



L.E.A.D. Academy Trust

Lead • Empower • Achieve • Drive

Bishop Alexander L.E.A.D Academy

Attendance Policy

Policy Information

Document name	Attendance Policy
Date approved	
Date issued	
Date of review	January 2024
Approved by	

1. Aims

At Bishop Alexander L.E.A.D Academy we are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our culture and ethos that values good attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend
- Promoting and supporting punctuality in attending lessons

2. Legislation and Guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education 2022 (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)

Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)

Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)

[The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)

[The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2007 \(and 2013 amendments\)](#)

3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 Academy Trustees

Trustees are responsible for:

- Ensuring that there is a Trust wide strategy to improve attendance

Academy Governing Bodies (AGBs) are responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of good attendance across the academy's policies and through its ethos
- Making sure academy leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the Headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

Link Governor – Phillip Biesty (Safeguarding).

3.2 The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the academy
- Monitoring absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Authorising the Local Authority issuing of fixed-penalty notices where necessary

3.3 The Designated Senior Leader Responsible for Attendance

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the academy
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having an oversight of data analysis
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Stuart Ward and can be contacted via Bishop Alexander L.E.A.D Academy – 01636 680040.





3.4 The Attendance Team

The Academy Attendance Team is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to academy staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the Headteacher
- Working together to tackle persistent absence
- Working with parents to improve school attendance
- Targeted work with cohorts of children within our academy to improve attendance
- Completion of an absence call log form for each absentee

- Recording all absence details received on a day-to-day basis and log it on the academy MIS system
- Texting those families who have not called to inform the academy of an absence and continue to try other methods of contact until their whereabouts have been established.
- Conduct home visits as appropriate and in the interest of safeguarding all Bishop Pupils.

The Attendance Team is:

			
Stuart Ward	Emma Walker	Sally Hade	Shelley Fitzpatrick
P/C Admission Meetings P/C Review Meetings Report Writing Data Monitoring Data Analysis Home Visits Weekly Meetings	Data Monitoring Data Analysis Authorisation Level Trust/LA Data Sharing EH/HRET/ Enforcement Liaison Home Visits Absence Calls Weekly Meeting	Absence Calls P/C Absence Liaison Letters/Emails to P/C Early Pick up Process Late Arrival Process Registers/Coding Checks SIMs Comms notes	Targeted work Attendance Intervention Proactive Family Work New starter check-ins Absence Calls Home Visits

They can be contacted at the Academy Office on 01636 680040.

3.5 Class Teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the office by 9.00am. They must also be vigilant in encouraging and promoting resilience within attendance and praising those that come to our academy with minor illnesses. Staff are encouraged to welcome pupils back following illness and ensure they take time out to ask about their wellbeing.

3.7 Parents/Carers

Parents/Carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Call the Academy to report their child's absence between 8.00am and 9.00 am on the day of the absence (and each subsequent day of absence), and advise when their child is expected to return
- Provide the academy with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child and update accordingly
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the academy day but if they are made during that time we need proof of their appointment.

3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend every day on time

3.9 The Local Authority

The Local Authority is legally obliged to:

- Provide a strategic approach to improving attendance and ensure that it is a key focus of all frontline services
- Provide access to the School Support Team
- Enable opportunities to share effective practice
- Work with academies to issue legal interventions

4. Recording Attendance

4.1 Attendance Register

At Bishop Alexander L.E.A.D Academy, we keep an attendance register of all pupils on the academy roll.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each day and once during the second session (after lunch). It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

DfE attendance codes can be found in appendix 1.

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity.
- The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

The school day at Bishop Alexander L.E.A.D Academy starts at 8.40am. Pupils must arrive by 8.40am

The register for the first session will be taken at 8.40am and will be kept open until 9.10. No longer than 30 minutes after the session begins.

The register for the second session will be taken at 1.15pm and will be kept open until 1.45.

4.2 Unplanned Absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the academy of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8.30am or as soon as practically possible by calling the Academy Office on 01636 680040.

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless Bishop Alexander L.E.A.D Academy has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness. If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, Bishop Alexander L.E.A.D Academy may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the academy is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

4.3 Planned Absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the academy in advance of the appointment.

The Academy Office should be informed of medical appointments at the earliest possible opportunity. This is done via the Academy office, and should include any relevant evidence.

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of the academy for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for any other type of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the date or dates of the requested absence.

4.4 Lateness and Punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed, will be marked as late, using the appropriate code 'L'
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code 'U' which signifies that the pupil arrived after the official closing of the register and denotes an unauthorised absence.

Ongoing issues with punctuality will be raised with parents by our Academy Attendance Team. All children who arrive late will need to be signed in by parent/carer via the Academy office.

4.5 Following up Unexplained Absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend does not attend, or stops attending without reason, the academy will:

- Text the pupil's parent/carer after 9.10am on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the academy don't hear anything. Then they will call the pupil's emergency contacts, asking them to call us back to inform reason for absence. If still no contact, the academy may take whatever measures are necessary to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the child. This may include phoning other emergency contacts, visiting the house etc if they are a vulnerable child.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not.
- Identify the correct absence code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session
- Call and text the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the academy will consider involving the School Attendance Support Team and or other frontline services.

