



MASCALLS ACADEMY

Academic Excellence
Character | Culture

Mascalls Academy Attendance Policy

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"Every Academy Day Counts"

Rationale

For a child to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance is essential.

We are committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all our pupils/students and endeavour to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome.

For our children to take full advantage of the educational opportunities offered it is vital that your child is at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. The routines children develop around attendance and punctuality at school are the same as the expectations of any future employer in the world of work. High attainment, confidence with peers and staff, and future aspirations depend on good attendance.

It is our duty to consistently strive to achieve a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Mascalls Academy aims to promote at least good attendance (attendance above 97%). Mascalls Academy recognises and supports the evidence that poor attendance can significantly impact both educational outcomes as well as mental health, well wellbeing and social development. Ultimately the impact of attendance on long term life chances for our students is maximised through good attendance.

Academy resources support good attendance by creating a safe, calm, inclusive and orderly environment through the application of our behaviour strategy, Place2be, learning support and its pastoral structure as well as conflict resolution and as a result believe the best place for a student to access the support is on site. Such an environment is the first intervention for the most vulnerable students at risk of poor attendance. Serious mental health and well being must always be referred to a GP and diagnosed professionally. Mascalls Academy also recognises that attendance to school is mandatory and it is the legal responsibility of the parent/carer to ensure good attendance.

The level of attendance and punctuality expected from all our pupils is included in our school's Home School Agreement, which parents must sign following their child's admission to a school (statutory).

It is very important, therefore, that you make sure your child attends regularly and this policy sets out how together we will achieve this. This policy will be annually publicised in writing for all staff, parents/carers and pupils via the academy website.

Good attendance is important because:

1. statistics show a direct link between under-achievement and absence below 95%
2. regular attenders make better progress, both socially and academically
3. regular attenders find school routines, school work and friendships easier to cope with
4. regular attenders find learning more satisfying
5. regular attenders are more successful in transferring between primary school, secondary school, and higher education, employment or training.

Promoting good attendance

The foundation for good attendance is a strong partnership between the school, parents and the child. The Home School Agreement will contain details of how we will work with parents/carers and our expectations

of what parents/carers will need to do to ensure their child achieves good attendance. To help us all to focus on this we will:

- provide information on all matters related to attendance in our regular Principals update
- report to you on how your child is performing in school, what their attendance is
- celebrate good attendance through whole school assemblies
- reward good or improving attendance through certificates and outings/ events

Help and Support?

If you would like help, support and advice regarding your child's punctuality and attendance please contact your child's college. You can make an appointment by email or by telephoning the main academy number 01892835366

Roles and responsibilities

Responsibilities of the academy's attendance lead

A member of the senior leadership team will oversee, direct and coordinate the academy's work, alongside an attendance manager, in promoting regular and improved attendance and will ensure the attendance policy is consistently applied throughout the school. This person will also ensure that attendance is both recorded accurately and analysed. They will ensure that attendance issues are identified at an early stage and that support is put in place to deal with any difficulties.

If absence is frequent or continuous, except where a child is clearly unwell, staff will discuss with parents/carers the need and reasons for their child's absence and will encourage them to keep absences to a minimum. A note or explanation from a pupil's home does not mean an absence becomes authorised. The decision whether or not to authorise an absence will always rest with the academy.

Responsibilities of students

- Attend every day unless they are ill or have an authorised absence.
- Arrive in school on time.
- Go to all their registrations and lessons on time.
- Take responsibility for registering at the student services desk if they are late or are leaving the school site during school hours.

Responsibilities of parents/carers

A child not attending school is considered a safeguarding matter. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required. Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is a parent/carer's legal responsibility (Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act) and permitting absence from school that is not authorised by the school creates an offence in law.

Parents will:

- inform the school on the first day of absence
- discuss with the advisor/class teacher any planned absences well in advance
- support the school with their child in aiming for 100% attendance each year

- make sure that any absence is clearly accounted for by telephone or text on the first and subsequent days of absence, or by letter if a phone is unavailable
- avoid taking their child out of school for non-urgent medical or dental appointments
- only request leave of absence if it is for an exceptional circumstance.

