



# Quarrydale Academy

## Attendance Policy

Title of Policy	Attendance Policy
Originator	Mr T Paling
Date agreed by Trustees	
Next Review date	September 2025
Version number	
Additional information	

### Log of Changes

Date	Sections affected	Description	Revised by	Approved by
Sept 2024	Closing of register Penalty Notice Punctuality	Times updated Method of communication updated Clarification of per parent, per pupil added A member of staff contacts parents rather than student support coordinator	TP	



# Quarrydale Academy

## Attendance Policy

### Contents

1. Policy Statement
2. Purpose
3. Roles and responsibilities
4. Targets – Attendance & Punctuality
5. Impact of Poor Attendance on Academic Progress
6. Procedures
7. Medical and Dental appointments
8. Leave of absence During Term Time Including Religious Leave of Absence
9. Punctuality
10. Persistent and severe absence
11. Registers and attendance monitoring
12. Lesson Avoidance.
13. Legal Sanctions.

### Appendix

1. Attendance Codes
2. Attendance contacts

## **1. Policy Statement.**

Regular and punctual attendance to school is a legal requirement.

We know that good attendance is crucial to the future educational success of our students. Absence from school not only has a detrimental effect on a student's academic progress but may also mean that a young person is more vulnerable to safeguarding risks and impact on their overall well-being.

At Quarrydale Academy we are committed to working with families and students to ensure that each individual pupil can attend school and secure great attendance in a safe and supportive environment. In order to fulfil this we have an excellent pastoral, attendance and safeguarding team to support students so that they can take full advantage of the opportunities available, thereby maximising their chances of success.

The Academy's aim is to achieve good attendance by operating an attendance policy which staff, students and parents, the local community and the Family Service all work in partnership. The school will monitor attendance and ensure quick and early intervention if a problem is identified.

This policy is underpinned by the following legislation and guidance:

- The Education Act - 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 to any special needs the child may have. This can be regular attendance at school or by education otherwise. If a child of compulsory school age who is registered at a school fails to attend regularly at school, then the parent is guilty of an offence under section 444 (1) of the Education Act 1996.
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024)
- Working Together to Improve School Attendance (2024)
- The Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 and latest amendment 2016 1.5

This policy relates to many other policies and, in particular, the following:

- Anti-Bullying
- Child Protection and Safeguarding- KCSIE
- Equality act 2010
- Behaviour

## **2. Purpose**

To create a culture in which students are enabled to become independent and responsible citizens, accepting responsibility for their own actions and preparing for future success linked to employability standards.

To form an active partnership with families to support the learning of their children and to inform parents or carers of punctuality and attendance issues at the earliest opportunity.

To ensure regular contact with students in order to safeguard their well-being.

To provide every opportunity for our students to secure outstanding outcomes and reach their full potential linked to our school values

To keep an accurate and up to date record of attendance.

- To identify the causes of non-attendance and act upon them.
- To ensure all staff understand their roles in the monitoring and recording of attendance.
- To maintain and improve attendance throughout the academy through rewarding and target setting.
- To monitor and evaluate attendance protocols on a regular basis.
- To give clear information on expected levels of attendance.

### **3. Roles and Responsibilities**

#### **3.1 Students:**

- Always attend school unless prevented by unavoidable circumstances or specified illness.
- Always arrive at school by 08:30 for a start at 08:35.
- Always arrive promptly to lessons.

