



# Portland Spencer Academy

# Attendance Policy

The Local Governing Body of Portland Spencer Academy adopted this policy statement in March 2022

It will be reviewed no later than January 2025



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## **1: 1 Introduction**

Portland Spencer Academy is committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all its pupils and recognises this can only be achieved by supporting and promoting excellent school attendance for all. This is based on the belief that only by attending school regularly and punctually will children be able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. High attainment depends on good attendance.

The attendance of pupils will be monitored as a school and broken down into groups, including special educational needs, gender and those pupils in receipt of free school meals and we will use this data to support pupils, raise standards and ensure inclusive teaching. We will tackle discrimination by the positive promotion of equality, challenging bullying and stereotypes and creating an environment which champions respect for all. At Portland Spencer Academy, we believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.

## **1:2 Aims and Objectives**

- To promote an ethos that projects the whole school community
- To raise levels of achievement and participation by maintaining high levels of attendance.
- To maintain high levels of punctuality.
- To identify the causes of poor-attendance and poor punctuality and act upon them.
- To ensure all staff understand their rolls in the monitoring and recording of attendance.
- To keep accurate and up to date records of attendance.
- To maintain and improve attendance throughout the Academy through target setting and rewards.
- To monitor and evaluate the processes on a regular basis, analysing specific groups including SEND, Gender and Pupil Premium data and responding to findings.
- To give clear information on expected levels of attendance and punctuality and any cause for concern' to children, parents/carers, staff and stakeholders.



### 1:3 Responsibilities

The Governing Body is committed to supporting children and their families in their preparation for life after the Academy by encouraging them to attend the Academy every day and on time. The Governing Body will work in partnership with staff, parents/carers, children and the wider community and is responsible for determining the content of the policy and delegating the implementation of the policy to the Principal.

The Principal has overall responsibility for the policy and its implementation; for liaison with the Governing Body, staff, parents/ carers and appropriate outside agencies.

The Attendance Improvement Officer has responsibility for the handling of the daily implementation of the policy.

All staff at Portland Spencer Academy have a key role to play in supporting and promoting excellent school attendance

Parents are responsible to ensure that their children are in school every day and arrive on time.

- *Under Section 7 of the Education Act 1996, the 'parent' is responsible for making sure that their child of compulsory school age receives efficient, full-time education that is suitable to the child's age, ability and aptitude and any special needs the child may have either at school or otherwise.*
- *Section 444(1) if a child of compulsory age who is a registered child at a school fails to attend regularly at the school; the parent is guilty of an offence and maybe liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding level 3 on the standard scale: A MAXIMUM FINE OF £1000*
- *Section 444(1A) If in the circumstances mentioned in subsection (1) the parent knows that their child is failing to attend regularly at the school and fails without reasonable justification to cause him/her to do so, they are guilty of an offence and maybe liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding level 4 on the standard scale: A MAXIMUM FINE OF £2500 or IMPRISONMENT FOR A TERM NOT EXCEEDING THREE MONTHS or both.*

### 1:4 The Role of the Governing Body

The Governing Body makes arrangements for ensuring that their functions relating to the conduct of the academy are exercised with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who are pupils at the academy. The Governing Body gives consideration to any comments from parents about the process of assessment and makes a record of such comments.

The Strategic Development Committee monitors this policy and its impact as part of a 3-year cycle. The committee reports its findings and recommendations to the Full Governing Body, as necessary, if the policy needs modification.

The Strategic Development Committee will approve the school attendance target annually. If the whole School attendance figure drops below 95% then this will trigger an attendance review of systems and processes.