Understanding types of absence

Pupils are expected to attend school every day for the entire duration of the academic year, unless there is an exceptional reason for the absence. There are two main categories of absences:

1. authorised absence: is when the school has accepted the explanation offered as satisfactory justification for the absence or given approval in advance for such an absence. If no explanation is received, absences cannot be authorised
2. unauthorised absence: is when the school has not received a reason for absence or has not approved a child's leave absence from school after a parent's request. This includes:
 - parents giving their children permission to be off school unnecessarily, such as for shopping, birthdays,
 - to look after siblings
 - truancy before or during the school day
 - absences which have not been explained.

An academy can, if needed, change an authorised absence to an unauthorised absence and vice versa if new information is presented. Any changes will be communicated to parents/carers. An example of this would be where a parent states a child is unwell but on return to school there is evidence they have been on holiday.

In education law, parents/carers are committing an offence if they fail to ensure the regular attendance of their child of compulsory school age at the school at which the child is registered, unless the absence has been authorised by the academy.

Mascalls Academy, The Leigh Academies Trust and Kent County Council will use the full range of legal measures to secure good attendance. Legal measures will only be considered when there is unauthorised absence and :

1. the child or family do not require the support from any agency to improve the attendance
2. the child has 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence and parents are complicit in the child's absence.

The following legal measures will be used for pupils of compulsory school age who are registered at a school or academy:

Parenting contracts set at meetings

Parenting orders

Penalty Notices

Prosecution.

For national guidance refer to:

[Parental responsibility measures for behaviour and attendance, which covers legal measures for non-attendance](#)

Persistent absence

What is Persistent Absence?

From September 2015 in line with Government Guidelines a pupil will be defined as a “Persistent Absentee” if they miss approximately 10% or more of all possible school sessions, any attendance that is 90% or below

What is the impact of persistent absence?

There's a clear link between poor attendance at the Academy and low levels of attainment. Poor attendance can disrupt a pupils own learning and that of other pupil's. It has a damaging effect on a child's academic career in the Academy. Every Academy day counts, don't let your child miss out in the education they deserve.

100%	99%	98%	90%	84%	80%	74%
190 School days a year	186 days of education	182 days of education	171 days of education	160 days of education	152 days of education	140 days of education
0 days off school in a year	4 days off in a school year	8 days off in a school year	19 days off in a school year	30 days off in a school year	38 days off in a school year	50 days off in a school year
			Research suggests that your child would now be failing 1-2 grades below their potential	Your child would have missed 6 weeks of Education	Research suggests that your child would now be failing 2-3 grades below their potential	Your child would have missed 10 weeks of education
Amazing! Your attendance is on track			Concerning. You are now classed as 'Persistent Absentee'		Serious concern. The local authority will be moving towards court action	

There are 175 non school days a year, families should use these days for holidays/trips to see relatives

What does the law say about poor attendance?

Unauthorised absence from the Academy can be a cause for concern in relation to child welfare and safeguarding. Under section 7 of the Education Act 1996, parents and carers have a legal duty to secure their child's regular and punctual attendance at school. The Academy gives plenty of warning to parents and carers in regard to unsatisfactory attendance. However, should a child be persistently absent and if parents and carers are unable to provide valid reasons or proof, the Academy in conjunction with Kent County Council will intervene. In this instance, parents and carers could face a fine anywhere from £60 and up to £2,500 and/or two to three months imprisonment, under section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