#### **3.2 Families:**

- Ensure that your child attends school every day, punctually, properly equipped and ready to learn. **Regular attendance is a legal requirement.**
- **Inform the school of absence before 09:00 on the first day of absence on 01623 554178 (Option 1).**
- Inform the school in advance of hospital or medical appointments that are unavoidable during the school day. This should be done via the attendance officer. Routine appointments should not be scheduled in school time.
- Inform school of any problems which may affect their child's attendance. Tutor, Head of Year, Pastoral Support officer.
- Work with the school if their child's attendance/ punctuality is a cause for concern.
- Make requests for exceptional circumstance leave of absence during term time through liaison with the attendance officer.
- Provide up to date contact details and telephone numbers for every adult with parental responsibility. **If details change school must be informed as soon as possible. (This can be done via the My Child at School app)**

#### **3.3 Academy**

- Accept that attendance is everyone responsibility
- Recognise and reward students for good and improving punctuality and attendance.
- Challenge attendance that is less than good, provide support and set targets for improvement.
- Provide a graduated response to remove barriers where a student's attendance is less than good.
- Follow up on non-attendance with no contact on the first day of absence with a phone call and or a home visit.
- Offer support to families where there are barriers to attendance and punctuality and keep regular contact to remove these.
- Ensure every child of statutory age has access to full time education.
- Communicate a clear process around the management of attendance to families including:
  - Prevention and reward/ recognition.
  - Support and challenge with sanctions where appropriate.

- Legal action and/ or external agencies when other measures have been ineffective as part of the graduated response.
- Will not authorise extended leave during term.
- Will involve external agencies if we believe there is a wider safeguarding issue surround a student.

#### 4. Targets

The target for all students is to achieve 100% attendance and 100% punctuality. The minimum expectation for all students is to have attendance above the national average.

Category	Attendance level	Action
Green	above 95%.	No action but acknowledge improvement.
Amber	below 95% but above 90%.	Attendance is causing concern and working together actions can be taken to improve this.
Red	below 90%	Persistent absence, working with families and other external services may be required to improve this.

Attendance during one school year	Equivalent days	Equivalent sessions	Equivalent weeks
95%	9 Days	18 sessions	2 weeks
90%	19 Days	38 sessions	4 weeks
85%	29 Days	58 sessions	6 weeks
80%	38 Days	72 sessions	8 weeks
75%	48 Days	96 sessions	10 weeks
70%	57 Days	114 sessions	11.5 weeks
65%	67 Days	134 sessions	13.5 weeks

A session is one morning or afternoon.

#### 5. The Impact of Poor Attendance on Academic Progress.

If your child is absent from school on a regular basis, they are damaging their future life choices. Nationally, it has been proven that children with low attendance in primary school miss out on making the expected progress in vital literacy and numeracy skills and find it difficult to catch up. In secondary school, 19 days' absence correlates, on average, to a grade at GCSE in all subjects

#### 6. Procedures

There are two types of school absence:

- Authorised where the school approves the student's absence
- Unauthorised where the school will not approve the student's absence

It is the parents' responsibility to contact the Academy and inform of a student absence. Communication should be made with the school before 09:00 to notify of the child's absence, the reason and when the child is expected back in school. (Tel: 01623 554178 (option 1)).

If no contact has been made by the family, the school will attempt to make contact. If this is unsuccessful then a home visit will be completed. Home visits are part of our

safeguarding policy and are there to build positive relationships between home and school.

For any child with an allocated Social Worker, they will be contacted on the first day of absence from school as routine communication between the school and social care.

If a student is absent for more than five days then further contact will be made from the pastoral and attendance team. This is a wellbeing check and to arrange for missed work to be sent home if appropriate.

Only the school can authorise the student's absence. Whilst this is straightforward in most cases, there may be a time when the school will refuse to authorise a student's absence without medical proof.

Unfortunately, there are occasions when a child can suffer from more sustained health problems. If this is the case, parents will be required to supply a medical letter from the consultant in order to be able to support the child in the appropriate manner. In these circumstances it is not necessary for the parent to contact school every day and a more appropriate frequency of communication will be established with the parent through discussion with the Attendance team or Pastoral support officer.

At the end of each week, an unauthorised absence report will be produced and a letter will be sent to any parents where a student has received unauthorised marks for the week asking for an explanation. HoY and tutors will also be given this information. If there is a pattern developing of absences then parents will be invited in to school to discuss this and put support measures in place to prevent further escalation.

