact the academy to inform them of the reason for their child's absence. The academy will judge whether or not the explanation given is satisfactory justification for the absence and mark the register accordingly.

2. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- 2.1 Macmillan Academy:
 - 2.1.1 Emphasises that it is the responsibility of everyone in the academy to improve attendance and punctuality.
 - 2.1.2 Needs to ensure that all its students access a full-time education which meets their needs and allows all to realise their potential.
 - 2.1.3 Will strive to provide a safe and caring environment where each student can engage in all opportunities offered.
 - 2.1.4 Will work with students and their families to ensure every student has good attendance and punctuality.
 - 2.1.5 Will challenge the behaviour of those students and parents/carers who aren't supportive of the academy's high standards over attendance and punctuality.
 - 2.1.6 Has an effective system of communication with parents/carers together with appropriate agencies to provide mutual information and support.
 - 2.1.7 Will continue to develop ICT-based attendance recording systems in order to provide accurate information and to use suitable tracking strategies to recognise any trends that can damage good attendance and learning.

3. WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM MACMILLAN ACADEMY

- 3.1 We will promote good attendance and punctuality and will investigate any unexplained and or unjustified absence.
- 3.2 We will work closely with parents/carers where a student's absence is a cause for concern.
- 3.3 We will support students to achieve good attendance and punctuality.
- 3.4 We will support students returning to school after prolonged absence.

4. WHAT MACMILLAN ACADEMY EXPECTS FROM PARENTS/CARERS:

- 4.1 It is also important to note that even though a parent may not live in the same home as the student, that parent is still responsible for ensuring the child attends school every day. Parents/Carers should:
 - 4.1.1 Ensure their child attends regularly, punctually, dressed in full uniform and equipped to learn.
 - 4.1.2 Ensure their child attends every day that Macmillan Academy is open unless they are too ill to do so.
 - 4.1.3 Avoid keeping their child away from Macmillan Academy for any reason other than illness or other authorised absence.
 - 4.1.4 Avoid arranging holidays during term time.
 - 4.1.5 Immediately inform Macmillan Academy if their child is unable to attend via the dedicated Absence Line (01642 800800 – option 1/Post 16 – option 3) by 8.30am, including a full reason for the absence and expected date of return.
 - 4.1.6 If no indication of a return date has been given, parents/carers should contact Macmillan Academy on each day of absence.
- 4.2 A parent is defined as:
 - 4.2.1 all natural parents, whether they are married or not.
 - 4.2.2 any person who, although not a natural parent, has responsibility for the care of a child or young person. This means that a person with whom the child lives and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their relationship is with the child, is considered to be a parent.

5. WHAT MACMILLAN ACADEMY EXPECTS FROM STUDENTS:

- 5.1 To attend regularly and on time.
- 5.2 To be punctual to all lessons.
- 5.3 To ensure that they register for all tutorial sessions and timetabled lessons.
- 5.4 To ensure all messages and notes from parents/carers are taken to the appropriate place.

6. REGISTRATION

- 6.1 The law requires the register to be taken twice a day – at the start of the morning session and once in the afternoon session. This is at 8.30am and 1.00pm
- 6.2 Students are expected to arrive via the student entrance by 8.20/8.25am in order to be ready for the start of the tutorial session at 8.30am.
- 6.3 Students are registered at the start of every lesson of the day.
- 6.4 The register is marked using the Department of Education Attendance and Absence Codes.

7. PUNCTUALITY

- 7.1 Macmillan Academy student entrance closes at 8.25am.
- 7.2 Any student arriving after this time will enter the Macmillan Academy building via the main reception and sign the appropriate Late Book. If a student is late more than three times in a week without a reasonable and unavoidable excuse, the student will be issued with an immediate Head of Year detention (60 minute detention) which will be facilitated at the earliest opportunity.
- 7.3 Repeated lateness will be reported to parents/carers and other sanctions will be considered.

8. AUTHORISED/UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

- 8.1 Authorised absence is where Macmillan Academy has given approval for absence in advance or where the explanation given afterwards has been accepted as satisfactory justification for the absence. Parents/carers may not authorise absence; only the academy can do this.
- 8.2 Absence will not be authorised for such reasons as:
 - 8.2.1 looking after brothers/sisters/unwell parents/carers
 - 8.2.2 birthdays
 - 8.2.3 days out
 - 8.2.4 shopping trips
 - 8.2.5 holidays
 - 8.2.6 special occasions, where Macmillan Academy does not agree that the absence should be granted.

NB: This list is not exhaustive.

- 8.3 Medical/dental and other appointments should be arranged out of school hours wherever possible. Where this is not possible, students should, where practically possible, come to school before the appointment, sign out and return to school after the appointment. Proof of the medical appointment is required (medical card or appointment letter) and must be shown to the students tutor prior to the appointment.
- 8.4 Following an explanation from parents/carers regarding a student's absence, Macmillan Academy will decide whether or not it accepts the explanation and authorise the absence or record it as unauthorised.
- 8.5 Absence which hasn't been explained will remain as unauthorised.