Punctuality

Pupils are expected to arrive at Mascalls at 8.25am

Lateness		Code
Arrival between 8.30am and 9.15am	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Registers are open.Pupils who arrive during the registration period with acceptable reasons for lateness are counted as present, but late.Pupils who arrive after 8.30 without an acceptable reason 3 times in a week are given a after school detention	L
Arrival after 9.15am	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Registers are closed.Pupils who arrive after close of registers with unacceptable reasons, absence is unauthorised. This then counts as one unauthorised session. (10 unauthorised sessions may result in a referral to KCC and a fixed penalty notice).Pupils who arrive after 9.15am without an acceptable reason 3 times in a week are given an after school detention	U
Lateness to lesson	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Registers stay open throughout the lesson.If a student is late, this will be coded as such and with a record of minutes late.If students are more than 5 minutes late to a lesson they will attend a same day detention. Multiple lates throughout the day will lead to 2 lessons in inclusion. If a student is late multiple times in a day, a call home will be made to notify. Further lateness will be a college detention	L (+minutes late)

Application for leave of absence

Only exceptional circumstances warrant a leave of absence. Schools should consider each application individually taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request. If a leave of absence is granted, it is for the Principal to determine the length of the time the pupil can be away from school. As Principals should only grant leaves of absence in exceptional circumstances it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday.

Some examples of exceptional circumstances:

- A close bereavement in the family
- Attending a funeral
- Religious observance
- An organised activity the Academy agrees in advance

Applications for leave of absence must be made in writing to the Principal of the Academy using the College emails below. The Academy will also seek proof of any absence approved during term time as evidence for your child's attendance record (this would be supporting documentation)

Earhart - maria.kemp@mascallsacademy.org.uk

Luther King - sharon.mahon@mascallsacademy.org.uk

Shackleton - chris.courtney@mascallsacademy.org.uk

Marie Curie - Claire.shaw-kew@mascallsacademy.org.uk

Home visits

In the event of your child(ren)s attendance declining, and with no contact, an unannounced home visit will occur. Should there be no contact a referral will be made via 101 and contact will be made with Kent County Council

Medical Evidence

We advise parents to notify us on the first day the child is unable to attend due to illness. We will authorise or not authorise absences due to illness in line with NHS guidelines found [here](#) unless we have genuine cause for concern about the veracity of an illness. If the authenticity of illness is in doubt, we can request parents to provide medical evidence to support illness. We can record the absence as unauthorised if not satisfied of the authenticity of the illness but will advise parents of our intention. We are advised not to request medical evidence unnecessarily. Medical evidence can take the form of prescriptions, appointment cards, etc. rather than doctors' notes.

Monitoring and intervention

Attendance Monitoring and Intervention procedures	
Action	Person responsible
Punctuality	
Students late due to buses Advisors to amend registers as present not late or absent	Advisor
Late to lesson 1 but not late to advisory. Mark students as late and record the minutes they are late	Attendance team/College
Late to lessons throughout the day. Students to be marked late throughout the day.	College team
Persistent lateness to lessons	College team

If over 5 in a week, students will be given an after school detention. Persistent lateness will mean an inclusion day, further lateness will lead to a suspension	
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Attendance		
Unexplained absence will be followed up with a phone call and a text message. Until contact is made students will remain as N	Attendance manager and college team	
All N codes to be followed up throughout the day with a text message and a phone call.	Attendance manager	
Student attendance below 96% - Advisor/College team to call home and discuss any issues leading to poor attendance. Any reference made to mental health must be followed up with contact to the college team and referral to Place2be or parental/carer referral to GP. A letter sent reminding parents of the expectations of regular attendance	Advisor/College team	Through each of these stages, there will be reasonable adjustments where applicable and appropriate
Student attendance 90-94% 15 day absence monitoring period. Any absence over a 15 day period without medical evidence will result in the next stage. AS1 referral. Meeting with the college team.	Attendance manager/college team	
Student attendance 85-90% Pre fine stage. AS5 referral to be submitted and meeting with EWO to support. Meeting to be held with KCC/Attendance manager/SLT/College team	Attendance manager	
Student attendance 85% below Education welfare officer involvement and a fine to be issued	Attendance manager	

There are key policies that are relevant to pupil attendance, registration procedures, and following up on pupil absence which, for your convenience, are listed below:

Admissions

Anti-bullying

Child protection and safeguarding

Suspension

Special educational needs

Teaching and learning

Behaviour and rewards