If the student is not in school by 09:30 and the school has not been contacted by the parent/carer then a text message is sent out via Bromcom to the parent/carer to find out why the student is not in school. Where the school is also unsure of the reason for illness, or needs clarification about this, the parent/carer will be contacted.

## **7. Medical and Dental appointments**

Parents are expected to book routine dental and medical appointments outside school hours.

Any urgent appointments must be authorised by sharing proof with the attendance officer.

Students must be collected from the main reception for medical and dental appointments as they will not be allowed to leave site unaccompanied.

Where appointments are in the school day students should return to school as soon as possible.

## **8. Leave of absence During Term Time Including Religious Leave of Absence**

Leave of absence during term time is no longer permitted. The Government guidelines are very clear and only allow the headteacher to grant leave of absence for exceptional circumstances. Parents do not have a right to take their child out of school for a holiday during term time.

Leave of absence during school time will not be routinely granted. Any request for leave of absence should be submitted at least four weeks in advance of the time asked for. Parents should fill in a Leave of Absence form and hand in to reception who will then pass this to the head teacher. Parents will then be informed whether the absence has

been authorised or not. The head is only allowed to authorise leave of absence in 'exceptional circumstances'.

It is reasonable to say that unless the request meets the case of exceptional circumstances then it is quite likely the request will be turned down. If the student still takes the leave of absence, this will be classed as unauthorised absence. If a student's attendance is low this absence is likely to be taken into account by the Family Service and may result in legal action.

The school reserves the right to refer any case where a student takes a holiday during term time to the Local Authority Law Enforcement Team Lead with a view to issuing a penalty notice. However, the circumstances around any absence of this nature will always be examined on an individual basis before any decision to request a penalty notice is taken. This is not a decision that the school will take lightly and all aspects will be thoroughly considered and taken into account.

Please refer to the Government website for details of these notices and their present value [www.gov.uk/school-attendance-absence/legal-action-to-enforce-school-attendance](http://www.gov.uk/school-attendance-absence/legal-action-to-enforce-school-attendance)

**If a student is absent for more than 10 consecutive days absence without permission and attempts to contact the parent to ascertain the detail of the absence have failed, the Local Authority will be contacted. In some cases, the Child Missing Officer (CMO) will be informed and under these circumstances it is possible for the student to be removed from the school roll and listed as missing from education.**

### **Religious leaves of absence**

For a day set aside exclusively for religious observance, students will be granted one day for each occasion of religious observance with a maximum of 3 days over one academic year.

These absences, if granted, will be recorded as authorised using the 'R' code on Bromcom. These are the codes as stipulated by the Department for Education and whilst absence is authorised, it does count against the child's attendance. This is the national policy.

### **9. Punctuality**

Punctuality to school and lessons is equally as important as attendance, lateness to school and lessons equals lost learning time.

Late to school is defined as not being in tutor time at 08:35 when the register is taken. Students are expected to arrive on time. Registers will be closed 30 minutes after the first session of the day, 09:05. Students who arrive after this time will receive an unauthorised mark for the session.

Afternoon registers will take place between 12:50pm and 13:00pm for all students and students must be in tutor by 12:50pm to be marked present, if after this time they will be marked late. If they arrive in school after 1.20pm it will be an unauthorised absence.

If lateness becomes an issue the tutor will advise the parent reinforcing the school's expectations in this area. A sanction to make up lost learning time will also be put in place.

Each morning that a student is late they will receive a same day break time detention unless there has been communication from the parent with a justified reason for the late arrival to school.

The attendance team will send a message via Bromcom to parents alerting them when their child is late to school.

