



Transforming Attendance at The East Manchester Academy

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

September 2024

Approval History

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D Goddard		November 2020	

Revision History

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July 2022	Nov 2020	Updates to reflect new DfE guidance – 'Working together to improve school attendance' May 2022	D Goddard
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1 STATEMENT OF INTENT

The East Manchester Academy is committed to the continuous raising of progress for all students through our REACH values and commitment to team and partnership working. We set ourselves challenging targets and overcome barriers to achieve them. A high standard of regular and punctual attendance is one such target and is critical if students are to benefit from the opportunities available to them and enjoy a successful and fulfilling school experience.

The attendance champion for the school is Miss H Bamber (Associate Assistant Headteacher). If you have any concerns/questions, please email h.bamber@temac.co.uk

2 WHY REGULAR ATTENDANCE IS SO IMPORTANT

Any absence disrupts the pattern of a student's education, disrupts teaching routines and will have an adverse effect on the learning of others. The academy offers a broad and balanced curriculum and to facilitate this many academic topics may not be re-visited. Before permitting any absence, we urge families to carefully consider the negative implications of any missed learning opportunities.

The academic year consists of 195 days of which 5 are staff professional development or training days with students not being required to attend on these days. Students who attend for the full 190 days will achieve 100% attendance for the academic year and are highly likely to achieve the greatest progress for their ability, enabling them to continue their studies and raise their earning potential in the world of work. We know that the students with the highest progress and attainment at the end of key stage 4 have higher rates of attendance compared to those with the lowest attainment and progress.

We know that some students find it difficult to attend the academy and therefore we will work in partnership with families at all stages to try to remove any barriers and to put the right support in place at the right time.

We believe that transforming attendance and punctuality is everybody's responsibility and we know that the barriers to learning are wide and complex, both within and outside the academy.

Attendance percentage relating to learning days lost per academic year

Percentage Attendance	Days Lost
98%	4
95%	10
90%	19
85%	29
80%	38
75%	48

3 THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK AROUND ATTENDANCE

The law states that every child of compulsory school age is entitled to receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude to any special educational needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

Where parents decide to register their child at school, the law also states that the child must attend regularly. This means that a student must attend every day that the academy is open except for in a small number of circumstances such as being too ill to attend or where permission has been given for the absence.

A child is of compulsory school age at the beginning of the term following their 5th birthday. A child ceases to be of compulsory school age on the last Friday in June of the school year in which they reach the age of 16. At The East Manchester Academy this will be in Year 11.

The academy takes an attendance register twice a day, once at the start of the morning session and then again during the afternoon session. A student will be recorded as present, absent, present at approved educational activity or unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act states that parents must ensure that children of compulsory school age receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude to any special educational needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

This policy meets the requirements of the school attendance guidance from the Department for Education (DfE) and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance and 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 (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2011
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- Working Together to Improve attendance (February 2024)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

4 PROMOTING REGULAR ATTENDANCE

At The East Manchester Academy, our aim is for all students to achieve at least 98% attendance and we recognise that attendance below this will impact on a student's achievement.

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everyone's responsibility. To help us all to focus on this we will:

- give details of whole academy attendance in our messages to families and the community.

- report to families on their child’s performance at the academy, giving their attendance percentage and punctuality details, and how this relates to their attainment.
- celebrate good attendance.
- reward good or improving attendance through our REACH values.
- work with families and partner agencies to provide advice, challenge and support where attendance is a concern.

We will:

EXPECT

High standards of attendance from all students and parents and maintain an academy culture where all can, and want to, be in school and ready to learn.

MONITOR

Using attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance as soon as possible.

LISTEN AND UNDERSTAND

Talk with students and families to understand barriers to attendance and agree how we can all work together to resolve them through a support first based approach

FORMALISE SUPPORT

Where absence persists and support is not working or not being engaged with, we will work with other agencies and advise families of the possible consequences if absence remains a concern. This may include formalising support through a parenting contract or education supervision order.

ENFORCE

Where all options have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, we will enforce attendance through statutory intervention or prosecution to protect a student’s right to an education.

4.1 Rewards

Attendance at the academy automatically means that students are displaying our REACH values, showing respect, equality, ambition, care and hard work.

Postcards, positive phone calls and receiving REACH points demonstrate that students will be eligible for a range of rewards and initiatives throughout the year. Attendance is considered but this is always time limited to ensure that it is achievable. Year group and form attendance and punctuality rates are acknowledged each week in staff briefings and assemblies.

5 TYPES OF ABSENCE

Every half-day absence has to be classified by the academy (not by families), as either **authorised or unauthorised** in accordance with the categories as set out in 'Chapter 8: Contents of the attendance register' of Working Together to Improve Attendance (February 2024).

5.1 Authorised absences

Authorised absences include mornings or afternoons absent for a valid reason such as illness, urgent medical/dental appointments or other emergencies. All non-urgent medical or routine dental appointments should be arranged outside of the academy day or during the holiday periods. Where this is not possible, **students should attend the academy before and after the appointment**. Families should show the appointment letter, prescription or medication to the attendance team to enable the absence to be authorised. If students are required to leave early or be absent from lessons for an urgent appointment, parents should telephone or email with this information.

If a student is absent for 5 days consecutive days due to illness, contact will always be made with families and medical evidence may be required in order to authorise the absence.

Students who have permission to leave during the day must sign out in SPACE. Students must report to the Attendance Team to obtain an official out of academy pass to produce in the event of being questioned.

The authorisation of the use of the C code is monitored and tracked at The East Manchester Academy.

5.1.1 Religious Observance

The academy acknowledges the multi-faith nature of British society and recognises that on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside holiday periods or weekends. The authorisation of absence, or special leave for religious observance, will be considered in these instances, but families are requested to give advance notice if they intend for their child to be absent. The East Manchester Academy feels that it is reasonable that **no more than one day be designated for any individual occasion of religious observance or festival and no more than three days in total in any academic year**. Any further absence will be categorised as unauthorised.

5.1.2 Traveller Absence

The aim for the attendance of children within travelling families, in common with all other children, is to attend school as regularly and as frequently as possible. To protect traveller parents from unreasonable prosecution for non-attendance, the Education Act 1944, section 86, states that a traveller parent is safe from prosecution if their child accrues 200 attendances (i.e. 200 half days) in a year. This is only when the family are engaged in a trade or business that requires them to travel and when the child is attending school as regularly as that trade permits.

Traveller children will be recorded as attending an approved educational activity when:

- a child is on roll and attending another visited school.
- a child is undertaking supervised educational activity under the jurisdiction of another Local Authority's Traveller Education Service.
- a child is undertaking computer-based distance learning that is time evidenced.

