



**Aston Community
Education Trust**

Temple Normanton Junior Academy Attendance and Punctuality Policy

DATE: September 2024

POLICY LEAD: Principal

APPROVED BY: Local Governing Body



Excellence



Equity



Empowerment



Esteem

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V1	SEPTEMBER 2023		
V2	SEPTEMBER 2024	<p>Updated in line with updated guidance from DfE 2024.</p> <p>Section 3 change of time for contacting parents to 9.15am. Change of time for close of register to 8.45am.</p> <p>Section 5 changed from 3 years to 6 years for retaining data on registers.</p> <p>Section 5 Addition of minor illnesses.</p> <p>Appendix 1 Updated codes in line with DfE guidance for registers.</p> <p>Section 6 Exceptional circumstances updated to include religious observance</p> <p>Appendix 1 updated codes in line with DfE guidance for registers.</p> <p>Appendix 2 LA updated guidance around penalty notices</p>	

This is the Attendance and Punctuality Policy for Temple Normanton Academy

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Mission Statement

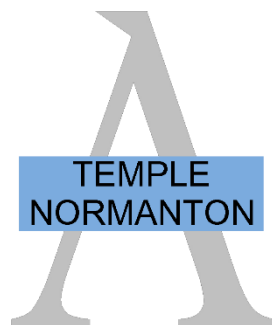
‘EXCELSIOR’ – Ever upwards.

At Temple Normanton we are committed to providing high quality learning and teaching, enabling everyone to reach their full potential, whatever their age, ability, gender or ethnicity.

We believe that every person is unique and we work together in an inclusive environment of mutual respect and consideration, valuing everyone’s contribution.

Through our partnership with the local and wider community we aim to support our young people in successfully taking their place in society.

All adults in school have a responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.



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Section 1: The aims and principles underpinning the Temple Normanton Junior Academy Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Our academy has the highest standards and expectations in place for all pupils.

Temple Normanton Academy teaches and promotes the importance of attendance and punctuality to all pupils to enable an ethos of attendance and punctuality excellence to be established and shared by all members of our community.

Our academy is committed to maximising the achievement of all pupils and recognises the importance of excellent attendance and punctuality as a part of this. There is a clear link between excellent attendance and educational achievement. Regular and punctual attendance is vital if pupils are to benefit fully from the academic, personal and social opportunities which are offered to them. A broad and balanced education is dependent on regular attendance at the academy. The global Covid-19 pandemic did have an impact on some of the attendance and punctuality routines of our pupils. We are committed to ensuring that learning is not lost, but that it has experienced delay and we continue to focus closely on attendance so that any learning gaps are closed for all our pupils.

We value partnership working and parents/carers have a crucially important role in ensuring that their children access school regularly (*Parents are responsible for making sure that their children of compulsory school age receive a suitable full-time education. This can be by regular attendance at school, at alternative provision, or otherwise (e.g. the parent can choose to educate their child at home) – **DfE School attendance parental responsibility measures** and support the academy in encouraging attendance excellence with their children. Temple Normanton Academy looks to work in partnership with families to ensure that their child's attendance is as regular and punctual as possible. The building of strong relationships with families is a key priority.

Temple Normanton Academy regularly reviews practice and looks to ensure that attendance and punctuality policies and procedures are following effective practice models. We work in close partnership with multi-agencies and the Local Authority to ensure that resources are directed swiftly and effectively to pupils and their families where attendance and/or punctuality is a concern.

Temple Normanton Academy will always take appropriate action to promote and encourage excellent attendance to the academy and to promote and support attendance and punctuality to lessons during the academy day.

Temple Normanton Academy is committed to reducing persistent (below 90%) and severe (below 50%) absence levels and recognises the importance of personalised approaches to supporting attendance and punctuality.

This policy is key in ensuring that the highest standards and expectations of attendance and punctuality are in place for all of our pupils and that a consistent approach is taken when working with families where the attendance of children is a cause for concern. Ultimately, we want all of our pupils to access the best educational and enrichment opportunities and it is only with regular attendance and excellent punctuality that pupils will be able to experience a full range of opportunities and learning experiences.

It is because we want the best for all of our pupils that this policy is in place and is regularly reviewed.