4.6 Reporting to Parents/Carers

The academy will inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels if and when they become a cause for concern. We will endeavour to work proactively with parents to ensure good levels of attendance are maintained.

5. Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

5.1 Approval for Term-time Absence

Only exceptional circumstances warrant a leave of absence. Bishop Alexander L.E.A.D Academy will 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 Headteacher to determine the length of the time the pupil can be away from school. As Headteachers 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.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 4 weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form (Appendix 3), accessible via the academy office. The Headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence may** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the academy will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart.
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, barges (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be

authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the academy, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision

Study leave

Flexi-schooling requests – contact the academy office for an appointment to discuss this with a Senior Leader.

5.2 Pupils with Medical Conditions or Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

In line with Section 19 of the Education Act 1996 the Local Authority (LA) have a duty to: “make arrangements for the provision of suitable education within the academy or otherwise than at the academy for those children of compulsory school age who, by reason of illness, or otherwise, may not for any period receive suitable education unless such arrangements are made for them.”

This applies to children and young people:

- who are of statutory school age and who
- are permanently resident in the local authority and
- who are not in school for 15 days or more, whether consecutive or cumulative due to ill health
- where the health need and necessity for absence has been validated as necessary by a medical doctor
- will not receive a suitable full-time education unless the local authority makes arrangements for this

Health problems include: disabilities, physical illnesses, injuries and clinically defined mental health problems. Suitable medical evidence will be required, including details of the health problem, how long the condition is expected to last, the likely outcome, and a treatment plan. This must be provided by a suitable medical professional, normally a hospital consultant. However, where specific medical evidence is not available quickly, the local authority will liaise with other medical professionals (e.g. the child's GP), so that provision of education is not delayed.

5.3 Children Missing Education (CME)

The academy recognises that early intervention is necessary to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk, and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in education. The academy will:

- Follow absence procedures
- Make a referral to CME if information is obtained that the family have moved out of area, with no forwarding school/academy
- Make a referral to CME if a pupil has not returned after 10 days and there has been no contact with the family, despite efforts made by the academy
- Work closely with the Children Missing Education (CME) Officer to identify a pupil's current whereabouts/destination
- Agree with CME an appropriate time and category to remove the child from the academy roll. This includes those children and young people who are expected to move swiftly into appropriate provision; this is in line with The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016

- Contact the Local Authority via CME after 20 school days of absence, to discuss whether to remove a pupil from the academy roll. The final decision about removal from the academy roll remains with the Headteacher.
- The academy will create a 'lost pupil' record on the national Lost Pupil's Database School to School (s2s) to assist future schools and Children Missing from Education Officers to identify and locate children

5.4 Legal Sanctions

The academy can refer parents to the local authority where they do not ensure that children attend school. Parents can be fined for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, via a fixed penalty notice (FPN), each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute.

6. Strategies for Promoting Attendance

Attendance awards and weekly feedback to children and classes. Classes win an attendance certificate.

7. Attendance Monitoring

Day to day attendance monitoring is carried out by the Academy Attendance team who initiate first day calls, parental contact, offer support, meet with parents and safeguarding protocols. Home visits if necessary to promote good attendance.

7.1 Monitoring Attendance

The academy will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data trends on a half-termly, termly and yearly basis in relation to whole cohorts and distinct pupil groups
- Monitor individual pupil attendance, absence and punctuality on a daily and weekly basis
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern

- Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying academy-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The academy will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing board.

7.2 Analysing Attendance

The academy will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

7.3 Using Data to Improve Attendance

The academy will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to Headteacher, and other academy leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

7.4 Reducing Persistent and Severe Absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The academy will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the academy (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement
- Send monitoring letters
- Meet with parents to discuss any support required
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance
- Use all available legal means at the academy's disposal to challenge situations where there is severe and persistent absence

8. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum once per year by the Attendance Academy Team.. At every review, the policy will be approved by the AGB.

9. Links with Other Policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy
- Equality policy

Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

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

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

O	Unauthorised absence	The Academy Attendance Team is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

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

Appendix 2:

Flow chart of promoting good attendance

Appendix 3:



Leave of absence
request form.docx

BISHOP ALEXANDER L.E.A.D ACADEMY LEAVE OF ABSENCE REQUEST

Name of Pupil:.....

Date of Birth:..... Form:.....

Dates of proposed absence: From:..... To:.....

Total days requested:.....

Parent/Carer full name:..... Date of Birth:.....

Parent/Carer full name:..... Date of Birth:.....

Address:.....

Signature of Parent/Carer..... Date:.....

Signature of Parent/Carer..... Date:.....

Parents or carers who take their children on holiday without permission risk a fixed penalty notice of up to £120 (per parent, per child) if paid within 28 days. This amount can be reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days.

Reason for leave of absence:.....

For office use only:

Attendance (current academic year):..... (previous academic year):.....

Parent/Carer(s) informed by letter? Yes/No Date:.....

Authorised: Yes/No Headteacher:..... Date:.....