



Attendance Policy

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Reviewed by: SLT

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Responsibility

Cornerstone Academy aims to achieve good attendance by operating an attendance policy within which students, staff, parents/carers and external agencies can work in partnership.

In order for this policy to be successful every member of the school community must make attendance a high priority. We must share our enthusiasm for education; communicate its importance to students and all members of the school community.

School expectations

Cornerstone Academy expects students to:

- Attend school regularly
- Arrive on time, appropriately dressed and prepared for the day
- Keep 100% attendance

Cornerstone Academy expects parents/carers to:

- Encourage their children to attend school
- Contact the office each day by 9am if their child cannot attend school
- Send a note, medical card etc. to the school on return from sickness or absence
- Contact the school immediately if they become aware that their child is reluctant to attend school

Students and parents/carers can expect Cornerstone Academy to:

- Ensure that there is regular, efficient and accurate recording of attendance and time keeping as a statutory and legal requirement
- Contact home on first day of non-attendance
- Establish early contact with the home when a pattern of lateness emerges
- Act immediately on any problem notified to us
- Maintain confidentiality
- Positive measures to encourage good attendance
- Support for Students - to ensure a broad and balanced curriculum
- Provide a welcoming, safe and caring environment in which each Student valued and supported
- Build and maintain effective partnerships between the school and its parent body, external support agencies and the wider community

Dealing with Absenteeism

Cornerstone Academy uses a computerised registration system to monitor students' attendance. Cornerstone Academy will identify students whose attendance is a cause for concern. These students will be targeted to receive additional support from the school and/or relevant external agencies. The following chart shows how Cornerstone Academy will respond to absence;

**Step
1**

Truancy call

Truancy calls will go out no later than 10:00am on the 1st day of absence. If parents/carers contact school an update will be put into the school MIS concerning of reason for absence as well as documenting any late mark on the MIS. Truancy calls will be made daily for all students who are not in school by the **School Office**. Truancy Call will be a Telephone call, email or text.

**Step
2**

'No Response' Phone call

The school will make direct contact with parents/carers if a student has been absent for 3 days and the school has received no contact from home. This will be completed by the School Office and the outcome of contact will be emailed to the Head teacher.

**Step
3**

Home visits

If there has been no response from phone calls and truancy calls a home visit will be undertaken by the Mr Sweeney or a member of the SLT in order to try to identify the underlying cause of the absence

Depending on the outcome the home visit, an action plan will be drawn up and attendance will continue to be monitored. If necessary a referral will be made to the Education Welfare Advisory Service (EWAS), Cheshire East Early Help Team or relevant external agency. If the home visit highlights problems in school (e.g. bullying, friendship problems etc.) appropriate strategies will be implemented and support given to the student to resolve the difficulties.

The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003

Section 23 of the Act gives powers to the local authority to issue Penalty Notices where a parent/carer is failing to ensure their child's attendance at school.

What is a Penalty Notice?

Under existing legislation, parents/carers commit an offence if a child fails to attend regularly and the absences are classed as unauthorised. A Penalty Notice is an alternative to prosecution, which does not require an appearance in Court to secure an improvement in a pupil's attendance. Payment of a Penalty Notice enables parents to discharge potential liability for conviction.

What Are the Costs?

Payment within 28 days of receipt of a Notice is £60 and £120 if paid after this but within 42 days.

How Are They Issued?

By post to the home address or delivered by a member of staff from the Cheshire East Children's Services Team.

The use of Fixed Term Penalty Notices would depend upon the circumstances and would only be used if there was a very high probability that using a FPN would make an immediate and significant improvement to the attendance.

Punctuality and Lateness

Morning Registration

School starts at 9:30am and students are expected to be in class for this time, school opens its doors from 9:28am. Students must attend school on time for morning registration. Children arriving at school after the register has been taken but before 9.40am are recorded as late – L code. Children arriving after this time are 'late after registration closes' and this will be recorded as unauthorised absence (U code) unless there is an acceptable reason for the lateness.

Afternoon Registration

The afternoon registers are taken at 12.45pm. Children arriving to afternoon registration after this time are recorded as late – L code.