Section 2: Legislation and guidance informing our policy

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#) and [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set 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 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013 and the 2024 amendment](#)

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

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Temple Normanton Junior Academy's Behaviour and Rewards and Safeguarding Policy.

Section 3: Roles and Responsibilities

The Local Governing Body

The responsibilities of the Local Governing Body are to:

- Promote the importance of school attendance across the academy's policies and ethos.
- Make sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.
- Monitor attendance figures for the academy
- Regularly receive, review and challenge attendance data and targets.
- Make sure staff receive adequate training on attendance.
- Support the academy in its efforts to improve and raise attendance.
- Contribute to plans where attendance is a cause for concern.
- Contribute to the academy's strategies to improve attendance e.g. Academy Attendance Panel meetings.
- Hold the Principal to account for the implementation of this policy.

Specific responsibilities linked to this role, include:

- Meeting with the Principal/Attendance Lead to review punctuality and attendance data and consider against local and national contexts
- Reviewing and supporting attendance action plans linked to key groups of pupils where attendance is a cause for concern

The Principal

The responsibilities of the Principal are to:

- Implement our Attendance and Punctuality Policy.
- Monitor academy-level absence data and report it to governors.
- Support staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils.
- Monitor the impact of any implemented attendance strategies.
- Issue fixed-penalty notices, where necessary, and in line with Local Authority procedures.

- Report pupils missing in education (CME) following academy and local authority procedures.
- Report to the Local Authority any pupils where written notification of Home Education has been requested.
- Attend Case Conferences, TAF meetings and/or other directed professionals' meetings on behalf of the academy/trust.

The Attendance Lead

The responsibilities of the Attendance Lead are to:

- Develop, monitor and regularly review the Attendance and Punctuality Policy in collaboration with the Principal.
- Lead attendance across the academy.
- Have a clear ethos, vision and strategy for improving academy attendance and communicate this effectively with staff, governors and parents/carers.
- Monitor and analyse attendance data.
- Benchmark attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement.
- Provide regular attendance reports and report concerns about attendance to the Principal.
- Work with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence.
- Advise the Principal when to issue fixed-penalty notices (FPNs).
- Produce and distribute attendance information for parents/carers
- Ensure programmes are in place to educate pupils about the importance of punctuality and attendance.
- Deliver targeted intervention and support to pupils and families.
- Ensure that attendance data is collected effectively and patterns and trends are used to inform timely intervention for individuals and cohorts of pupils.
- Collate attendance data for the DfE, Local Authority and the Local Governing Body and in liaison with colleagues.
- Support the role/s of the Attendance Team and use academy resources efficiently and effectively.
- Identify those pupils whose attendance is falling below average and work with parents/carers towards improvement.
- Liaise with the EWO, Local Authority and relevant multi-agencies regarding pupils whose attendance is giving significant cause for concern.
- Reward outstanding / improving attendance.
- Liaise with relevant colleagues regarding Attendance Support Plans (ASPs) and their implementation for pupils with specific medical needs.
- Monitor and improve attendance of target groups (Attendance Lead/Principal)
- Arrange calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues.
- Liaise with the Local Authority Attendance Teams regarding case-loads and prepare any relevant documentation.

The School Business Officer

The responsibilities of the School Business Officer are to:

- Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record these on the academy system (SIMS etc).
- Contact parents/carers where no message or call has been received by 9.15am to determine reason for the child's absence.
- Enter information received regarding attendance onto the SIMS system. Pupils arriving after the register has been taken should have their absence mark amended. A late mark should be recorded, where appropriate.
- Notify staff and parents/carers of absences in line with attendance procedures.
- Provide administrative support in logging, tracking and communicating individual and collective attendance levels and patterns.
- Identify individual pupils with known punctuality/attendance concerns and share information with the Principal/Attendance Lead.

Class Teachers

The responsibilities of the Class Teachers are to:

- Record attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office. Registers should be taken each morning and afternoon, within the first 10 minutes of the session, and close at 8.45am. and 1.10pm.
- Have regular discussions with pupils about the importance of excellent attendance and punctuality.
- Liaise with the Academy Business Officer regarding any queries surrounding absence.

The Education Welfare Officer

The responsibilities of the Education Welfare Officer are to:

- Conduct visits, write letters and liaise with other agencies linked to pupils whose attendance is a cause for concern.
- Our Educational Welfare Officer can be contacted via phone on 01246 850389.

