

RNIB

Three Spires
Academy

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ATTENDANCE POLICY

Three Spires Academy is committed to providing all pupils with an appropriate and effective education in a safe and happy environment. Each pupil is welcomed, valued, respected and encouraged to respect themselves and others. We aim to empower all pupils to gain both academic and essential skills that will equip them for life. We believe that education is essential for all, and to achieve their full potential pupils need to attend regularly and punctually.

Non-attendance at Three Spires for any reason is an important issue that must be treated promptly and seriously. In all cases of non-attendance it is essential that early action is taken.

‘Ensuring Children’s Right to Education’ DSCF 2008

The Board Members, head teacher and staff of Three Spires Academy acknowledge that there is a strong correlation between high attendance and high attainment, helping all pupils to achieve their best.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. PARENTS AND CARERS

- 1.1 Three Spires is an inclusive academy working in partnership with parents and carers to achieve good attendance. We raise parents' and pupils' awareness of the importance of good attendance, and of the impact attendance has upon achievement.
- 1.2 Parents and Carers have a legal responsibility to ensure that their children attend the Academy regularly and punctually. They should also ensure that their children are properly equipped, and fit for a learning environment.
- 1.3 Parents of children of compulsory school age are required to ensure that they receive full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude.
- 1.4 Regular attendance includes pupils being punctual. Persistent lateness will be regarded as an unauthorised absence.
- 1.5 **Parents and Carers must contact the Academy on the first day of a pupil’s absence.** They should state the reason for their absence, and also the date on which they are expected to return. Notification of absence should be by parental note, telephone call on 02476 594952 or in person. Please note that none of school bus drivers or guides are employed by Three Spires Academy and therefore they do not have the responsibility to pass on messages about absences etc. **Please notify school in the ways noted above rather than relying on a message to be passed on via a guide or driver.**
- 1.6 When an appointment has been made for medical reasons, the appointment card (clearly showing the pupils name, date and time of

appointment) should be shown in advance to the class teacher or Attendance Officer.

We encourage our parents/carers to book doctor's and dentist's appointment outside of school time or on the weekend if available. The Academy will not authorise a full day absence for pupils who attend a short or routine doctor's or dentist's appointment. Appointments that must be booked during term time should be done towards the start or the end of the day. Pupils are expected to return following appointments if practical.

- 1.7 **Parentally condoned, unjustifiable absence is damaging to a pupil's progress.** If, in the opinion of the Academy, an explanation offered by a parent for absence is unacceptable (or where no explanation is given) the absence will be treated as unauthorised.
- 1.8 **Parents who wish to collect their pupils early during the school day should contact the Academy in advance.** Authorisation of the absence may be granted where a pupil has a medical appointment or other authorised reason, however evidence of this will be requested. When a parent wishes to collect a student for a reason other than a medical appointment, the absence may not be authorised. Authorisation of the absence is at the discretion of the head teacher.

2. PUPILS

- 2.1 Pupils are expected to attend school regularly and punctually and be appropriately prepared for lessons. A system of incentives and rewards is set up to encourage individual pupils, and whole classes, to attend regularly.

3. Board of Trustees

- 3.1 The Board of Trustees has responsibility for academy attendance and is familiar with current legislation.
- 3.2 They are acquainted with the registration system in the Academy.
- 3.3 They will request reports on attendance and procedures as necessary. A member of the governing body will usually be part of the Attendance Team/Panel.

4. THE HEAD TEACHER

- 4.1 The head teacher has day-to-day responsibility for attendance and will ensure that the Academy meets all legal requirements, sets targets for attendance and unauthorised absence, and publishes attendance figures.

4.2 The head teacher will ensure that parents and pupils are aware of their responsibilities regarding attendance and punctuality at the point of admission.

4.3 **Registers are legal documents and must be kept for at least 3 years.**

5. Admin Manager or DHT will:

- Contact parents/carers within two days if parents/carers have not informed the Academy of the reason for absence; this may be via telephone call, text message, letter or home visit.
- Look for patterns developing, such as Monday and Friday absences.
- Look for days being taken off for medical reasons just before and after half term breaks.
- For longer spells of illness ask the parent/carer to provide medical evidence including but not limited to: copy of prescription, copy of appointment card or letter, note from doctor/dentist reception – stamped, copy of discharge letter or doctor's note.
- Individual pupil attendance will be reviewed every term and Fast Track / Leave in Term Time procedures may be used as an intervention to improve attendance.
- Additional interventions may be triggered for those whose attendance falls below 90%. These include but are not limited to Classroom Attendance Trackers, Parent meetings with action plans, whole school and focused departmental strategies to tackle specific attendance concerns, letters to parents/carers and involvement of external support agencies.
- Home visits or phone calls to students where appropriate to encourage attendance
- Work with professionals, both within school and external organisations to offer support to pupil and families to encourage attendance