5.2 Unauthorised absences

Unauthorised absences are those which the academy does not consider reasonable and may result in the Local Authority issuing a School Attendance: Notice To Improve Letter and a penalty notice being issued by the Local Authority. Each academy will request that the LA take statutory action when 10 sessions of unauthorised absence over a 10-week period. A penalty notice may then be issued to each parent for each child where attendance is a concern. A 'First Action' Penalty Notice will incur a fine of £160, which is reduced to £80 if paid within the first 21 days.

Failure to pay the Penalty Notice may result in legal proceedings being taken against you in accordance with the Education Act 1996. This will involve being summoned to the Magistrates Court and if you are found guilty you will receive a criminal record and may receive a fine of up to £2,500 and/or 3 months imprisonment.

Unauthorised absences include:

- truancy during the academy day.
- absences which have no proper explanation.
- persistent absence due to illness that has no supporting medical evidence.
- students who arrive late to the academy after the registers have closed.
- absence for the purposes of shopping, to look after other children or celebrate birthdays.
- families keeping children away from the academy unnecessarily.
- day trips or holidays taken during term time.
- excessive absence due to medical/dental appointments without good reason or evidence.

Families will be asked to provide medical evidence where there are repeated absences due to reported illness. Families may also be asked to provide medical evidence where their child is absent for 5 consecutive days or more, or when attendance falls below 94%. The Student Services Team will follow interventions detailed in Transforming Attendance at TEMA to offer support and challenge to families.

Whilst a student may be absent because they are unwell, they may also sometimes be reluctant to attend for a variety of other reasons. If families have any concerns, we would encourage contact with the Year Team who will offer support and try to resolve any issues.

5.1.3 Granting approval for term-time absence (See [Appendix 1](#))

Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence to students during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. Each school will have their own list of exceptional circumstances due to the needs of the community. However, exceptional circumstances are likely to include the following:

- acute family trauma
- terminal illness or death of a family member
- if a family member serves in the Armed Forces - Service personnel returning from a tour of duty abroad where it is evidenced the individual will not be in receipt of any leave in the near future that coincides with school holidays
- following advice from a health professional
- out of school programmes such as music, arts or sport operating at a high standard of achievement

5.3 Persistent Absence

A student becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the academic year, for whatever reason. Students are, therefore, classed as persistently absent irrespective of whether absence is authorised or unauthorised.

We monitor all absence thoroughly. Any student who reaches the persistent absence percentage or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority. Parents are informed by Student Services.

All our persistently absent students are subject to weekly review and actions are agreed in accordance with Transforming Attendance at TEMA. Mentoring is offered and support for learning where absence affects attainment. This may include support from partner agencies such as Early Help or School Health in addition to enforcement where interventions do not improve attendance.

5.4 Severely Absence

A student is severely absent when they miss 50% or more schooling across the academic year, for whatever reason. Students are, therefore, classed as severely absent irrespective of whether absence is authorised or unauthorised. Schools and local authorities are expected to have agreed a joint approach for all severely absent students.

All severely absent students at TEMA are subject to weekly review and actions are agreed in accordance with Transforming Attendance at TEMA. Help and support will be offered from partner agencies such as Early Help or School Health. A Lead practitioner will be identified at the academy to work closely with the family to identify barriers to punctuality or attendance and to co-ordinate help and support. The Lead practitioner may be a member of The East Manchester Academy staff or from a partner agency. Where interventions do not improve attendance, a range of legal actions will be explored with the local authority.

5.5 Long-term Absence due to Medical Conditions

Where a student is absent from the academy due to a long-term medical condition, a care plan will be developed in accordance with the academy’s Supporting Students with Medical Conditions policy. Where possible, the academy will support the student to continue his or her access to education by providing specialised provision such as Academy 21 or by engaging the Home/School Teaching Service. A reintegration plan will be agreed with families to enable a successful return to the academy.

Where an assessment of a student’s illness or well-being concludes that their achievement will be significantly impaired unless alternative arrangements for education are made, a referral can be submitted to the Hospital School in Manchester under Section 19 of the Education Act 1996. This includes students who display Emotional Barriers to School Attendance. Referrals will be made in partnership with families and will require the support of a medical professional, such as a paediatrician or Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services, in order to be accepted.

5.6 Students Educated Off Site

The attendance of students educated off-site is monitored daily by Student Services. There is daily communication with all Alternative Providers. Registration codes are manually input into SIMS on a daily basis. Home visits are made to the families of all students who are educated off-site to offer any help and support that may be needed and where attendance or engagement is a concern, transforming Attendance at TEMA procedures will be followed in partnership with the Alternative Provider.

The academy only uses schools that are registered as independent schools with OFSTED and as such students are dual registered and D coded within the academy’s register.

6 THE ACADEMY DAY

School Day Structure					
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
7.30-8.30	Breakfast Club	Breakfast Club	Breakfast Club	Breakfast Club	Breakfast Club
8.20-8.30	Staff Briefing				Staff Briefing
8.25-8.30	Welcome Bases/Standards Check	Welcome Bases/Standards Check	Welcome Bases/Standards Check	Welcome Bases/Standards Check	Welcome Bases/Standards Check
8.35-9.00	Progress Time/Assembly	Progress Time/Assembly	Progress Time/Assembly	Progress Time/Assembly	Progress Time/Assembly
9.00-10.00	Period 1	Period 1	Period 1	Period 1	Period 1
10.00-11.15	Period 2 (55 Mins) /Break (15 mins) Line up (5 Mins)	Period 2 (55 Mins) /Break (15 mins) Line up (5 Mins)	Period 2 (55 Mins) /Break (15 mins) Line up (5 Mins)	Period 2 (55 Mins) /Break (15 mins) Line up (5 Mins)	Period 2 (55 Mins) /Break (15 mins) Line up (5 Mins)

11.15-12.15	Period 3	Period 3	Period 3	Period 3	Period 3
12.15-1.45	Period 4 (55 mins)/Lunch (30 mins)/Line Up (5 Mins)	Period 4 (55 mins)/Lunch (35 mins)	Period 4 (55 mins)/Lunch (35 mins)	Period 4 (55 mins)/Lunch (35 mins)	Period 4 (55 mins)/Lunch (35 mins)
1.45-2.40	Period 5	Period 5	Period 5	Period 5	Period 5
2.40-3.35	Period 6	Period 6			

7 ABSENCE PROCEDURES

The East Manchester Academy is committed to promoting the safety, health and welfare of all students and endeavours to manage absences fairly and consistently, with the aim of supporting students and their families.