Section 4: Expectations of pupils and parents/carers

We expect our pupils:

- To attend regularly.
- To arrive on time, appropriately prepared for the day.
- To report to reception and sign in should they arrive after 8.45am.

We expect parents/carers of our pupils to work with us to ensure:

- Their children attend the academy regularly and on time.
- They contact the academy every day that their child is unable to attend (before 09.00).
- Their child arrives on time and is well-prepared for the school day (being well prepared means that pupils arrive in full academy uniform, with a school bag, their reading book and planner).
- They contact the academy whenever any problem arises that may lead to their child's absence/keep their child away from the academy.
- The academy is informed and authorisation sought for any forthcoming appointments and, where possible, appointments are arranged outside of the academy day. Appointment cards/letters etc. should be provided to confirm the need for absence due to medical purposes.

- The continuity of their children's education by taking holidays during the academy holiday periods.
- They can be easily contacted by providing more than one contact number as per safeguarding requirements.

What pupils and parents/carers can expect of the academy:

- A broad and balanced education that is dependent on regular attendance at our academy.
- The encouragement and promotion of excellent attendance.
- Regular, efficient and accurate recording of attendance.
- Contact with parents/carers on a daily basis when a pupil does not attend.
- Close liaison with the Early Help Team to assist and support parents/carers, pupils and their families where needed.
- Notification to parents/carers of their child's attendance record through regular reports, and letters home.
- Accurate marking of the register using the DfE Attendance and Absence Codes (see Appendix 1)
- Where the academy's procedures and contact with home have failed to bring about improvement and poor attendance persists, the academy will request that parent/carers attend meetings within the academy with the Principal and/or the Education Welfare Officer. Where a pupil's attendance does not improve when placed on an 'Attendance Plan' (AP) a meeting will take place with the Academy's Attendance Panel (including the Attendance Governor) and the relevant communication and referrals will be made to multi-agencies/the Local Authority who will liaise with academy staff to provide further attendance support.
- The academy and year group attendance data will be collected, analysed and monitored. The academy will respond to any areas of concern identified.
- Through partnership working with Early Help and the Local Authority, further action may be taken in the form of a penalty notice should concerns regarding a child's attendance persist despite the academy's procedures being followed (see Appendix 2).

Section 5: Recording attendance

1. The Attendance Register

AM and PM attendance registers take place every day.

Attendance registers mark whether pupils are:

- 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

See Appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- (For pupils of compulsory school age) Whether the absence is authorised or not.
- The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of the circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

All entries on the attendance register are kept for 6 years after the date on which the entry was made.

At Temple Normanton Junior Academy, there are two sessions per day. The register for the first session is taken at 8:45am and will be kept open until 9:15am. Pupils arriving after 8:45am are marked as late. Pupils arriving after 9:15am are marked as unauthorised (U code). The register for the second session is taken at 1:00pm and will be kept open until 1:30pm. Pupils arriving after 1:30pm are marked as unauthorised (U code).

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 09.15 or as soon as practically possible by calling the academy on 01246 850389 (see also section 8).
- We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness or if it is classed as a minor illness where a pupil could attend the academy.
- The academy may ask the pupil's parents/carers 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.

3. Planned Absence

- Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment and provides appropriate documentation e.g. appointment card/letter. 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 school for the minimum amount of time necessary.
- Parents/carers should contact the academy and follow Leave of Absence procedures (Section 6) where making a request for absence during term time.

4. Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late (within the first 30 minutes of the start of the morning or afternoon session) using the code L.
- After the register has closed (after the first 30 minutes of the start of the morning or afternoon session) will be marked as absent, using the U code

The academy actively discourages late arrival, monitors and tracks patterns of late arrival and will contact parents/carers to identify why pupils are arriving late to prevent late arrival moving forwards.

Staff actively encourage punctuality to the academy each morning. Pupils arriving late disrupt the continuity of learning for others as well as themselves.

Persistent lateness may provide grounds for prosecution and parents will be informed of this.