6. THE CLASS TEACHER

6.1 The class teacher has a vital role to play in raising attendance and punctuality in our Academy.

6.2 The class/subject teacher will ensure that registers are completed accurately and sent within 45 minutes of registers opening. In the event of a systems failure or when teaching PE/swimming for

example, a manual paper copy will be sent to the Attendance Officer. In the case of technical issues, these should be reported to I.T.

- 6.3 Class teachers should monitor the attendance of pupils and are responsible for referring pupils with poor patterns of attendance and/or punctuality to the Admin Team.

7. ATTENDANCE CONCERNS

- 7.1 When a pupil is absent for no apparent reason, it is the duty of all staff to consider all possible reasons. **Consideration of the Academy Behaviour or Safeguarding Policies may be needed in identifying reasons for such absence.** In addressing such issues support should be sought from key senior staff and the head teacher.

8. PUNCTUALITY

- 8.1 **School starts at 8.50 am.** Parents have a duty to ensure that their children are ready for school transport to pick them up at the arranged time.
- 8.2 Pupils arriving after the register has closed, must report to reception to be entered into the late record book. Pupils will be marked late from 9.30-10am; if the late arrival is due to circumstances beyond the pupil's control, such as an Assessable Transport bus not collecting the pupils due to unavoidable delay, late arrivals may be marked as authorised.
- 8.3 **Lateness which is not due to an Academy transport issue or without an acceptable reason, will be marked as an Unauthorised Absence.**

9. SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS

- 9.1 We must safeguard pupils and ensure they receive their right to education. If there are any child protection concerns, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputies) for child protection must be informed. Information should be passed to the relevant outside agencies promptly.

10. CHANGE OF ADDRESS

- 10.1 Parents should inform the Academy immediately if they have a change of address. In case of emergency, the Academy must be able to contact the parents or carers or a third named person. Parents are required to provide this information when they first register their pupils, and keep information including telephone numbers up to date.

11. MOVING TO ANOTHER SCHOOL/COUNTRY

11.1 Parents and carers must inform the Academy immediately if they are removing their son/daughter to start at another school/academy. The parents must give details of the new school/academy or details of when/where they plan to leave the country.

12. EXTENDED LEAVE AND HOLIDAYS DURING TERM TIME

The Government, Local Authority and Academy actively discourage parents/carers from taking pupils on holidays or trips during Academy term time. Parents/carers who do so will be challenged and where the holiday/trip is not authorised by the head teacher the issuing of a penalty notice or court action will be considered. The head teacher has discretion to allow requests for extended holidays in term time under exceptional circumstances.

If leave is requested, parents must apply in writing to the head teacher using the Leave in Term Form; explaining the nature and purpose of the absence, and whether this is likely to occur again during the pupil's school career. Granting leave will be at the discretion of the head teacher taking into account the pupil's previous attendance pattern, and the impact on the pupil's education.

Parents/carers must give an expected return date and notify the Academy as soon as possible if the date changes.

If a pupil fails to return within five school days of the agreed date and the Academy has not received any explanation for continued absence, the pupil will be referred to the Children Missing in Education (CME) team. SENAR will also be informed and further action may be taken.

13. PENALTY NOTICES

School Admissions and Pupil Placements Service will issue penalty notices for unauthorised absence, including lateness recorded as such, in accordance with guidelines set out in 'The Education ((Penalty Notices) (England) Amendment Regulations 2013, the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 and Sections 444A and 444B of the Education Act 1996.

14. REINTEGRATION FOLLOWING A PERIOD OF ABSENCE

Where a student has been absent for a significant period of time, the Attendance Officer will be happy to discuss a reintegration strategy with parents or carers. It may be appropriate in some cases for pupils to return to the Academy part time over a short period. The Academy does not allow pupils to have a part time timetable on a permanent basis, and reintegration should take place over a period fewer than 4 weeks. The only exception to this would be where a medical professional has given their opinion in writing that the student, due to their condition, cannot return to a full time timetable. In these cases, the Academy will review the student's medical condition and refer to SENAR and School Admissions and Pupil Placements Service for support and advice.

Date ratified:

Date Policy due to be reviewed:

Committee Responsible for Policy: Full Board of Trustees