If a student is absent from the academy, families should:

- contact the academy by 8.15am on the first day of absence by telephone on 0161 230 8039 or by email to attendance@temac.co.uk and send any supporting medical evidence to the Attendance Team if the absence is likely to continue.
- maintain contact with the academy every day of absence for safeguarding reasons, ensuring that staff are aware of the reason for absence and the likely date of return.

It is a family's responsibility to contact the academy to advise staff of absence to support the safeguarding and welfare of all students.

AM registration will take place in the first 10 minutes of form time. Once all students are registered for the morning session, the Attendance Team will send an email to the Year Teams enquiring if any absent students have been seen in the academy. Absent students will be coded as N unless a reason for absence has been received.

If a student is not registered in the academy we will:

- text or email families.
- take phone calls to contact numbers on SIMS.
- there students are vulnerable, make home visits and contact Social Workers or Early Help support workers.
- send letters in accordance with Transforming Attendance at TEMA.

Once reasons for absence have been returned, N codes in the register will be changed to the appropriate authorised code or converted to code O to indicate an unauthorised absence or that no reason has been received.

Registration is taken throughout the academy day and always within 10 minutes of the start of the lesson.

Where absence becomes a concern or no contact is possible with families, interventions will be in accordance with Transforming Attendance at TEMA and will include:

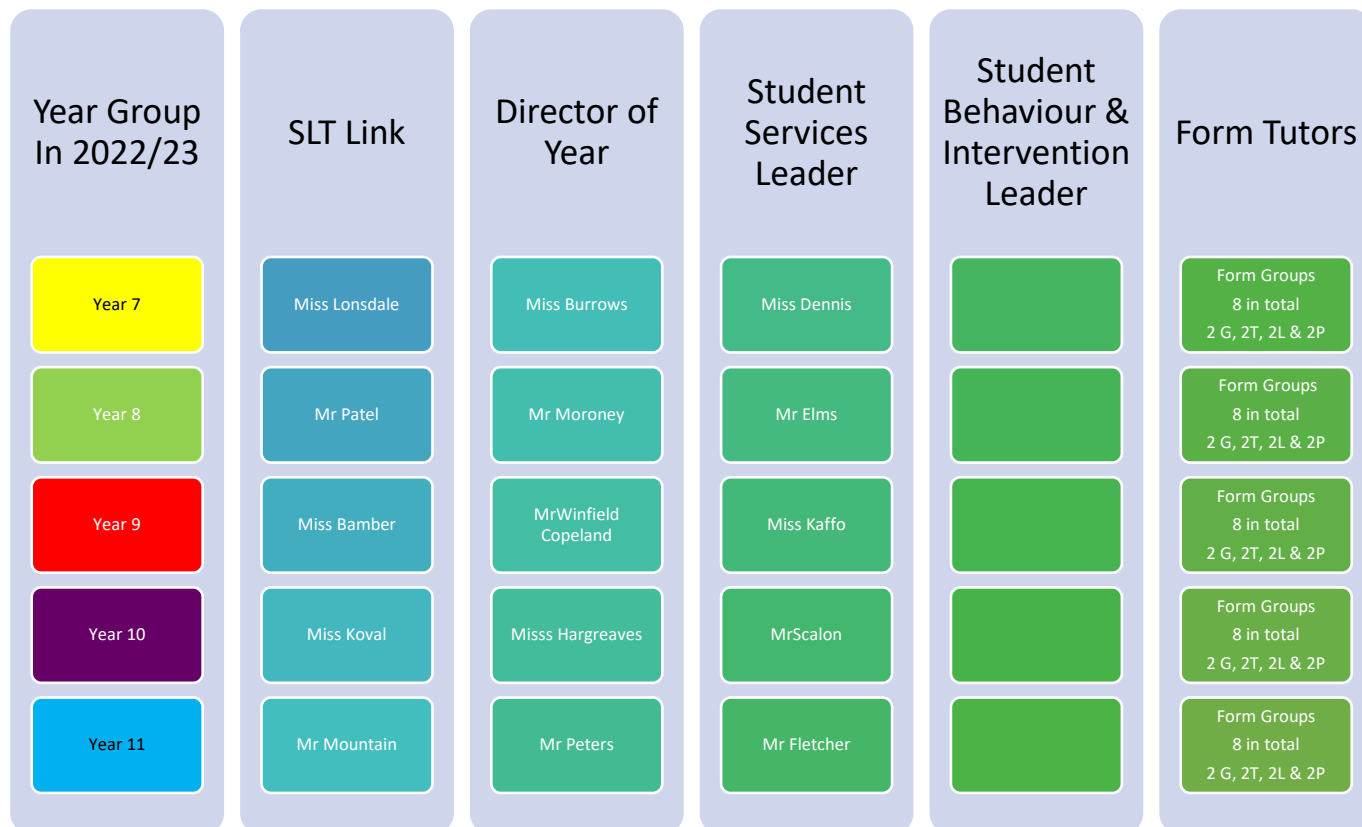
- inviting families into the academy for a meeting with Student Services.
- notifying parents by letter when their child's attendance falls below certain parameters.
- working closely with families and where consent is given, completing an Early Help Assessment to identify areas for support.
- completing a parenting contract to agree actions and set targets.
- make a referral to Manchester City Council for enforcement action.

8 KEY STAFF IN THE ACADEMY

Helen Bamber, Associate assistant headteacher, is responsible for attendance on behalf of the Senior Leadership Team. Amy Morgan is the Attendance Manager and there are two Attendance Officers at the academy.

8.1 The Student Services Year Teams

Where families have concerns or need support, contact should be made with a member of their child's Student Services Year Team. The Student Services Year Teams are structured as follows:



8.2 Responsibilities

All staff, parents and carers and members of the Interim Management Board have a responsibility to make attendance a high priority and to convey the importance of good attendance to students. There is a named member of the Interim Management Board with responsibility for attendance.

9 CONTACT DETAILS FOR STUDENTS

To comply with Health and Safety guidelines and Keeping Children Safe in Education it is important that we have more than one up to date contact details for all students. There are a variety of reasons that staff from the academy may need to contact parents or carers, including ill health when at the academy, emergencies, to discuss unexplained absences and to ensure students are safe. To confirm the reason for a student's absence with families, the academy will generally

telephone the first contact number listed on the student's record. If contact information changes, please telephone or email the academy.