The school day:

Registration	08:35 – 08:55
Lesson 1	08:55 – 09:55
Break	09:55 – 10:10
Lesson 2	10:10 – 11:10
Lesson 3	11:10 – 12:10
Lunch	12:10 – 12:50
Registration	12:50 – 13:00
Lesson 4	13:00 – 14:00
Lesson 5	14:00 – 15:00

#### **10. Persistent and severe absence**

- Students with attendance below 90% are persistently absent.
- Students with attendance below 50% are severely absent.

Students who fall below this level are endangering their education. Attendance reports are monitored for the basic attendance percentage or worrying patterns of absence. If regular time is being lost through absence and/or a number of broken weeks of education then this is also a trigger for intervention.

If attendance falls below 90% then:

1. The attendance, welfare and enforcement officer will write to inform parents that their child's school attendance has fallen below 90%. The parent will be reminded of their legal duty to ensure that their child receives an education and the school's expectations in relation to this. At this point, it may well become clear that there are other issues and interventions/support may be put in place.
2. We will request that all further absences are supported with medical proof. An appointment slip from the surgery receptionist or letter of appointment for orthodontists etc is acceptable. We do not expect a parent to pay for proof of illness. Absences will not be authorised without this proof being provided, and the parent will be reminded of the possible consequences of unauthorised absences.
3. If the attendance does not improve over a 6-week period the Pastoral Team (namely either the tutor, Head of Year or Pastoral support officer) will contact the parent to discuss ways in which the school can support the family in getting their child to attend school regularly. A meeting will be held and an action plan agreed. This will be reviewed on a two weekly basis. If there is an improvement then there will be a further period of monitoring before the student is removed from any attendance intervention. In some cases, a home visit will be made to ensure parents are fully aware of the situation.
4. If attendance remains low then in some cases the school will refer the attendance to the Family Service which may lead to legal action being taken by the local authority.

In exceptional cases of poor attendance, the school reserves the right to accelerate the process of creating bespoke plans to address the attendance concern.

Where students fall in to the severely absent category, in addition to the above the Academy will seek to involve external agencies to support the student and family also.

### **Support Systems**

We recognise that poor attendance can be an indication of difficulties in a child's life.

This may be related to problems at home and/or in school. Parents should make school aware of any difficulties or changes in circumstances that may affect their child's attendance and/or behaviour in school, for example, bereavement, divorce/separation, incidents of domestic abuse. This will help the school identify any additional support that may be required.

Quarrydale also recognises that some students are more likely to require additional support to attain good attendance, for example, those students with special educational needs, those with physical or mental health needs, and looked after children.

The school will implement a range of strategies to support improved attendance.

Strategies used will include:

- Discussion with parents and students
- Attendance panels
- Parenting contracts
- Attendance report cards
- Referrals to support agencies
- Time limited part time time-tables
- Additional learning support
- Behaviour support
- Reintegration support packages

Support offered to families will be child centred and planned in discussion and agreement with both parents and pupils.

Where parents fail or refuse to engage with the support offered and further unauthorised absence occurs, Quarrydale will consider the use of legal sanctions.

### **11. Registers and attendance monitoring**

The Register is a legal document which must be completed fully and on time at AM and PM registration and then for every lesson throughout the day. Should a student not be in registration, they should be marked absent; however, if form tutors are aware of any appointments elsewhere, in or out of school, these should be recorded using the relevant code.

Quarrydale Academy follows the Department for Education guidance on the use of attendance codes.

Staff must take a register in every lesson. If a member of staff suspects that a student is missing from the lesson, then they should notify the Attendance Officer immediately.

## **12. Lesson avoidance.**

If the student is known to have been in school, but has not attended all, or some of their lessons, they will have truanted. In most cases the truant is discovered and depending on the number of lessons missed, the sanction will vary from lunchtime detention to use of isolation. The parent will be informed by the Head of Year.

If it is believed that the truant has left the school site then, the school will inform the parent. In this situation we would advise the parent to contact the child themselves. If the school is unable to contact the parent to inform them of their child's truancy, then a message will be left for the parent. It is up to the parent to decide if they wish to contact the police. In either case, the student's sanction will be similar to the previous example.

