



ASPIRATIONS



Futures Institute Attendance Policy

Date of last review	May 2024	Review Period	2 years
Date of next review	May 2026	Owner	Academy
Type of policy	Attendance	Board approval	Regional

Contents

Introduction.....	3
Expectations.....	4
Parents/Carers.....	4
Students.....	4
Attendance Officer.....	4
Mentor.....	4
School Procedures.....	5
Lateness.....	5
Punctuality.....	5
Truancy.....	5
Monitoring attendance.....	6
Fast Track to Attendance Process.....	6
Attendance of concern.....	6
Promoting Attendance.....	7
Absence from School.....	8
First Day Absence.....	8
Third Day Absence/Continuing Absence.....	8
Pupil Missing.....	8
Absence Notes.....	8
Frequent Absence.....	8
Penalty Notices and Legal Action.....	9
The Law.....	10
Attendance Targets.....	11
Register and Admission Roll keeping.....	12
Categorisation of Absence.....	12
Unauthorised Absence.....	12
Authorised Absence.....	12
Examples of Authorised Absence:.....	13
Approved Educational Activity.....	13
Leave of Absence.....	14
Exceptional circumstances.....	14
Deletions from the Register.....	14
Roles and responsibilities.....	16
APPENDIX 1.....	17

Introduction

Futures Institute is committed to providing a full and efficient education to all pupils and embraces the concept of equal opportunities for all. This policy has been written in light of the latest DfE guidance [Working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#)

We will endeavour to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome.

For a child to reach their full educational achievement, a high level of school attendance is essential. We will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance including e.g. newsletters and end-of-term reports.

We are also aware of the social and mental health benefits of attending school. Being able to access support and spend time with peers is vital for all students.

School attendance is subject to various Education laws and this school attendance policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by the Department for Education (DfE).

Each year the school will examine its attendance figures and set attendance/absence targets. These will reflect both national and Oxfordshire attendance targets.

The school will review its systems for improving attendance at regular intervals to ensure that it is achieving its set goals.

This policy will contain within it the procedures that the school will use to meet its attendance targets.

Expectations

Parents/Carers

We expect that all parents/carers will:

- Work with and support the academy ensuring that their children attend each day and on time.
- When an absence occurs, the Parent/Carer will contact the academy (office@futures-aspirations.org) before 8.30am on the first day of absence, to provide the following information: child's name and mentor group, reason for absence and the anticipated length of absence.
- Provide the academy with medical evidence for any absence extending beyond 5 days.
- Inform the academy immediately if there is any change in contact details.
- Notify the academy of any problems which may affect attendance and punctuality including medical conditions. Medical treatments must be evidenced.
- Arrange medical appointments outside academy hours. When this is not possible, provide the academy with a copy of the appointment letter/card.
- Arrange family holidays during periods when the academy is closed.

Students

We expect that all students will:

- Attend the academy daily and arrive in their mentor group, with their, mentor by 8:45am. We all have a responsibility to ensure that ALL students attend the academy regularly. The academy will use all external agencies to ensure that it secures the highest possible attendance for all students to ensure they are given the best possible starting point in life and improve their life chances.
- Arrive promptly for the start of each lesson.
- If late, students will be expected to accept a sanction and this will be monitored to ensure improvement is seen.

Attendance Officer

- Attendance Officer to action first day of absence – Parents/Carers to be contacted by text messaging and/or telephone calls to establish reason and eliminate the possibility of truancy. This is to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary, and to identify whether the absence is approved or not and identify the correct attendance code to use.
- If no response is received from either texting or phoning the main contact, other listed contacts will be called to find out the reason for non-attendance. This is a safeguarding procedure to ensure that no harm has come to the child, as they may have left home and not arrived at school.
- Absence letters to be posted/mailed to Parents/Carers who have not responded.
- In the event of an absence of three or more days without contact from the family, a home visit will be considered by a member of the academy Safeguarding team and/or a local authority professional, to ascertain the safety and well-being of the child and the reason for their absence from school.
- Futures Institute have a legal duty to report the absence of any student who is absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive days. If the child is not seen and contact has not been established with the named parent/carer then the local authority is notified that the child is missing from education (CME). The Local Authority will be notified to locate the child.
- Maintain accurate records for attendance & punctuality.
- To refer any student with over 15 days of illness to the local authority.