10 MONITORING OF ATTENDANCE

The academy monitors attendance to school and to all lessons. If a student does not arrive at a lesson and was marked present in their previous lesson, a log is recorded to inform staff on Learning and Engagement Academy Response. They will then try to identify the whereabouts of the student. Families will be informed after 15 minutes if there is concern that the student is missing from the academy and if no contact is possible with families, Greater Manchester Police will be notified.

As a matter of course, Form Tutors and the Student Services Team will speak to students collectively and individually to discuss the value of regular attendance at the academy and remain in contact with families to ensure that support is always available. Form tutors are notified weekly of the attendance of students in their form and whether there have been any absences.

Weekly meetings are held within the Student Services Team to ensure that individual students' attendance is monitored. A colour coded attendance banding system is used throughout our monitoring process so any change in a student's attendance may be easily identified. This is known as the Transforming Attendance Triangle. Families receive regular letters to update them in relation to their child's attendance. We have clear and consistent interventions for students in each band and all communication is recorded on the academy's Information Management System.

Whole academy attendance, persistent absence, severe absence and punctuality is monitored by the Deputy Headteacher and Attendance Team. Data is analysed weekly, including information relating to specific groups of students e.g. gender, year group, Student Premium (PP) and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). This is reported to the Interim Management Board, the Senior Leadership Team and to the Trust. These findings inform strategies and action to be taken by Student Services to improve attendance and punctuality in accordance with Transforming Attendance at TEMA.

11 LATE ARRIVAL

The day begins at **8.20am** and we expect students to be in the academy by 8.15am to arrive to their homebase on time. All registers will be completed during form time and at 9.05am each morning the registers will be closed. The academy is only permitted to keep the registers open due to extreme local transport issues or severe weather conditions. In accordance with regulations, students arriving after that time will receive a mark that shows them to be on the academy premises, but this will **not** count as a present mark and be recorded as will an unauthorised absence. This may mean that parents could face the possibility of a penalty notice if late arrival persists.

If students arrive after 8.30am, they are required to enter the academy through the Student Punctuality and Counselling Experiences entrance (SPACE) in order to confirm their presence and register. It is essential that students sign into the academy for safeguarding and health and safety reasons.

A text message will be sent to the families of any student who arrives late and a detention will be issued for the next day. Where punctuality becomes a concern, Student Services will contact families in accordance with Transforming Attendance at TEMA procedures. A 'Minutes Late' report will be shared with the family.

Families may contact Student Services at any time if students are struggling to arrive to the academy on time.

12 LEAVE OF ABSENCE DURING TERM TIME

The Education (Student Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 removed all references to holidays and extended leave and made it clear that headteachers cannot grant any leave in term-time unless exceptional circumstances prevail, therefore, there is no automatic entitlement in law to time off school to go on holiday.

At The East Manchester Academy we believe that leave in term time is undesirable because of the impact on our students' education and we encourage parents always to take family holidays when the academy is closed.

Research has shown that there is a clear link between levels of attendance and achievement. Taking leave in term time has a disruptive effect upon students' learning and progress and it is often difficult for students to catch up with work that has been missed. It may also suggest to some students that their education is not a priority.

The academy's policy is as follows:

- if families wish to request permission for leave of absence during term time we ask that a request form is completed and returned to the academy at least four weeks before the start date of the proposed leave of absence.
- any request will be considered in the light of exceptional circumstances.
- a request is likely to be refused, regardless of the circumstances, if attendance including the proposed period of absence, is below 96%.
- if approval is given for a period of absence, no further requests will be granted for the remainder of the academic year.
- leave of absence taken without permission will be categorised as unauthorised and will result in a request to Manchester City Council for a penalty notice to be issued.

Approval for leave of absence cannot be given retrospectively and any absence taken will always remain as unauthorised.

13 SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES WHEN ABSENCE IS A CONCERN

Support is always available from The East Manchester Academy and we would request that families contact their Year Team without hesitation if we can help with any difficulties.

We recognise that some students face greater barriers to attendance than their peers. These can include students who have long term medical conditions or who have special educational needs or disabilities. All students have the same right to education and the academy will ensure support is in place to help all students access full-time education. Where appropriate Year Teams will liaise with the Attendance and Safeguarding Team, the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Team and other partner agencies

including the Local Authority, in order to fully support a student and their family. This may include an individual health care plan, a referral to the Manchester Hospital School (if this is supported by medical professionals) or access to home learning through Academy 21, a nationally recognised and authorised educational package for when students are too ill to attend school.

Where it is identified that additional arrangements are needed to enable successful reintegration back into the academy following a prolonged period of absence, a plan will be agreed between the Year Team and the family including support through the i-Hive and in exceptional circumstances, short-term part-time arrangements.

Good attendance at the academy also acts as an additional safeguarding measure for vulnerable students. Where students with a social worker or who have previously had a social worker, are absent, contact with home will be made a priority through a telephone call and a home visit. Information about absence will also be shared with the social worker.

13.1 The East Manchester Academy Counselling Service

The East Manchester Academy has its own counsellor. We recognise that from time-to-time life can feel like a challenge and students may need extra support. Our counsellor is here to listen and help. Counselling or 'talking therapy' allows problems or any difficult feelings to be discussed in a safe, confidential environment. It can be useful for anyone wanting to explore and better understand their thoughts and feelings in more depth. Referrals to our counselling service will be made with a student's consent.

13.2 Attendance Contracts

An **attendance contract** is a formal written agreement between a parent and the academy to address irregular attendance. **In the past, these were known as parenting contracts.** This is not legally binding but allows a more formal conversation to take place with clear outcomes and expectations where a voluntary Early Help plan has not worked or is not appropriate. **An attendance** contract is intended to provide support and offer an alternative to legal action. A separate leaflet is available from the academy which offers more information about **attendance contracts** and this will be shared with families if this process is deemed to be appropriate. It is also available on the academy's website.

13.3 Support from Early Help

Where barriers to attendance are complex, the academy will offer to work with students and families to complete an Early Help Assessment. This will enable more intensive support to be provided either at school level or through the hub and will establish a Lead practitioner for the family. The Lead practitioner will be from the team or service best placed to support the family and their needs and may be from the academy, the local authority or another partner such as a health professional.

14 ENFORCING ATTENDANCE

14.1 Parenting Orders

Parenting orders are imposed by the Court following conviction for non-attendance alongside a fine and/or a community order. Parents' agreement is not required before an order is made. They may be appropriate where the parent has not engaged with support to improve their child's attendance.

The order requires a parent to comply with the arrangements specified by the Court which can include a requirement for parents to a parenting class. A responsible officer will be named on the order to work with the family as the lead practitioner. If parents don't comply with the order, it can be seen as an offence and a fine can be imposed.