Students who arrive after registration closes will have to provide a reason for lateness and will receive a late mark in the register. Parents/carers will be notified if a recurring pattern of lateness develops. If lateness persists, further action will be taken and parents/carers invited in for a meeting to discuss the reason for the lateness. Procedures to be followed in the case of persistent lateness may involve external agencies.

Positive Measures to Encourage Good Attendance

Cornerstone Academy will seek to encourage good attendance and punctuality with the student through tutorial work and assemblies. Good attendance will be seen as an achievement in its own right and recognised as such with rewards such as certificates and positive class dojo awards.

Students will be rewarded with certificates termly and annually for achieving 100% attendance. There will be a display of students who achieve 100% attendance for a half term. Cornerstone Academy uses a points based system as one of the methods used to reward students. Students who achieve high levels of attendance will be awarded through the points system in the form of additional points and or privileges.

Roles and Responsibilities

All Staff

- Ensure that registers are completed regularly and accurately, using statutory codes, before the end of each lesson
- Communicate any concerns they have with regard to attendance and punctuality at the earliest opportunity to learning guides to follow up
- Remain vigilant of the fact that registers are legal documents and that false or inaccurate recordings may lead to prosecutions in some instances
- Communicate any concerns they have with regards to attendance and punctuality at the earliest opportunity to the Head teacher.

Attendance Officer (School Office Member)

- Ensure that am and pm registers are completed
- Initial point of contact to parents/carers
- Ensure that truancy calls are completed by the School Office daily to parents/carers of non-attendees
- Ensure that the attendance registers are up to date and being completed correctly and on time in cooperation with teaching staff
- Will inform Cornerstone staff of reason for non-attendance, if any, via register note and/or email
- Update registers where necessary
- Ensure that an official register is printed off twice daily for am and pm marks

- Maintain regular contact with Cheshire East Services to discuss registers, arrange meetings and make referrals
- Support Academic Mentors with the monitoring of attendance, punctuality and truancy
- Ensure that periods of non-attendance are followed up
- Track and target individual students to improve levels of attendance
- Communicate regularly with parents/cares of non-attendees and follow up concerns of staff
- Monitor the attendance of offsite provisions and ensure that registers are received
- Coordinate and implement of any reward scheme that is linked to attendance and punctuality
- Work with Learning Mentors to implement targeted support strategies to address issues of non-attendance and truancy
- Inform Referring Schools and organisations of attendance statistics for referred students on a weekly basis and to liaise with the Referring Schools Attendance Team

Head teacher

- Take a strategic lead on raising levels of attendance
- Be responsible for overseeing all issues regarding attendance and will meet regularly with the Cheshire East Services to review and implement strategies for raising attendance.
- Authorise absences and referrals where appropriate
- Communicate regularly with Cornerstone Academy staff and the Senior Leadership Team regarding all issues of attendance and punctuality
- Prepare formal reports for Cornerstone Academy Board of Governors as and when required to be presented at Full Board meetings and Sub-Committee meetings

Leave in Exceptional Circumstances

Leave in exceptional circumstances is at the discretion of the Head teacher and the Governors and will be considered on a case by case basis. Any parent/carer taking their child out of the school during term, for

any reason, without the permission of the Headteacher will result in an unauthorised absence and possible referral to the Localities Services.

Attendance and Punctuality Interventions

Cornerstone Academy will use a variety of interventions to address issues of attendance and punctuality. The Academy will work both independently and with Cheshire East local Authority in establishing the correct intervention to be applied. Interventions will include;

- Fixed Penalty Notices
- Engagement of the Cheshire East Education Welfare Service
- Family Support Services

Cheshire East Services and Education Welfare Officers (EWOs)

- Work with Cornerstone Academy at a strategic level to increase attendance and action plan for individuals
- Attend meetings and reviews with parents regarding attendance and will liaise with parents/carers of young people referred to the relevant service
- Attend meetings e.g. meetings of the Special Needs Support, Group/Meetings with Educational Psychologist

Appendix

Letters

- Letter of Commendation
- Attendance Concerns
- Meetings to be Arranged

Exapmle Letters of commendation

Date

Dear Parent /Carer

This letter is to inform you of how pleased Cornerstone Academy staffs are with _____ current levels of attendance.

At present _____ attendance is excellent and is 100%. This is having a positive effect on learning and is increasing _____ chances of reaching his/her full potential.