## **1:5 The Role of the Principal**

The Principal has the overall responsibility for the policy and its implementation; for liaison with the Governing Body, parents/carers and appropriate outside agencies

## **1:6 The Role of Teaching Staff**

**It is a legal requirement to ensure that all registers are completed to ensure the safeguarding and well-being of children within the Academy.**

- Teachers must ensure that the register is taken promptly at 8.50am on the SIMS registration system, (the register closes at 8.55am).
- Any child arriving late (after 8.55am) should then be marked late and the register updated and re saved.
- Afternoon registers MUST be completed at 1.05pm and saved on the SIMS registration system.
- Children who arrive after 8.55am are marked Late using the 'L' code.
- Children who are absent with no reason given for absence are marked 'N', No reason given code.
- Children whose parent/carer has informed the teacher of the reason for absence are to be red flagged with the comments section on the child's register.
- Any written confirmation by letter or note should be sent to the Attendance Improvement Officer.
- Staff should speak to children regularly and praise or discuss ways to improve attendance.
- Staff should ensure the children know their percentage attendance and encourage target setting.
- Staff should ensure the children are rewarded for good and improved attendance.
- Staff should inform the Attendance Improvement Officer of any concerns about a child's attendance and punctuality immediately.
- Staff should meet with the Attendance Improvement Officer half termly to ensure sustained and improved attendance and punctuality for each child in their care.



## **1:7 The Role of the Pupil and Parent/Carer**

Portland Spencer Academy expects pupils will:

- Attend school every day
- Attend school punctually
- Attend appropriately prepared for the day
- ASPIRE, enjoy and have fun whilst achieving to their best potential

Portland Spencer Academy expects parents/carers will:

- Ensure regular attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities
- Ensure that their child/ren arrive at school punctually and prepared for the school day
- Ensure they contact the school daily whenever their child is unable to attend school
- Support their children's attendance by keeping requests for absence to a minimum and ensure medical appointments are taken out of school time where possible
- Notify the school of any home circumstances that might affect the behaviour and learning for their child
- Notify school immediately of any changes to contact details
- Notify Portland Spencer Academy on the first day of absence, by telephoning the School before 9:00 am, notifying by the schools electronic texting service or by visiting the main reception to inform academy staff
- Ensure their children arrive at school on time at the beginning of the school day at 8:45 am, properly dressed and with the right equipment for the day;
- Ensure their children are collected on time at the end of the school day at 3:15 pm;
- Work in partnership with the school, for example by attending parents' meetings and consultations, signing homework diaries when asked to do so, taking an interest in their children's work and activities;
- Contact the School without delay if they are concerned about any aspects of their children's school lives.

## **1:8 The Role of the Attendance Improvement Officer**

- To text parents /carers by 9.45am whose child has been recorded absent with no reason.
- To phone all parents/carers on the first day of their absence for any child that is in Local Authority Care'.
- To phone all parents/carers on the first day of absence who are classified as a Persistent Absentees (i.e.: children with 90% attendance or less).
- To phone all parents/carers on the first day of an absence when a parent/carers has not informed the Academy and has not responded to the text.
- A home visit to be made by the Attendance Improvement Officer on the first day of absence if no contact has been made with parents/carers.
- A home visit to be made by the Attendance Improvement Officer on the 2<sup>nd</sup> day of recurrent absences where contact cannot be made with the parent/carers.
- To raise a safe and well check with the Police/Local Authority on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day of absence if not contact has been made with the parent/carers and concerns are raised by the Safeguarding Team.
- A home visit to be made where no satisfactory evidence has been given for absence.



- A work package to be provided for children who are unable to attend the Academy for 3 days or more due to medical reasons certified by a medical practitioner.
- To monitor and meet with The Principal on a half term basis to identify children at risk of becoming persistent absentee's
- To ensure all children's attendance records are updated on SIMS.
- To ensure parent/carers are given up to date information on their child's attendance.
- To record and keep an accurate record of all correspondence between all the relevant people contacted, dates, times and actions for use in legal proceedings.
- To action the request from the Principal for the issue of a Penalty Notice/Court action from the Local Authority for persistent unauthorised absence or unauthorised lateness.
- To action the request from the Principal any request for penalty notice action from the Local Authority for unauthorised absence of leave.
- To work with parents, staff and partner agencies to support improved attendance and punctuality.
- To ensure children are rewarded for Outstanding, good and improved attendance and punctuality.