14.2 Education Supervision Orders

Where an early help plan or a parenting contract has not been successful, an application for an Education Supervision Order (ESO) can be made to provide legal intervention to improve attendance without families being prosecuted. In deciding whether to progress to an ESO, the academy will consult with the local authority and they will agree that support has not been successful and that making the order would be beneficial for the student and the family. Where safeguarding concerns exist, the lead practitioner will agree with academy's safeguarding lead and children's social care that an ESO would be a more suitable option than a s.17 (Children in Need) or s.47 (Child Protection) plan. If it is decided to apply for an ESO, a meeting will be arranged with the family to notify them and a final decision made.

ESOs are made through the Family or High Court, rather than Magistrates Court. They give the local authority a formal role in advising, helping and directing the student and their family to ensure that the student receives an efficient, full-time, suitable education. For the duration of the ESO, the family's duties to secure the child's education and regular attendance are superseded by a duty to comply with any directions given under the ESO.

The order initially lasts for one year, but extensions can be applied for within the last 3 months for a period of up to 3 years at a time.

Where families persistently fail to comply with the directions given under the ESO, they may be guilty of an offence. Local authorities can prosecute in the Magistrates Court for persistent non-compliance with the order and parents (upon conviction) will be liable to a fine of up to £1,000. The lead officer should also raise non-compliance with children's social care.

14.3 Notice to Improve Letter and Penalty Notices

After 10 sessions of unauthorised absence over a 10-week period each academy will make a referral to the Local Authority for statutory action. **The Local Authority may issue a School Attendance: Notice To Improve Letter.** Families would be offered a 6-week period to improve their attendance and engage with support **before the LA progress to issuing a penalty notice.**

A Notice to Improve Letter does not need to be issued where support is not appropriate or where parents are deliberately avoiding the above threshold being met.

Where it is clear that improvement is not being made, it may be appropriate to issue a penalty notice before the improvement period has ended.

A penalty notice is a fine which can be issued to each person with parental responsibility for every school-aged child or young person with irregular attendance. **A 'First Action' Penalty Notice will incur a fine of £160, which is reduced to £80 if paid within the first 21 days.**

Penalty notice fines are issued by Manchester City Council in accordance with their Penalty Notice Protocol. Failure to pay the penalty in full by the end of the 28 day period may result in prosecution by the Local Authority for failure to ensure regular attendance, according to s444, Education Act 1996.

Further details of the Statutory Action Escalation Pathway can be found in Appendix 5.

Each academy will also request that the LA issue a penalty notice be issued for taking leave of absence in term time without authorisation.

With the exception of unauthorised holidays taken in term time, parents will be sent a formal warning of their liability to receive such a notice before it is issued. **A template letter is provided in Appendix 6. These should be sent to families at the end of each week so that families are provided with sufficient notification of the direction of travel in relation to the balance between support and challenge.**

14.4 Legal proceedings for failing to ensure regular attendance

If a child of compulsory school age fails to attend regularly at a school at which they are registered, or at a place where alternative provision is provided for them, their family may be guilty of an offence and can be prosecuted by the local authority.

Prosecution in the Magistrates Court is the last resort where all other voluntary and formal support or legal intervention has failed or where support has been deemed inappropriate. In all cases, local authorities must fully consider using an ESO before moving forward to prosecution. Where it is decided to pursue prosecution, only local authorities can prosecute families.

Failing to ensure regular school attendance is an offence punishable in the Magistrates' Court with a fine of up to £1000 or in the case of 'aggravated' offences up to £2500 or a term of imprisonment of up to 3 months.

The local authority will make the decision to prosecute but in deciding, the following will be considered:

- the level of engagement from the family and whether prosecution is needed to demonstrate how serious the absence is and to ensure parental engagement with support.
- whether all other legal interventions have been considered and are not appropriate or have been tried and have not worked.
- whether statutory children's social care intervention would be more appropriate including a Child in Need or Child Protection Plan.
- the family's response to formal warnings and information provided relating to the absence.

15 CHILDREN MISSING EDUCATION NOTIFICATION

All possible contact will be made via email, text and home visits to establish the whereabouts of a student if they are absent from the academy. If a student has 10 days unauthorised absence, notification will be sent to Manchester City Council in accordance with their CME Protocol. Students are only removed from the academy roll with notification to Manchester City Council and in accordance with legislation. A record of all students removed from roll is kept by the academy including destinations where known.

16 SUMMARY

The academy has a legal duty to regularly publish annual absence figures and to promote excellent attendance. Equally, parents and carers have a duty to ensure that their child attends regularly. The East Manchester Academy is wholly committed to working with families and partner agencies to ensure the highest possible levels of attendance are achieved and to offer help and support to students and their families in order for them to achieve the best possible outcomes from their education.

APPENDIX 1: LEAVE OF ABSENCE REQUEST FORM

Please be aware that leave of absence for holidays taken during term time will NOT be authorised unless the academy considers there to be exceptional circumstances supporting the application. This form should be completed and submitted to the Attendance Team within four weeks of the start of the proposed leave of absence. Separate forms should be completed for each student if there is more than one request. Parents and carers are reminded that term time holidays taken without permission will result in unauthorised absence and may lead to a Penalty Notice being issued by the Local Authority. This is a fine of £60 which rises to £120 if it is not paid within 21 days. These are issued to each parent for each child.

Name of Student:	
Form:	
Name of parent/carer:	
Address:	
Telephone number:	
Start date of proposed leave of absence:	
End date of proposed leave of absence:	
Exceptional circumstances:	

Signed Date

For academy use only

% Attendance	No of previous holidays	of No of days authorised and dates	No of days unauthorised and dates	Reasons for decision

TRANSFORMING ATTENDANCE At TEMA



Form Tutors

- Will congratulate students for having attendance within this band.
- Will ensure students collect termly certificates printed by the admin team and issued in assemblies by Directors of Year.

Form Tutors

- Will discuss attendance with students ensuring that they are welcomed back and are aware that the absence has been noted.
- Will set an attendance target.
- Will contact the family to discuss absence from the academy.

Student Services Year Team - Director of Year

- Will ensure Attendance Concern Letter 1 is sent by the admin team where attendance remains a concern.

Student Services Year Team - Director of Year

- Will ensure Attendance Concern Letter 2 is sent advising families that medical evidence is needed in order to authorise future absences.
- Will work with families and ensure an understanding of the link between attendance, progress and attainment.
- Will set an attendance target.
- Will coordinate home visits and attendance meetings to ensure that we can discuss attendance concerns with you.
- Will complete a referral for Early Help support with a family's consent.
- Will work with the Student Services Attendance Team to offer a parenting contract.
- Will complete a referral for legal action as appropriate.
- Where Early Help support or a parenting contract has not brought about an improvement, an Education Supervision Order (ESO) will be discussed with Manchester Local Authority. An ESO would identify a supervising officer to advise, help and direct students and families to improve access to education.