9. HOW WE RESPOND TO ABSENCE/LATENESS

- 9.1 If a student is absent without contact from a parent/carer to explain the absence, Macmillan Academy will contact parents/carers. We take our safeguarding responsibilities seriously and will always do our best to contact parents/carers to ensure that they are aware of their child's absence.
Contact will be made via telephone call from the Attendance Officer who will attempt to call telephone numbers from priority contacts. Macmillan Academy asks that parents/carers ensure contact details are up to date at all times.
- 9.2 Safeguarding and wellbeing home visits will be carried out when a student has been absent from school for three days. The purpose of this is:
 - 9.2.1 To check on the welfare of the student.
 - 9.2.2 To identify any support needed to encourage the student's return to school.
 - 9.2.3 To identify any previously undisclosed issues that may be affecting attendance.
- 9.3 Home visits will also be carried out:
 - 9.3.1 Where a student has been absent from school for two days without any contact from home to explain the absence.
 - 9.3.2 Where there are joint sibling absences, the academy will also work in collaboration with local primary schools.
 - 9.3.3 Where students are identified as vulnerable or are in attendance proceedings.
- 9.4 Further to this:
 - 9.4.1 All absence notes will be retained.
 - 9.4.2 Where a student's absence is cause for concern, the academy will write to parents/carers and/or invite the parents/carers into school/refer to the Education Welfare Officer.
 - 9.4.3 Where 5 days/10 sessions of absence has accumulated, a request will be made to provide medical evidence to support and authorise further absences due to illness. Medical evidence can be in the form of an appointment

card/dispensing receipt or empty medication packaging with the dispensing label showing students name and date dispensed.

- 9.5 Where no sustained improvement in attendance is demonstrated despite intervention, Fixed Penalty notices may be issued in line with the Local Authority's Code of Conduct.

10. PERSISTENT ABSENCE

- 10.1 A student becomes a Persistent Absentee when they miss 10% of their schooling across the academic year for **whatever reason**. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parents'/carers' fullest support and co-operation to tackle this. Any student whose attendance has reached the persistent absence threshold or is at risk of moving towards that threshold is given priority for intervention. Intervention may be via an action plan to improve attendance. This may involve a Family Plan and referrals to other agencies alongside meetings between relevant Macmillan Academy staff and parents/carers.

Where parents/carers fail to co-operate with support and strategies provided by Macmillan Academy, further intervention may take place which could lead to legal sanctions being imposed by the local authority.

Persistent Absence data is communicated to the relevant Local Authority via the School Census on a termly and annual basis.

11. LEAVE OF ABSENCE DURING TERM TIME

- 11.1 Any absence interrupts the continuity of student's learning. Government Legislation now states that only exceptional circumstances warrant an authorised leave of absence, Amendments to the **Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006** make clear that Head Teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Head Teachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted. Please refer to the Department for Education for the latest guidance. **Parents/carers are strongly urged not to take students out of school for holidays during term time.**

Even where the circumstances are considered exceptional, please be aware that:

- 11.1.1 Your request will not be authorised during exam periods (these could be throughout the year).
- 11.1.2 Your request will not be authorised where there are coursework deadlines or controlled assessments (these could be throughout the year).

- 11.2 It is expected that a Leave of Absence Request Form is submitted to the Attendance Officer **at least 2 weeks** term time in advance of the proposed absence. All factors that need to be considered must be stated on the request form. If the Leave of Absence is refused and the absence is recorded as unauthorised, the Principal may refer the matter to the Local Authority, requesting a penalty notice to be issued against you.
- 11.3 Fixed Penalties require **each parent to pay a fine of £60 per child** if paid within 21 days or **£120** if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. Failure to pay within the specified timescale could result in prosecution in the Magistrates Court for failure to ensure regular school attendance. This legislation also applies to any student taking leave of absence without prior notification to Macmillan Academy.

12. RE-INTEGRATION FOLLOWING LONG-TERM ABSENCE

- 12.1 Where a student has been absent for a prolonged period of time, perhaps due to illness, Macmillan Academy will:
- 12.1.1 Provide support for the student in consultation with parents/carers to enable a successful return to Macmillan Academy.
 - 12.1.2 Ensure that all relevant staff are informed of the circumstances.
 - 12.1.3 Work with other agencies, where appropriate, to ensure a successful outcome.
 - 12.1.4 Consider a personalised programme of return if appropriate.

13. PROMOTING GOOD ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY

- 13.1 Students are regularly informed of their attendance levels and if appropriate how they can improve.
- 13.2 Where appropriate, students whose attendance falls below the target for Macmillan Academy will be set a new target for improvement and progress towards these, and will be regularly reviewed.
- 13.3 Good and improved attendance and punctuality is promoted and celebrated through Macmillan Academy's reward system.
- 13.4 Students, parents/carers and staff are regularly reminded about the importance of good attendance.
- 13.5 Parents/carers are encouraged to contact Macmillan Academy Attendance Officer at any time to discuss their child's attendance on 01642 800800 or attendance@macademy.org.uk.
- 13.6 Regular meetings will be held with the appropriate members of staff/external agencies to identify and support those students whose attendance is a cause for concern.
- 13.7 Effective links are made with primary schools to facilitate the smooth transition to Macmillan Academy.
- 13.8 Students' attendance will be reported in line with the Progress Data and student reports.

14. STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS, THE LAW AND THE LOCAL AUTHORITY

- 14.1 Registers are legal documents; regulatory requirements placed on schools regarding the keeping of registers are to be found in the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006.
- 14.2 Macmillan Academy works together with the Local Authority to ensure that parents/carers fulfil their responsibility. There are a range of legal sanctions that may be imposed for dealing with unauthorised absence: From Penalty Notices to a referral to the Magistrates Court which can recommend fines (up to £2500) or up to 3 months in prison.
- 14.3 If a child of compulsory school age, who is a registered student at a school, fails to attend regularly their parents/carers are guilty of an offence under **Section 444 of the Education Act 1996**. Any unauthorised absences may result in the issuing of a Fixed Penalty under the **Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003**.
- 14.4 For further details refer to: <https://www.gov.uk/school-attendance-absence>.



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