Mentor

- To provide a welcome back to students in their mentor group when they have been off school.
- To discuss with students and home any issues affecting a student's attendance
- To pass on any concerns to the Head of College and College Coordinators.
- To work regularly with a key group of students as identified by senior leaders to help improve their attendance.

School Procedures

1. Any child who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as being authorised (C, I, M, B, P, J, R), unauthorised (O, G) or as an approved educational activity (V, W) (attendance out of school). These codes are available on www.gov.uk as approved by the Government.
2. Only the Principal or a member of staff acting on their behalf can authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence must be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised.

Lateness

1. Morning registration will take place at the start of school at 08:45am. The registers will remain open until 09:10.
2. Pupil arriving after this time will be marked as having an unauthorised absence (U) unless there is an acceptable explanation, e.g. school transport was delayed (L).
3. The afternoon registration will be at 12:30pm
The registers will close at 1:00pm
4. Pupils arriving after the start of school but before the end of the registration period will be treated for statistical purposes as present, but will be coded as late (L) before registers close.
5. When making medical/dental appointments, every effort must be made to ensure appointments are outside school hours but we acknowledge that this is not always possible. Medical/Dental appointments must be accompanied by an appointment card or other written/electronic confirmation.

Punctuality

Due to the need to ensure punctuality to both the academy and lessons, students must realise lateness is totally unacceptable. If students are late to lessons, the Teacher will follow this up in line with our behaviour policy. If the lateness persists, it will be referred to the Mentor and the relevant Coordinator. Leaders will want to contact parents/carers of perpetual offenders and will also refer them to the Attendance Officer.

Truancy

Truancy is defined, where a student is not present during their timetabled academy activity. If a student is found to be truanting a lesson within or off the academy site, staff will follow our 'Missing Student' procedure. If a student goes missing during the academy day, a member(s) of staff will search to locate the student. This will mean checking they are not in a meeting, medical room, or music lesson etc. Toilets will be checked and a general sweep of the site will take place. If the student still cannot be located then their parents/carers will be notified. Parents/carers will be asked to try and contact them on their mobile and then contact us back. If we have not heard within 15 minutes we will try and call again, but if we cannot confirm they are safe we will consider contacting the police.

Monitoring attendance

Futures Institute implements a staged system of escalating support and rewards, in order to ensure that students and parents/carers maintain, and/or improve attendance. In addition to the continuous monitoring of attendance by the Attendance Lead and other members of staff.

Stage	Trigger	Monitored by	Support
1	100%	Mentor Weekly	Rewarded
2	Below 96%	Mentor	Mentor discussion with the student and their family
3	Below 92%	College team	Initial Fast Track Meeting Letter (see Appendix 1) Completion of Early Help Assessment Tool (see Appendix 1)
4	Attendance not improving after Initial Fast Track meeting	Attendance officer	FPN warning letter where appropriate
5	Continued decline in absence	College team/Assistant Principal	Attendance contract
6	Failure of attendance contract	Principal	Refer to county team

Fast Track to Attendance Process

The criteria for a successful Fast Track is for there to be less than 10% unauthorised absence for the Fast Track period.

Fast Track can still be used when a child is on a reintegration, or reduced timetable, as the key is that they are attending fully, or any absence is unavoidable (authorised).

The Parenting Contract and subsequent reviews are likely to form the backbone of any witness statement if the case were to proceed to Court, either as a direct prosecution following a failed Fast Track, or if a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued because of a failed Fast Track and is subsequently unpaid. For this reason, we will be ensuring clarity of details are included, such as communication between home and the academy, and pinpointing the barriers and potential solutions.

In those instances where attendance doesn't improve, we will proceed to a Fixed Penalty Notice to be issued.

Attendance of concern

For students with very low attendance (<50%) personalised interventions will be put in place and regularly reviewed at Re-engagement meetings.

Promoting Attendance

The school will use opportunities as they arise to remind parents/carers that it is their responsibility to ensure that their children receive their education.