Student Services Attendance Team

- Will ensure Attendance Concern Letter 4 is sent advising a family of the serious concern about attendance and that legal action may follow.
- Will continue to discuss the impact that absence is having on academic progress.
- Will set an attendance target.
- Will monitor attendance and safeguarding.
- Will coordinate home visits and attendance meetings to ensure that we can discuss attendance concerns and create a plan for improvement.
- Will work closely with other agencies to offer support and a personalised intervention package.
- Will balance support and challenge.
- Where Early Help support or a parenting contract has not brought about an improvement, an Education Supervision Order (ESO) will be discussed with Manchester Local Authority. An ESO would identify a supervising officer to advise, help and direct students and families to improve access to education.

Student Services Attendance Team, Manchester Local Authority and Other Agencies such as Manchester Children's Services

- Will intensify the support and challenge already started by school.
- Will support a student back into school and ensure measures are in place to build confidence and bridge gaps.
- Will consider placing a student into alternative forms of educational provision to overcome the barriers to being in school.
- Will build on the existing Early Help offer to include a single assessment plan and a lead practitioner from the team or service best placed to support a family to bring about an improvement in attendance.

100 - 98% ATTENDANCE

Congratulations. Your child's attendance is excellent. Students in this band are eligible for a range of rewards.

97 - 95% ATTENDANCE

Your child's attendance is below TEMA's expected percentage. Your child may have been ill. This is understandable but not without cost. It is important to catch up on work and maintain good attendance over the coming weeks. Attendance can be improved by being on time every day and ensuring all appointments are made outside of academy hours. A student in this band will probably continue to make progress but will need to work hard to maintain this.

94 - 91% ATTENDANCE

Your child's attendance is a cause for concern and is significantly below TEMA's expected percentage. Lost learning will make progress difficult and there is a significant risk of under achievement. Your child must speak to teachers to catch up with work and you must now meet with Student Services to discuss everything that is affecting your child's attendance. You may be asked to come to an attendance panel and enter into a parent contract to improve attendance.

BELOW 91%

Your child's attendance is a serious cause for concern and there is a severe risk of under achievement. Your child is classed as a persistent absentee and urgent measures need to be taken to ensure that there is an improvement or your child will not reach his or her potential, will gain fewer qualifications and will be less likely to gain entry to further education, training or employment. Unless there are genuine reasons preventing your child from attending school, legal action will be taken.

BELOW 51%

Your child's attendance is so low that they are classified as severely absent.

School will work with Manchester Local Authority and other local partners to intensify the support and challenge offered. If you do not work with TEMA to improve attendance there may be further legal action.

Attendance Letter 1

«date_of_printing»

«addressee»
«address_block»

Dear «salutation»,

Re: «forename» «surname» «reg»

Every student at The East Manchester Academy matters. The most important factor contributing to your child's success at the academy is at least 98% attendance. Whilst the academy accepts that genuine authorised absences are sometimes unavoidable, they are not without cost. The link between attendance, progress and examination results is firmly established. Those students who attend less achieve fewer qualifications and are less able to access higher education, employment or training. It is your legal responsibility to ensure that your child attends school every day.

I am writing to advise you that «forename»'s school attendance has begun to decline. Currently «forename»'s attendance is «**percentage_attendance**»%.

We are hoping that bringing this issue to your attention will result in an improvement but if there are any issues which you believe are affecting «his_her» attendance, please don't hesitate to contact your Year Team to discuss the help and support that we can offer.

I must remind you that ensuring regular school attendance is a legal responsibility and that failure to do so may result in a referral to the Local Authority for further action, including penalty notice fines or prosecution.

Yours sincerely

Attendance Letter 2

«date_of_printing»

«addressee»
«address_block»

Dear «salutation»,

Re: «Forename» «Surname» «reg»

Every student at The East Manchester Academy matters. The most important factor contributing to your child's success at the academy is at least 98% attendance.

It is widely recognised that absence from school significantly impacts on the educational outcomes and future life chances of children and young people. Therefore, at The East Manchester Academy, we want to encourage all our parents and carers to make sure that their children attend school every day. Regular and punctual attendance at school will ensure that your child has every opportunity for success and will also create good habits for the future.

«Forename»'s current attendance is **«percentage attendance»%** and is now a cause for concern. Due to «forename»'s current attendance levels, any future absences may not be authorised unless supported by medical evidence (for example, a doctor's note or a copy of a prescription). Absences not supported by such evidence will be unauthorised.

The Year Team will continue to monitor «forename»'s attendance. If it continues to be a cause for concern the team will contact you to arrange a meeting at the academy or they will make a home visit. At this time, we will discuss how we can support you to make improvements and identify any help that you may need as a family. If, after this meeting «forename»'s attendance does not improve, then a referral may be made to the Local Authority to consider further action.

Please note that it is your legal responsibility as a parent to ensure the regular and punctual attendance of your child. Failure to do so may result in the Local Authority issuing a School Attendance: Notice To Improve Letter and a penalty notice being issued by the Local Authority. A penalty notice can be issued to each parent for each child where attendance is a concern. A 'First Action' Penalty Notice will incur a fine of £160, which is reduced to £80 if paid within the first 21 days.

Failure to pay the Penalty Notice may result in legal proceedings being taken against you in accordance with the Education Act 1996. This will involve being summoned to the Magistrates Court and if you are found guilty you will receive a criminal record and may receive a fine of up to £2,500 and/or 3 months imprisonment.

Support and guidance is always available from The East Manchester Academy and if you have any specific queries in relation to this letter, please make contact on the above telephone number.

Yours sincerely

Attendance Letter 3

Date

Parent details

Address

Dear

Following a review of this year's attendance data, I am writing to make you aware that your son/daughter is currently recorded as a persistent absentee, as defined by His Majesty's Government. His/her attendance is currently % and is a serious concern.

Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need your support and cooperation to tackle this. In order to discuss this further, I would like to invite you to a meeting at the academy on xxxx at xxx. (Names and role) will be present at the meeting. I have enclosed a copy of xxxxx's attendance for your information.

If you are unable to attend the meeting, please contact me to arrange a time that is suitable for you. Please also bring any medical evidence to cover xxxx's absences from school. Please note that no further absences will be authorised without medical evidence.