5. Unexplained absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend the academy does not attend, or stops attending, the academy will:

- Make contact with the pupil's parents/carers on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the academy cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the academy may need to seek support from external agencies including the Police, Social Care and/or Early Help.
- Identify whether the absence is authorised or not.
- Identify the correct attendance 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 the parent/carer on each day the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper and appropriate safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the academy will seek the support of the Education Welfare Officer
- The EWO will conduct home visits for all pupils who are absent for more than 3 days. In the case of pupils identified as vulnerable (CP, CIN - safeguarding concerns), our EWO will visit on day 1 of the absence.

6. Reporting to parents/carers

- The academy will regularly inform parents/carers about their child's attendance and absence levels each term.
- If parents/carers have any questions about their child's attendance and/or punctuality record, they should contact the academy's academy office on 01246 850389 or via email, info@normanton.derbyshire.sch.uk.

Section 6: Authorised and unauthorised absence

Approval for term-time absence

- The Principal will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be **'exceptional circumstances'**. Parents/carers should seek permission from the Principal prior to the leave of absence period in question. Parents/carers are requested to complete the Leave of Absence request form and include any additional information regarding the circumstances leading to the request.
- A leave of absence is granted at the Principal's discretion, including the length of time authorised linked to the absence request.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as one-off events that are unavoidable and could include (non-exhaustive list):

1. Funerals or weddings of close family members
2. To visit a terminally ill relative
3. Religious observance – The Education Act 1996 S444(3) (c), states "on any day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which his/her parent belongs".
4. Forces staff returning from abroad
5. Parents/carers returning from having to work abroad for a fixed, minimum term period
6. Compassionate leave
7. Performance at representative level (County/National) with accompanying letter from the relevant body

Parent/carer employment holiday rotas and differences in the financial costs of holidays in term time compared to designated school holiday periods, **are not** exceptional circumstances and holidays **will not** be authorised linked to these reasons. Children have to attend school for 190 days per academic year. This leaves 175 days (including weekends) free for families to take holidays.

The academy considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

The Principal will determine the number of academy days a child can be away from academy **if** the leave is granted. (For example, a maximum of two days or equivalent in each academic year will be awarded for pupils taking part in pursuits not linked directly to the academy e.g. National sports representation).

- Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 2 weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form (Appendix 3), available from the academy office. The Principal may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.
- Parents/carers who remove their children from the academy without authorisation or do not return their child to the academy on the agreed date following an authorised period of leave of absence, may face a Fixed Penalty Notice Warning (FPN) which could lead to a fine/prosecution.

Valid reasons for authorised absence include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments (see section 5 for further details)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil’s/pupil’s parents/carers belong. If necessary, the academy will seek advice from the pupil’s/pupil’s religious body to confirm if the day is set apart.
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English, Welsh, Irish and Scottish travellers, fairground workers, circus people, 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/pupil is attending educational provision.

Legal sanctions

Temple Normanton Junior Academy is committed to taking proactive attendance intervention that enables families to feel supported and break down the barriers that may impact upon their children attending the academy. This involves following DFE 2024: ‘Working Together to Improve Attendance’. However, the academy will use every possible means of ensuring that pupils attend the academy and receive an education, as it is their legal entitlement.

Temple Normanton Junior Academy, working with the Local Authority, can issue Fixed Penalty Notices to parents/carers for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age. The Academy follows the guidance set out by Derbyshire Local Authority regarding the issuing of FPNs and progression to prosecution.

We are committed to proactive attendance intervention that enables our families to feel supported and break down the barriers that may impact upon their children attending the academy. However, we will use every possible means of ensuring that our young people attend our academy and receive an education, as is their legal entitlement.

Please refer to Appendix 2 which outlines the Derbyshire County Council Penalty Notice process.

Section 7: Strategies for promoting excellent attendance and punctuality at Temple Normanton Academy

We promote excellent attendance and punctuality as a high priority and seek to celebrate outstanding/improving attendance and punctuality.

- Attendance and punctuality and their importance is very high profile at our academy and pupils are taught about the impact of their attendance and punctuality on their learning.
- Information is sent to parents/carers about the importance of attendance – Attendance Matters Leaflet and communication linked to attendance updates
- Attendance figures are shared in assemblies.
- Certificates are awarded for attendance excellence each half term, term and annually.