Sometimes parents believe that their child is at school, but the student has not actually entered the premises. Should this happen, the school will naturally believe the child is absent and would contact the parent for a reason for the absence. At this point the truancy would come to light. In this situation we would advise the parent to contact the child themselves, but if they do not get any response, then we would advise they contact the police. For this reason, it is important that parents keep the school informed of any changes of contact details.

Where a student is persistently not attending lessons and we are unable to locate them, this can become a safeguarding issue. Parents will be invited in to the Academy for a meeting to discuss this and ensure support measures are put in place to address this. The meeting should look to remove the barriers and identify why the student is not attending lessons whilst ensuring their safety.

## **13. Legal Sanctions.**

As an Academy we want to ensure that a full graduated response is in place and all support is accessed so that no Legal sanctions are implemented, however where families do not engage positively and there is no improvement the **Local Authority can use various legal powers if your child continues to miss school without a good reason:**

- Parenting Order**

This means you have to attend a guidance programme as instructed by the Court. You will also have to do what the Court says to improve your child's school attendance.

- Education Supervision Order**

If the Local Authority thinks you need support getting your child to go to school but you're not co-operating, they can apply to court for an Education Supervision Order. A supervisor will be appointed to help you get your child into education. The local authority can do this instead of prosecuting you, or as well as.

- School Attendance Order**

You'll get a School Attendance Order if the local authority thinks your child isn't getting an education. You have 15 days to provide evidence that you've registered your child with another school or that you're giving them home education. The order will require you to send your child to a specific school. If you don't, you may be prosecuted.

- Penalty Notice**

A Penalty Notice is an alternative to prosecution which does not require an appearance in Court. The penalty is £80 if paid within 21 days of receipt of a notice

per parent, per pupil, rising to £160 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. If you do not pay the fine you may be prosecuted.

If you receive a second penalty notice this would increase to £160 per parent, per child.

And a third offense would lead directly to prosecution.

- **Prosecution**

You can get a fine of up to £2,500, a community order or a jail sentence up to 3 months. The Court can also give you a Parenting Order.

## Appendix 1

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (AM)	Student is present at morning registration
\	Present (PM)	Student is present at afternoon registration
L	Late Arrival	Student arrives late before register is closed
B	Off-Site educational activity	Student is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Student is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
K	Off-site educational activity arranged by the LA	Student is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved and arranged by the local authority
P	Sporting activity	Student is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved or organised by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Student is on an educational trip/ visit approved or organised by the school
W	Work experience	Student is on a work placement
<b>Authorised Absence</b>		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Student has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
C1	Authorised leave of absence - Abroad	Student has been granted a leave of absence for the purpose of a regulated performance or employment abroad
C2	Authorised leave of absence – Part time timetable	Student is subject to a part time timetable agreed with the school and the parent
E	Excluded	Student has been excluded for a period of less than five days so no AP has been provided
I	Illness	School has been notified that the student is absent due to illness
J1	Interview/ admission at another education setting	Student has an interview with a prospective employer/ induction day at a new school or college.
M	Medical/ dental appointment	Student has a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Student is taking part in a religious day of observance
S	Study Leave	Year 11 student is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Absence	Student from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school.
<b>Unauthorised Absence</b>		
G	Unauthorised Holiday	Student is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Student is absent for an unknown reason (This code should be amended when the reason has been established or replaced with O if no reason is provided in a reasonable amount of time)

O	Unauthorised absence	The school is not satisfied with the student's reason for absence
U	Arrival after registration	Student arrived after register closed

**Other/ Administrative codes**

Q	Unable to attend due to access arrangements	Local authority have failed to make suitable access arrangements
X	Not required to be in school	Student of non-compulsory 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 local/ national emergency, or a student is in custody
Z	Child not on admission register	Register set up, but student has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half term/ bank holiday/ INSET