It is your legal responsibility as a parent to ensure the regular and punctual attendance of your child. Failure to do so may result in the Local Authority issuing a School Attendance: Notice To Improve Letter and a penalty notice being issued by the Local Authority. A penalty notice can be issued to each parent for each child where attendance is a concern. A 'First Action' Penalty Notice will incur a fine of £160, which is reduced to £80 if paid within the first 21 days.

Failure to pay the Penalty Notice may result in legal proceedings being taken against you in accordance with the Education Act 1996. This will involve being summoned to the Magistrates Court and if you are found guilty you will receive a criminal record and may receive a fine of up to £2,500 and/or 3 months imprisonment.

Support and guidance is always available from the academy. Please contact the attendance team if you have any specific queries in relation to this letter.

Your sincerely

«addressee»
«address_block»

Dear «salutation»,

Re: «forename» «surname» «reg»

Following a review of this year's attendance data, I am writing to make you aware that your «son_daughter» is currently recorded as a persistent absentee, as defined by His Majesty's Government. A student is classed as a persistent absentee when their attendance falls to 90% or below. «forename»'s attendance is currently at **«percentage attendance»%**.

Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need your support to improve this. Whilst the academy accepts that genuine authorised absences are sometimes unavoidable, they are not without cost. The link between attendance, progress and examination results is firmly established. Those students who attend less achieve fewer qualifications and are less able to access higher education, employment or training. It is your legal responsibility to ensure that your child attends school every day.

«forename»'s attendance is now a serious cause for concern and we have to take action to ensure that this improves. This may involve home visits, inviting you to an attendance panel or making a referral to the Local Authority. Please note that no further absences will be authorised without medical evidence of illness.

It is your legal responsibility as a parent to ensure the regular and punctual attendance of your child. Failure to do so may result in the Local Authority issuing a School Attendance: Notice To Improve Letter and a penalty notice being issued by the Local Authority. A penalty notice can be issued to each parent for each child where attendance is a concern. A 'First Action' Penalty Notice will incur a fine of £160, which is reduced to £80 if paid within the first 21 days.

Failure to pay the Penalty Notice may result in legal proceedings being taken against you in accordance with the Education Act 1996. This will involve being summoned to the Magistrates Court and if you are found guilty you will receive a criminal record and may receive a fine of up to £2,500 and/or 3 months imprisonment.

Support and guidance is always available from the academy. Please contact your Year Team if you have any specific queries in relation to this letter.

Yours sincerely

Attendance Letter 5

Date

Parent details

Address

Dear

Re: D.O.B.

Further to our communication earlier this academic year, I am concerned that xxxx's attendance has not significantly improved. His/her attendance is currently xxx% and he/she is recorded as a persistent absentee/severe absentee.

As the academy now has to consider the next steps to improve xxx's attendance, I would like to invite you to a meeting at the academy on (date) at (time). (staff attending and role) will be present. The purpose of the meeting is to make an offer of Early Help support. Engagement with Early Help support is entirely voluntary but is an important step in further engaging with support. If you are unable to attend the meeting, please contact me to arrange a time that is suitable for you. Please also bring any medical evidence to cover (student forename)'s absences from school. Please note that no absences will be authorised without medical evidence.

It is your legal responsibility as a parent to ensure the regular and punctual attendance of your child. Failure to do so may result in the Local Authority issuing a School Attendance: Notice To Improve Letter and a penalty notice being issued by the Local Authority. A penalty notice can be issued to each parent for each child where attendance is a concern. A 'First Action' Penalty Notice will incur a fine of £160, which is reduced to £80 if paid within the first 21 days.

Failure to pay the Penalty Notice may result in legal proceedings being taken against you in accordance with the Education Act 1996. This will involve being summoned to the Magistrates Court and if you are found guilty you will receive a criminal record and may receive a fine of up to £2,500 and/or 3 months imprisonment.

Support and guidance is always available from the academy. Please contact the XXX Team if you have any specific queries in relation to this letter.

Your sincerely

Leave of absence decline

Date

Our Ref CHG

Name and address

Parental salutation

Request for Leave of Absence – Name: DOB:

Thank you for your request for **students name** to be absent from school between **dates and dates**. I have considered your request and I am writing to advise you that on this occasion, **leave of absence will not be authorised**.

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 removed all references to holidays and extended leave and made it clear that headteachers should not grant any leave in term-time unless exceptional circumstances prevail, therefore, there is no automatic entitlement in law to time off school to go on holiday. The effect of this guidance is that the government expects it to be extremely unusual for holidays in term time to be permitted. On this occasion the category of exceptional circumstances has not been met.

Every student at The East Manchester Academy matters. The most important factor contributing to your child's success at the academy is at least 98% attendance. Whilst the academy accepts that genuine authorised absences are sometimes unavoidable they are not without cost. The link between attendance, progress and examination results is firmly established. Those students who attend less achieve fewer qualifications and are less able to access higher education, employment or training. It is your legal responsibility to send your child to school every day.

Both the academy and the Local Authority take the issue of school attendance very seriously and parents should be aware that where holidays are taken during term time without permission they may be issued with a Penalty Notice. **A first action Penalty Notice requires payment of £160 per student, per parent to be made within 28 days, reduced to £80 if paid within the first 21 days. Penalty Notices can increase to £160 per student, per parent if issued for a second authorised holiday taken in term time over a 3-year period.** Where students are absent for more than 20 days, they are at risk of losing their school place.

Support and guidance on attendance is always available from the academy and if you have any specific queries in relation to this letter, please contact me to discuss further.

Yours sincerely

Punctuality Concern

Date

Name
Address

Dear

Re: Student details DOB

Every student at The East Manchester Academy matters. The most important factor contributing to your child's success at the academy is at least 98% attendance. An important step towards achieving the academy's attendance target is to ensure that (he/she) attends on time. Late arrival at the academy means:

- lost learning.
- missing important information given out in form about the day or week ahead e.g. exams.
- disrupting other students' education and lessons.
- establishing bad habits which might transfer into further education and employment.

I am writing to advise you that (student's forename)'s attendance at the academy has begun to decline and one of the reasons for this is (his/her) punctuality. (His/her) attendance percentage is now (percentage attendance)% with (number) L codes and (number) U codes recorded during this academic year.

All students are expected to be at the academy by 8.35am. Students who arrive late to Period 1 will be issued with an L mark in the register. Any student arriving after 9.05am will receive a U mark in the register which counts as an unauthorised absence. This means that 50% of the day's attendance marks have been lost.

We are hoping that bringing this issue to your attention will lead to an improvement and if there are any issues affecting (student forename)'s attendance or punctuality, please don't hesitate to contact the Attendance Team to discuss the help and support that can be offered.