- Recognition is made of improving attendance for individuals/groups of pupils
- Excellent/improving attendance is shared with parents/carers through monitoring reports and attendance updates where a child is part of attendance support planning
- Attendance figures are shared with parents/carers and excellence / improvement is praised by class teachers and Leadership Team.
- Our website displays our Attendance and Punctuality Policy and further advice and guidance for parents/carers where a pupil's attendance is a cause for concern

Section 8: Attendance monitoring

1. Attendance monitoring

At Temple Normanton Academy we monitor attendance data daily, weekly and half termly. We look at percentage attendance and compare our attendance levels with national and regional statistics. We carefully monitor and track the attendance of all pupils/pupils individually and key cohorts including, year groups, gender groups, SEND, disadvantaged, LAC and EAL.

Our academy attendance target is rightly ambitious at 96.6%. Children with attendance at 96.6% or above are more likely to achieve in line with their targets and above peers that have lower attendance levels.

We look closely at pupil attendance and ensure that:

- Pupils with attendance between 93-96% are tracked and monitored and parents are informed.
- Where a pupil's attendance falls to 90-93%, parents will be informed by letter and attendance will continue to be tracked and monitored.
- Persistent absence pupils (attendance below 90%) are supported by our Education Welfare Officer. We also refer some pupils, with parental agreement to Early Help, where attendance continues below 90% and intervention has been put in place.
- Pupils categorised as 'severely absent' (attendance below 50%) are supported by our Education Welfare Officer. All pupils with attendance below 50% will be reported to Derbyshire County Council Children's Services as part of our safeguarding commitment to our pupils.

Close monitoring and enhanced support are put in place for particular pupils/groups of pupils whose absence is a cause for concern.

Pupil level absence data is collected each term externally and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The academy compares attendance data to the national average using FFT Aspire, and shares this at each Local Governing Body meeting.

2. Analysing attendance

The academy will:

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

3. Using data to improve attendance

The academy will:

- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies.

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.
- Regularly communicate with the parents/carers of pupils whose attendance is a cause for concern. Dependent upon the level of attendance concern, different verbal/written communication will be had with/sent to parents/carers indicating the next stages of support and intervention.
- Hold regular meetings with the parents/carers of pupils who the academy (and/or Local Authority) consider to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement in school.
- Provide access to wider support services to remove attendance barriers.

Our academy cares about your children and their educational and wider success. If we did not have this level of care and high expectations for them, we would not invest time, energy and resources in working with all of our pupils and their families where attendance needs to improve. It is important that this is kept in mind when communicating with the academy about your child's attendance levels. Judgements are not being made about how attendance levels have become a cause for concern but a firm focus is placed on improving attendance levels for all pupils where their attendance may impact on their learning and wider success. It is important that professionals, parents/carers and all supporting adults work together to remove attendance barriers.

It is vitally important that parents/carers are actively engaged in promoting good attendance. The academy will keep parents/carers informed on issues surrounding attendance and punctuality through academy website, newsletters, and electronic, written and verbal communication. The academy will react as swiftly and effectively as possible to any parent/carer concerns. Parents/carers will be encouraged to make contact with the academy to discuss any issues impacting on their children's attendance. A child of compulsory academy age who is registered at an academy must attend regularly. In law parents/carers have the prime responsibility for ensuring that their children attend school regularly.

Section 9: Working in partnership with the Local Authority and professional agencies

Our Local Authority Attendance Team is Education Welfare Service, Derbyshire County Council, County Hall, Matlock, DE4 3AG.

Their role is to undertake statutory duties in relation to school attendance including legal processes for unsatisfactory school attendance and duties in relation to children missing from education and/or without a school place including dedicated support for children identifying as members of the travelling community.

Derbyshire County Council Local Authority Attendance Guidance can be found at:

<https://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/education/schools/attendance-behaviour-welfare/support/education-welfare-services.aspx>

EWS.HQ@derbyshire.gov.uk - Queries regarding school attendance prosecution processes

CS.CMECoordinators@derbyshire.gov.uk – queries regarding children missing education/without a school place/traveller education support.

We work together with Early Help Teams to support the intensive needs of children, young people and families. We will ensure that children, young people and families who have emerging needs are supported through an Early Help Assessment.

We work together with Social Care to support the intensive and complex needs of children, young people and families. We will provide input and information for agency checks, assessments and review meetings.

Section 10: Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the Local Authority or DfE is updated. The policy will be updated at an academy and trust level annually.