<b>Procedures to Improve Attendance</b>	
<b>100% to 96% Attendance</b>	<b>Certificates and Rewards</b>
<b>95.9% to 93%</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> 'Cause for concern' letter to be issued</b>
<b>92.9% to 90%</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> 'Medical Evidence Request' and parent meeting letter to be issued</b>
<b>Below 90% Persistent Absentee - 5 days (10 sessions) unauthorised absence in 10 weeks</b>	<b>Referral to the Local Authority Education Welfare Service requesting legal intervention.</b>

### **1:9 Attendance Rewards**

The Local Governing Body recognises that rewards play a vital part in encouraging children to achieve. Rewards will be given to children for excellent attendance and punctuality.

The following illustrates the rewards the will be given for good attendance and punctuality (these can be subject to change dependant on consultation with the children)

- Weekly class reward for highest attendance in Foundation, Key Stage 1 and 2.
- Termly 100% certificates.
- Class incentives and rewards.
- End of year 100% reward and prize
- Half Term attendance raffle
- Weekly update/congratulations mention on the school communication systems



## 1:10 Procedures for Poor Punctuality

The academy doors open for registration at 8:45am. The registration period is from 8.45am to 8.55am. Any child arriving after 8.55am will be marked as late 'code L' in the register. After 9.10am, any child repetitively arriving late with no reasonable explanation e.g. doctors/dentist appointment with medical evidence from the establishment will be marked as unauthorised absence 'code U' in the register.

Code L = Child arriving to the Academy between 8:55am and 9:10am. This is an authorised mark therefore not affecting a child's overall attendance.

Code U = Child arriving to the Academy after 9.10am. This is an unauthorised absence and will reduce a child's overall attendance. If a child accrues 10+ unauthorised late marks in a rolling 10-week period, the Principal may request legal action from the Local Authority. This could be a penalty notice to parents/carers.

- *Penalties are set at £60 if paid within 21 days rising to £120 if paid after the 21 days but within 28 days. If the penalty is paid, the absence covered by the penalty notice cannot be cited again. Failure to pay will result in prosecution under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.*

Procedures to Improve Punctuality	
10 Late marks	1 <sup>st</sup> Warning Letter
15 Late Marks	Meeting with Attendance Improvement Officer
20 Late Marks	Meeting with Principal - U code Implemented
10 'U' codes in rolling 10 weeks	Referral to the Local Authority requesting legal intervention (penalty notice)

**For health and safety reasons it is important that the school knows who is in the building. Pupils arriving late should therefore report to the main school office. It is important that all pupils arriving late follow this procedure, therefore pupils arriving after 8:55am will enter through the school's main reception area and should be accompanied by an adult who is required to sign their children in on the electronic sign in system stating a reason for being late. Parents will be contacted by the Attendance Improvement Officer should no improvement be made.**



## **1:11 Permission for exceptional leave**

**No leave of absence for any child will be authorised except in exceptional circumstances.**

Under the 2013 amendment, head teachers may not grant leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Exceptional leave must be applied for in writing to the Principal and the decision to authorise leave of absence rests entirely with the Principal.

The request should be made in writing to the Principal before the leave of absence is booked and taken.

When considering granting the leave of absence as exceptional circumstance the Principal will consider:

- The amount of time requested;
- Circumstances of the request;
- Distance and whether the trip is a rare event;
- Frequency of the request;
- Previous leave of absences taken within child's academy career;
- When the request was made;
- Proximity of external and internal examinations (including controlled assessments);
- The child's current attendance record, including previous academic years;
- The impact that absence will have on a child's attendance record;
- The impact on the child's education and their ability to catch up on the work that would be missed.
- If the child is statutory school age

Should an absence coincide with examinations periods (both external & internal) permission will not be given.