I must **remind you that ensuring regular school attendance is a legal responsibility and that failure to do so may result in the Local Authority issuing a School Attendance: Notice To Improve Letter and a penalty notice being issued by the Local Authority. A penalty notice can be issued to each parent for each child where attendance is a concern. A 'First Action' Penalty Notice will incur a fine of £160, which is reduced to £80 if paid within the first 21 days.**

Failure to pay the Penalty Notice may result in legal proceedings being taken against you in accordance with the Education Act 1996. This will involve being summoned to the Magistrates Court and if you are found guilty you will receive a criminal record and may receive a fine of up to £2,500 and/or 3 months imprisonment.

Yours sincerely

<p>1 Support First</p>	<p>Manchester adopts a 'support first' based approach. All families should be offered support to break down in-school and out-of-school barriers to attendance in line with Manchester's Graduated Approach. At The East Manchester Academy this offer will include our Transforming Attendance Family Guide, Attendance Letters, telephone calls, home visits, Year team meetings, & Attendance Team Meetings, Early Help, Parenting Contracts and other interventions as appropriate. If your child has been experiencing any problems that may be affecting their attendance or punctuality, then please contact the school on 0161 230 8039 to discuss the support that can be provided in partnership with you so that we can work together to improve attendance.</p>	<p>2 Notice to Improve</p>	<p>Sporadic Absence: Issued for 10 sessions of unauthorised absence over a 10-week period. Families are offered a 6-week period to improve their attendance and engage with support. A Notice to Improve does not need to be issued where support is not appropriate or where parents are deliberately avoiding the above threshold being met. Where it is clear that improvement is not being made, it may be appropriate to issue a penalty notice before the improvement period has ended. Holidays Not used for unauthorised holidays taken in term time.</p>	<p>3 First Action (£80)</p>	<p>Sporadic Absence: Issued for 10 sessions of unauthorised absence over a 10-week period. Holidays Issued for a first unauthorised holiday taken in term time. PENALTY: £80 per pupil, per parent if paid within 21 days. £160 up to 28 days. If unpaid within 28 days, it will proceed to court.</p>	<p>4 Second Action (£160)</p>	<p>Sporadic Absence: Issued for second period of 10 sessions missed over a 10-week period within a 3-year rolling time frame. Holidays Issued for a second unauthorised holiday taken in term time over a 3-year period. PENALTY: £160 per pupil, per parent. If unpaid within 28 days will proceed to court.</p>	<p>5 Final Action</p>	<p>A weekly panel will meet to decide appropriate next steps for pupils who reach this stage of the escalation pathway. Options include: PACE Face to Face PACE by Post Direct Prosecution Section 1 Direct Prosecution Section 1a Formal Caution No Further Action Pupils coming into this stage of the pathway for a second or multiple times will be taken to multi-agency panels such as Early Help Allocations or Advice & Guidance</p>
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APPENDIX 5

«Parental_Salutation»
«AddressBlock»



Dear «Parental_Salutation»

Re: «Name» and DOB «DOB»

% Attendance	«M_Present_AEA»	L Codes Late before 09.05	«L_Codes»	U Codes Late after 09.05. This counts as unauthorised absence.	«U_Codes»
Number of unauthorised days missed.	Number and colour				

The East Manchester Academy has been working hard to improve the attendance of all students. It is widely recognised that the educational outcomes and future life chances of children and young people can be significantly impacted upon by periods of absence. Therefore, we want to encourage families to ensure that their child attends school every day. Students who have irregular attendance achieve fewer qualifications and are less able to access higher education, employment or training. An important step in ensuring that your child attends is to ensure that they arrive on time.

Arriving late means that your child has:

- missed out on the opportunity for breakfast;
- missing out on learning;
- missed important information given out about the day/week ahead e.g. examination dates and times;
- disrupted the education of other students and
- begun to establish a bad habit that might transfer into their employment history.

At The East Manchester Academy we fully appreciate that there may be occasions when a student’s attendance may be affected due to exceptional circumstances or other unforeseeable events that may occur. Support and advice will always be available from the school. **Unfortunately, despite this support, attendance levels for some students continues to fall below the academy’s expectations of at least 98%.**

All students’ attendance is closely monitored by the school and in some cases, we may decide to record a student’s absence as unauthorised where appropriate. **This happens automatically when a student arrives after our registers have closed at 09.05. These students receive a U code.**

Unauthorised Sessions Missed	Unauthorised Days Missed
0	0
1	
2	1
3	
4	2
5	
6	3
	4

No sessions of unauthorised absence are acceptable. Well done.

Students who attend can be supported and helped.

As a family you should have made contact with the school to notify us about the absence and provide us with evidence to support that absence.

The East Manchester Academy will be reaching out to you via Attendance Letters and the Banding Letters that are issued every term, as well as through texts, calls and home visits to ensure that you are offered any support and help that you may need to ensure your child is happy at school. Attendance meetings may be at school or in your own home. These may include an offer of Early Help or an Attendance Contract. You will also be challenged about the level of absence and the impact that this will be having on your child’s progress but supported to improve this.

Your child’s attendance is a cause for concern. Lost learning will make progress difficult and there is a significant risk of underachievement. As a family you should be working with The East Manchester Academy to reduce absence from school. Unless there are genuine reasons preventing your child from attending the school, we will be considering discussing the absence with Manchester City Council.



Families of students who have accrued 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence are referred to Manchester LA for statutory action as part of a new National Framework for Penalty Notices laid out in Working Together To Improve Attendance (February 2024) which came into force in August 2024.

This letter outlines where you are in the escalation process that is built on support and challenge. It complements our Transforming Attendance approach.



If further unauthorised absence occurs after this warning it may result in the Local Authority issuing a School Attendance: Notice To Improve Letter and a penalty notice being issued by the Local Authority. A penalty notice can be issued to each parent for each child where attendance is a concern. A 'First Action' Penalty Notice will incur a fine of £160, which is reduced to £80 if paid within the first 21 days.



Failure to pay the Penalty Notice may result in legal proceedings being taken against you in accordance with the Education Act 1996. This will involve being summoned to the Magistrates Court and if you are found guilty you will receive a criminal record and may receive a fine of up to £2,500 and/or 3 months imprisonment.

If your child is experiencing any problems that may be affecting their attendance or punctuality, then please contact the school on 0161 230 8039 to discuss support that can be provided. We would also urge our families to provide school with medical evidence when absence is related to illness i.e. a copy of prescriptions or medical/appointment cards.

Yours sincerely

Helen Bamber
Associate Assistant Head