At each review, the policy will be approved by the Temple Normanton Academy Local Governing Body.

Section 11: Links with other policies at Temple Normanton Academy

This policy links to the following policies:

Temple Normanton Academy Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Temple Normanton Academy Behaviour and Rewards Policy

Temple Normanton Academy Supporting pupils with medical needs

Temple Normanton Academy Medicines in the academy

Temple Normanton Academy Suspensions and Permanent Exclusion Policy

Appendix 1: Attendance Codes

Updated DfE guidance – 2024

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
Attending a place other than the school		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
Absent – leave of absence		
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment

S	Study leave	Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
C2	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
C	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
Absent – other authorised reasons		
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a ‘mobile child’ who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
E	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause		
Q	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
Y1	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency

Y3	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open
Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
Y5	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In police detention • Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or • Detained under a sentence of detention
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
Y7	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
Absent – unauthorised absence		
G	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
Administrative codes		
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered
#	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays

Appendix 2: DCC Local Authority Fixed Penalty Notice advice for parents/carers

Appendix 2: DCC Local Authority Fixed Penalty Notice guidance



PENALTY NOTICES

ADVICE FOR PARENTS AND CARERS

Derbyshire County Council

Children's Services

ADVICE FOR PARENTS AND CARERS

- **What is the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003?**

The Act gives powers to local authorities, schools and the police to issue penalty notices to parents or carers for their child's unsatisfactory attendance at school.

- **Why have penalty notices been introduced?**

Reducing absence from school is very important. This is because missing school can damage children's achievements, disrupt the school's routines and affect yours and other children's learning. It can also leave children at risk of anti-social behaviour and youth crime. Above all, missing out on the opportunities provided in school can have a long-term effect on children's chances in life.

- **What are my responsibilities as a parent?**

You have a legal duty to ensure that your child receives full-time education¹. Where a child is registered at a school, you must ensure that your child attends school regularly and on time. You will be committing an offence, therefore, if your child fails to attend regularly and punctually and the school has not given permission for the absence or late arrival.

Remember - only your child's school can authorise absence or late arrival.

- **What is a penalty notice?**

A penalty notice is an alternative to prosecution. It provides the parent the option to pay a fixed amount as a fine for their child's non-attendance and avoids court proceedings. It is intended to secure better attendance without taking legal action through the courts. The decision to offer the option of a penalty notice lies with the local authority and takes into consideration the facts of the case and the threshold guidance as outlined in the Government guidance²

- **What are the penalty costs?**

In the first instance, the fine is £160 to be paid within 28 days. The 28 days starts two days after the date of issue as shown on the notice. If the fine is paid within 21 days, payment reduces to £80.

If a second penalty notice is issued within 3 years of the first the amount to be paid is £160 to be paid within 28 days with no reduction for early payment.

PLEASE BE AWARE when two parents/carers are issued with a penalty notice for the same child both penalty notices must be paid. The fine will apply to each parent for each child who fails to attend regularly and punctually.

¹ The law states that education must be "efficient, full-time and suitable to the child's age, ability, aptitude and to any special educational needs the child may have either by regular attendance at school or otherwise (Section 7 of the Education Act 1996)"

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance>

- **Who is counted as the parent responsible for ensuring attendance?**

The law defines a parent as:

- Any natural parent, whether married or not
- Any parent who, even if not married, has responsibility as a parent
- Any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person

Having care of a child or young person means that if the child or young person lives with you and is cared for by you then you will be regarded as the parent irrespective of what your relationship is with the child.

- **How are they issued?**

A penalty notice will normally be sent by first class post to your home address.

- **When are they used?**

Penalty notices can be used in a wide range of situations, including but not limited to circumstances:

- Where it is clear that parents fail to ensure their child attends school regularly and on time
- Where parents take their child on holiday during term-time without the written permission of the headteacher.

- **Unsatisfactory school attendance**

The threshold for when a school should consider requesting the issue of a penalty notice is 10 sessions (5 school days) of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks. A school week means any week in which there is at least one school session. This can be made up of any form of unauthorised absence including late after close (attendance code U) of register and odd days of unauthorised absence (attendance code O) which add up to 5 days within a 10-week period.