Children taken out of the Academy for a family holiday during term time will have the absence recorded as an un-agreed family holiday (code G) on their attendance record. The Principal will request action from the Local Authority in the form of a penalty notice to be issued to the parents/carers. The penalty notice will be per parent/carer per child.

Any child who does not return by the agreed date will incur unauthorised absences until such time as they do return. If after 10 days of the expected return date, the child has still not returned to the Academy, and no contact with parents/carers has been made by the Academy, a referral will be made to the Education Welfare Service, missing children team for further enquiries to be made. This will involve the Local Authority contacting and visiting the parents/carers. If the Local Authority is unable to locate the parents/carers/child/ren, the Academy will remove the child/ren from the Academy roll. Parents/carers are then required to reapply for a place at the Academy and there is no guarantee that a space will be available.

If parents/carers do not apply for the leave of absence in advance of taking it, the child will have the leave of absence recorded as un-agreed family holiday on their attendance record, this will result in the Principal requesting legal action from the Local Authority.



### **1:12 Absences for Religious Observance**

The Academy promotes respect for the faiths and values of its community and it is important that we recognise the diversity of the academy population. The academy will authorise 3 days religious observance leave in an academic year. The academy will not authorise any additional days for shopping or extended celebrations, these will be treated as unauthorised.

In respect of pilgrimages the academy would request that evidence is supplied and a return date agreed prior to the period of leave. Any extended delays will not be authorised and the child could be at risk of being removed from the academy roll.

### **1:13 Missing Children**

Any safeguarding issues pertaining to a child being taken out of school in circumstances that cause concern will be addressed directly to Children's Social Care. If a child is absent for a longer period than 10 days, and the school has received no notification as to why the child is not in attendance at the academy, a referral will be made the Local Authority 'Children Missing Education Team' this may result in the child/ren being taken off the school roll and placed on the National 'Missing Child Register'.

Children transferring schools are expected to attend the academy until their official start date at the new school/academy. Should the child not attend, all absences will be unauthorised and a referral to the Local Authority Education Welfare Service will be made requesting Legal Action be taken. Exceptions will be made if the new school/academy is out of county. In this instance notification will be given to the Children Missing Education Team at the Local Authority if no forwarding school has been named on the child's last day of attendance.

### **1:14 Traveller Children**

Parents/Carers should inform school or The Traveller Education Team that the family will be travelling for the purposes of work, and intend to return at a given time. A place will be kept open and a record of absence authorised. Traveller families will be protected from prosecution for poor attendance where they can demonstrate that:

- They are engaged in a trade or business of such nature that requires them to travel from place to place;
- The child has attended school as a registered child as regularly as the trade permits;
- The child has attained the age of six years and they have attended at least 200 half-day sessions in the preceding 12 months.

Though there are specific regulations relating to the attendance at school of children from the Traveller Community, this should not be an excuse for not following the appropriate procedures where attendance is an issue, and the family are not known to be travelling for the purposes of work.



## 1:15 'A Good Foundation' - Attendance and Punctuality in the Foundation Stage (Reception and Nursery)

Regular attendance will be encouraged from the outset creating good habits for the future. This early message which will be communicated to parents in the Introduction meeting at the academy and will set the expectations of the statutory requirements ready for when the child is registered on the roll for compulsory education; this being the term following the child's 5<sup>th</sup> birthday.

The information regarding non-statutory attendance and punctuality will be recorded and analysed in the same way as the rest of the school and every attempt will be made to address any concerns with the parents/carers in discussion through a home visit. All interventions will be recorded on the Academy systems and confirmed through meetings with the child's parent/carers.

If the child's attendance fails to improve and no satisfactory reasons have been given for the absences, an appointment will be made with the Principal to further discuss the removal from roll of the child. The responsibility for the children attending is solely that of the parents/carers and the place could be at risk if the child does not attend regularly.