May I take this opportunity to ask you to continue encouraging _____ to access the support offered at Cornerstone Academy. I hope that _____ will continue to achieve high levels of attendance during the coming term.

Cornerstone Academy aims to give _____ the best possible support and education. We rely on your support and regular communication in an effort to achieve a greater chance of _____ succeeding.

Yours sincerely

Attendance Concerns 1

Date

Dear Parent /Carer

I am writing to inform you that _____ attendance has now fallen below 90% and is beginning to present a concern to us.

Students not arriving in school on time can also affect attendance figures. I would therefore advise you that I will be closely monitoring and documenting _____ attendance and punctuality from now on.

May I take this opportunity to remind you that it is extremely important that you ensure your child attends school regularly and punctually and this is your legal responsibility.

You should inform the school every time that your child is not in school on the above number and leave a message.

Please ensure that _____ is in school by 9.30am and attends regularly. Should it be necessary for _____ to be away from school, please ensure you telephone The Cornerstone Academy before 9.30am to advise of the reason for absence.

Should you require any support or need any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me or consult The Cornerstone Academy Attendance Policy.

Yours sincerely

Attendance Concerns 2

Date

Dear Parent / Carer

Further to our conversation today regarding _____ attendance. I would like to confirm that I have met with _____ to discuss how this can be improved.

Please be aware that should _____ attendance continue to be a concern, we will have no option but to call you into school for a formal meeting to discuss how improvements can be made.

Yours sincerely

Attendance Concerns 3

Date

Dear Parent / Carer

I am writing to bring to your attention _____ attendance figure, which is currently at XX %. This is presenting a serious concern to the school and could lead to external agencies being involved and possible court action.

I have made an appointment time for you to come into school on _____ *insert date and time*). At the meeting we will discuss how to make improvements and other options available.

I look forward to meeting with you.

Yours sincerely

Attendance Concerns Meeting 1

Date

Dear Parent /Carer

This is to inform you that we have concerns about _____ attendance, as since returning to school _____ attendance to school has fallen to XX%.

Despite numerous attempts we have not been unable to contact you to ascertain the reason for _____ absences.

I would like to arrange a meeting to discuss these attendance issues. A provisional date has been set for _____ **(insert date and time)**. This meeting will take place at The Cornerstone Academy. Please contact The Cornerstone Academy to either cancel or confirm.

If you have any queries about this matter please do not hesitate to contact me. I hope I have your full support and I look forward to meeting with you.

Yours sincerely

Attendance Concerns Meeting 2

Date

Dear Parent /Carer

I am writing to inform you that we have concerns about _____ attendance, as since returning to school in September your child's attendance to school has fallen XX%.

Despite numerous attempts we have been unable to contact, or meet with you to ascertain the reason for these absences.

As there has been no improvement in _____ attendance I would like to arrange to discuss these attendance issues. The meeting will take place at The Cornerstone Academy and a provisional date has been set for _____ **(Insert date and time)**. Please contact The Cornerstone Academy to either cancel or confirm.

If you have any queries do not hesitate to contact me. I hope I have your full support and I look forward to meeting with you.

Yours sincerely

Persistent non-attendance (internal truancy)

Date

Dear Parent/ Carer

Re: Persistent non-attendance of lessons

Having carried out a review of lesson attendance I write to inform you that your child's attendance this term has fallen well below acceptable standards for Cornerstone Academy students. Whilst s/he has been turning up for school most mornings s/he is spending a significant amount of time avoiding lessons by

wandering corridors and outdoor areas. This wandering has now reached the point where it is having a negative effect on both _____ and other students in the school.

I will be working with _____ tutor over the next week or so to set attendance targets for _____. Hopefully this will be enough to improve her/his participation in lessons. If it is not I am afraid that there will be a review of _____ placement at The Cornerstone Academy and we will seek an alternative to lessons in The Cornerstone Academy with Cheshire East Pupil Referral Unit. This will involve _____ leaving the school in order to provide places in lessons for young people who want to engage.

I trust I can rely on your cooperation in this matter and would ask that you speak with _____ about her/his future conduct. If you have any questions or would like to meet with somebody to discuss _____ current school experience please contact me on the number above.

Yours sincerely