At this point the school will consider if it is likely that the attendance will improve with further support or if they should refer the case to the local authority for formal monitoring with a view to legal action if the attendance does not improve.

- **Is a warning given?**

A formal written notice to improve will be issued in cases of unsatisfactory school attendance, but there will be certain circumstances where you will not be given a formal written warning. For example, if you have taken your child on holiday in term-time without the authorisation of the headteacher.

- **What happens if I receive a notice to improve?**

The letter will tell you how many school sessions your child has missed and give you a minimum number of school days to improve your child's attendance. If there is no significant improvement, a penalty notice may be issued.

We never take such action lightly and would prefer to work with parents or carers to improve attendance without having to enforce it. However, we will use these powers to ensure that your child attends school.

- **What does the law say regarding holidays in term-time?**

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 makes it clear that the headteacher should not grant approval for any leave of absence during term-time, including holidays, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Parents are not entitled to take their children on holiday in term-time. Planned absence can only be taken with the prior written approval of the headteacher. Each case will be considered on its own merits and the decision of the headteacher is final.

If a request for leave is denied and the pupil is absent for 5 days or more then the school is expected to refer the case to the local authority who will issue a penalty notice with no requirement for a formal warning to be issued. Penalty notices can also be issued where a pupil is absent for repeated incidents of unauthorised leave in term time but fall below the 5-day threshold.

If a penalty notice is issued the following apply:

- Each parent is liable to receive a penalty notice for each child for each period of absence
- A penalty notice will be issued without warning

Taking or allowing your child to take a holiday in term-time without the school's permission is a serious matter. If we find that you have done so, we will not hesitate to issue a penalty notice if requested to do so by the school.

- **Can I appeal?**

There is no right of appeal once a penalty notice has been issued.

We can take back a penalty notice but **only if**:

- It should not have been issued in the first place (for example, if your child was actually at school); or
- It has been issued to the wrong person; or
- It appears to Derbyshire County Council that the notice contains material errors.

If you believe that any of the above circumstances apply, you should contact Derbyshire County Council immediately with evidence to support your view. The contact details will be included in the penalty notice.

- **How do I pay?**

Details of how to pay will be included in the penalty notice. Please remember that there will be no reminder to pay and no opportunity to pay in instalments. Failure to pay within the timescales as specified in the penalty notice will result in prosecution.

- **What happens if I do not pay?**

If you do not pay, the consequences can be very serious. You have up to 28 days from receipt to pay the penalty notice in full. After this time, if it has not been paid, Derbyshire County Council is required by law to begin proceedings in the magistrates' court for the original offence of failing to secure the satisfactory attendance of your child at school.

Cases will usually be dealt with by using a process called the single justice procedure (SJP), which allows the case to be heard without the need for you to attend the Magistrates Court however you still have the right to request that your case be heard in open court even you wish to plead guilty. If you wish to plead not guilty to the offence the Court will schedule a trial and you will be required to attend.

If proven, this can attract a range of fines of up to £2500, and may include other remedies such as parenting orders, community sentences, or imprisonment, depending on the circumstances. A guilty verdict will also mean that you will have a criminal record.

- **Can I be prosecuted if I pay but my child still fails to attend school?**

If your child's attendance at school does not improve a second penalty notice or escalation to prosecution may occur. You cannot be prosecuted for the period included in the existing penalty notice, however, you can be prosecuted for any further periods of non-attendance, depending on the circumstances.

Appendix 3: Leave of Absence Request Form

APPLICATION BY PARENT/CARER FOR CHILD'S LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL DURING TERM TIME. PLEASE RETURN TO THE SCHOOL OFFICE. REMEMBER TO INCLUDE ANY SUPPORTING INFORMATION

If you consider you have to take your child out of school in term time, please complete this form and return to school at least 14 days before the date you wish to remove your child from school.

Name of Child(ren): Year Group(s):

Name of Applicant(s) Mr.....

Mrs/Ms/Miss.....

Applicants Address (if different from child) -----

First day of absence: Date of return to school:

Total number of days missed:

Reasons for absence (please attach a letter if you require additional space)

.....
.....
.....

Signed (both parents if applicable)

Date

.....

I understand that if the absence request is unauthorised the Education Welfare Officer will be notified. I understand that a Fixed Penalty Notice can be issued. From 19th August 2024 £160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days. Reduced to £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days.