



Attendance Policy for Children and Young People

Last reviewed: February 2017

This document applies to all academies and operations of the Vale Academy Trust: www.vale-academy.org

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Owner	Chief Executive	Approver	Board of Directors
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Overview

We aim to ensure that both individual and groups of children and young people (C&YP) participate and engage in the full range of educational opportunities available to them through maximising attendance levels. With a direct relationship between attendance, punctuality and attainment this policy aims to set out how the Vale Academy Trust (the "Trust") will improve the overall percentage of attendance and punctuality across all academies of the Trust.

In outstanding schools "attendance will be above average for all groups of pupils or will show a sustained and convincing improvement over time and C&YP are consistently punctual in arriving at school and lessons". OFSTED

Statutory Requirements

Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act places a duty on the parent of every child of compulsory age to ensure that their child attends school regularly and punctually, or to satisfy the Local Authority why this is not possible. Should parents fail to do so, they may find themselves and their children liable to legal proceedings.

Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this policy is to set out in clear terms the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders across the Trust together with the procedures to be followed in ensuring that the aim is met.

1. Specific Aims

- a) To outline the procedure for recording and reporting attendance and punctuality;
- b) To improve the overall percentage attendance and punctuality of C&YP across the Trust (with an annual minimum target agreed at 95%+ attendance for secondary academies and 97%+ for primary academies, and all to aim for 100% attendance and punctuality; unauthorised absence will not exceed 0.5%)
- c) To ensure that all other annual targets relating to attendance and punctuality for all individual C&YP and groups of C&YP are met by each academy;
- d) To ensure Attendance and Punctuality is a priority for all those associated with the Trust including all C&YP, parents, staff and governors and others working in partnership with the Trust;
- e) To set out the interventions and rewards which will be implemented in each academy to improve attendance and punctuality; and
- f) To develop a framework within each academy which defines agreed roles and responsibilities for attendance and punctuality

2. Objectives

1. To ensure an accurate and up to date record of attendance
2. To enable parents/guardians to support high attendance and 100% punctuality

3. To identify the causes of non-attendance and act upon them
4. To identify those C&YP classed as Persistent Absentees and to work with senior staff and the Attendance Officers to increase the attendance levels of these C&YP.
5. To use existing monitoring systems for early identification of Persistent Absenteeism in order to prevent decline in attendance
6. To raise attendance of vulnerable groups of C&YP (SEN, FSM, LAC, EAL)
7. To monitor and reduce absence through holidays in term time.
8. To ensure all staff understand their roles in the monitoring and recording of attendance
9. To maintain and improve attendance throughout the Trust through target setting and rewarding.
10. To give clear information on expected levels of attendance to all stakeholders at the Trust.

3. Responsibilities

The Headteachers have responsibility for:

- reporting to the Local Governing Body on the implementation of the Attendance Policy.
- the statutory requirement to report attendance figures to the DFE and the LA.

The Board of Directors have responsibility for:

- Reviewing the Attendance Policy every 24 months
- Agreeing and setting attendance targets for the academies
- Monitoring the implementation of the policy and progress against targets through reports from the Teaching and Learning Committee, and the Pastoral Committee

Local Governing Bodies have responsibility for:

- Monitoring implementation of the Policy in their academy
- Monitoring progress against their academy's targets
- Reporting to the Board of Directors through the Trust's Teaching and Learning Committee

4. Requesting Leave of Absence

Recent changes to legislation came into force on 1 September 2013. This states that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Time off during term time will not be authorised unless there are exceptional circumstances.

5. Penalty Notices

The Trust reserves the right to issue penalty notice(s) to families that do not actively engage with headteachers when trying to improve attendance of students who persistently fail to attend Trust academies, or where families remove their child/children during term time for unauthorised holidays. However, the Trust will take reasonable steps to avoid issuing penalty notice(s) and will endeavour to find other solutions to improving attendance.

A £60 Penalty notice may be issued by the Trust under the terms of the education related provisions of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act if;

- A parent or carer fails to ensure a CoYP attends the appropriate Trust academy or other education provision regularly;
- A CoYP is allowed to take holiday in term time without the Headteacher's authorisation;
- A CoYP is not returned to the appropriate Trust academy on an agreed date after an extended holiday.
- A CoYP arrives late after the register has been closed for at least 3 times in any one week or a total of 6 times in 6 weeks.

If the Penalty Notice is issued by the Trust it will be in compliance with all necessary and applicable legislation and will follow the Oxfordshire AEO guidance.

6. Policy Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

This policy will be monitored on an ongoing basis by the Trust headteachers with a review from the Local Governing Body of each academy. C&YP will be consulted in relation to rewards for good attendance and punctuality.