Nursery Opening times	
8:45am	Nursery Doors/register Opens
8:55am	Register closed
11:45am	Morning Nursery collection time
12:15pm	Afternoon nursery/ register opens - entry through main reception
12.25pm	Register closed
3:15pm	Nursery closed



### **1:16 Collection of children at the end of the school day**

School staff will release children at 3:15pm from their respective doors to a responsible adult that is known to the school. It is the child's parent/carers responsibility to inform the school who will be regularly collecting the child. Where changes to a child's normal pattern of home time occurs, the school expects to be informed by the parent/carer on or before the day so both the teacher and child are aware of who will be collecting at home time. Class teachers are responsible for the dismissal of pupils in their class and must be sure that pupils' leaving arrangements are safe. They will not allow children to leave with unknown persons or another parent without prior knowledge and as a school, we reserve the right to check with parents/carers before releasing a child with any adult who does not have parental responsibility or who we feel poses a risk or potential risk to the child. Children will only be released to a sibling over 16 years of age.

Children in years 4, 5 and 6 are only allowed to walk home alone with written permission from parents and with agreement from the Principal that it is appropriate and safe to do so. The location of the child's house from the school, roads that will need to be crossed, any additional needs the child may have and the time of the children leaving school – for example in the winter it is dark after extra-curricular activities- will be taken into consideration.

### **1.17 Collection of Children during the School Day**

Any child being collected from the academy site during academy hours must be collected from the main reception by an adult (Over 18). Every child must be signed out and on return signed back in for health and safety reasons on the school's electronic sign in and out system. Where possible we ask that the academy is informed the expected time of collection and return and the reason for leaving the site during. Evidence will be requested in order for the collection or absence to be authorised.

### **1.18 Collection of Part-time Nursery Children**

Children who are eligible for a part-time nursery place are offered a morning or afternoon session. If a parent is repeatedly late to collect their child at 11.45am (more than 15 minutes on 3 occasions) the place may be withdrawn or an alternative session offered.



**1:19 Late collection of children – All children must be collected at 3.15pm unless there is an unavoidable emergency.** Portland Spencer Academy takes persistent lateness in collecting children very seriously. In extreme cases it can be considered as abandonment or neglect of the child.

<b>Procedures for late collection of children</b>		
3:15pm	Parents to collect their children from the allocated collection doors	
3.30pm	All children not collected are to be escorted to reception.	Call/contact to be made with parent/carer and a follow up text should no contact be made.
3:45pm	Parent to be contacted again and emergency contacts to be contacted.	Emergency contact or parent/carer requested to sign child out and a reason given for late collection.
4:00pm	Contact to be continued to be made	Emergency contact or parent/carer requested to sign child out and a reason given for late collection.
4.45pm	Children' Social Care to be contacted	Staff to log late collection on CPOMS as late collection concern. To be followed up by Attendance Improvement Officer with parent

<b>Procedures to improve late collection of children</b>	
1 <sup>st</sup> late collection	Verbal conversation with parent/carer
2 <sup>nd</sup> late collection	Written Warning Letter to parent/carer
3 <sup>rd</sup> Late collection	Parent /carer invited to meet with Principal
4 <sup>th</sup> Late collection	Referral to Children Social Care

**1:20 Head Lice** – half a day absence will be authorised for treatment of head lice. Should a child be seen to have live lice on their head when in school, parents will be contacted and requested to collect their child after lunchtime. Their child should be treated as necessary and returned to school the following morning.



## Appendices

### Register Codes

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
D	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)	Approved Education Activity
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
X	Non-compulsory School age absence	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendances

- This policy has been formulated based on the following legislation applicable to schools:

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Amendment regulations 2013

The Common Attendance Protocol 2016-17

### Publication of this information

The Governing Body recognises that staff, children and parents/carers need to work in partnership to provide all children with guidelines, which allow them to work positively and make good progress.

A copy of the Attendance Policy can be found on the academy website or a paper copy can be obtained from the academy reception on request.