Attendance Awards

The school will use the following system to reward pupils who have good or improving attendance:

- *Weekly celebration of attendance & punctuality in assembly*
- *Recognition given to students that have achieved 100% attendance termly*
- *Reward given to students with attendance above 97% (prize draws and opportunities provided to the whole group). Types of rewards to be determined by student voice.*
- *Improved attendance certificates*
- *Inter-college weekly competition for highest attendance displayed in assembly*

A Welcome Back

It is important that on return from an absence, all pupils are made to feel welcome. This should include ensuring that the pupil is helped to catch up on missed work and brought up to date on any information that has been passed to other pupils. A return-to-school discussion will take place between the Mentor and pupil.

Absence from School

First Day Absence

- Parent/carer to call/email school by 8.30am every day that the child is absent.

Telephone number 01295 257942

Email office@futures-aspirations.org

- If no call is received, a member of staff will attempt to make contact (please ensure that the office has up to date contact numbers).
- If no reason is given within 2 weeks the absence will remain unauthorised.

Third Day Absence/Continuing Absence

- Parents/carers are expected to contact school daily during periods of absence. The attendance office will continue to make ongoing contact as required.
- If no contact can be made, an e-mail or letter will be sent requesting contact. · Futures Institute may request proof of ill health (e.g. Doctor's certificate, or an appointment card/electronic notification of appointment or prescription).

Pupil Missing

- Any pupil who is absent without an explanation or contact after 10 consecutive school days will be referred to Thames Valley Police in order to conduct a welfare check.
- Pupils missing from school for 20 consecutive days will be passed to the County Tracking Officer to be removed from the school roll. This is in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2013. This means that the child will lose their school place.

Absence Notes

Absence notes received from parents explaining absence should be kept for the remainder of the academic year. If there are attendance concerns about the pupil that may require further investigation, then the notes may need to be retained for a longer period.

Frequent Absence

It is the responsibility of the Attendance College Co-ordinator/Senior Leadership Team Member responsible for Attendance and Welfare Manager to be aware of, and bring attention to, any emerging attendance concerns.

In cases where a pupil begins to develop a pattern of absences, the school will try to resolve any concerns with parent/s. The Attendance Officer will liaise with the County Attendance Officer to ensure necessary action is taken when incidents of poor attendance and/or punctuality are identified.

Where incidents of poor attendance and/or lateness are identified through monitoring,

parents/carers will be notified in writing that this is a cause for concern. If this continues, the school will invite parents/carers in to discuss causes and ways forward.

A sickness return will be made to the local authority where there are reasonable grounds to believe a student will miss 15 consecutive days of school through illness or where the pupil's total number of school days missed during the current school year because of illness (whether consecutive or cumulative) will reach or exceed 15 school days

Penalty Notices and Legal Action

Students' attendance will be monitored regularly and may be shared with the Local Authority and other agencies if a student's attendance is causing concern.

Data will be shared with staff as needed so that appropriate interventions can be made.

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

Strategies used will include:

- Discussions with students by the mentor or attendance co-ordinator for the college
- Attendance report cards
- Time limited part-time timetables
- Nurture
- Punctuality report cards
- Fast Track meeting
- Parental Contract meetings
- Referral to other external agencies
- Referral to Local Authority attendance team

The Law

The Education Act 1996 Part 1, Section 7 states:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full time education suitable-

- [a] To his age, ability and aptitude and
- [b] To any special needs he may have.

either by regular attendance at school or by education otherwise.

For educational purposes the term parent is used to include those that have parental responsibility and/or those that have the day to day care of the child.

The legislation that appertains to children who are of compulsory school age and are registered at school is contained within this Act.

Part V1 Section 444 states that if a parent fails to ensure the regular school attendance of their child, if he/she is a registered student at a school and is compulsory school age, then they are guilty of an offence.

In cases of persistent absenteeism, the school reserves the right to ask the County Attendance Team to either issue a Penalty Notice Warning which could result in a fine or further legal action through the courts.

A Penalty Notice is a fine that the County Attendance Team may decide to issue instead of taking legal action through the Magistrates' Court system.

A Parent/Carer can be issued with a penalty notice if:

- they fail to ensure that their child attends school, or other education provision regularly, usually defined as six or more unauthorised absence sessions over a six week period;
- they allow their child to take leave of absence during term time without the school's authorisation;
- they fail to return their child to school on the agreed date after a period of authorised leave of absence;
- their child persistently arrives late for school after registration is closed.

Failure to pay the Penalty Notice may result in a prosecution under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' (PA) when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year **for whatever reason**. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parents' fullest support and co-operation to tackle this.

The school monitors all absence thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark **or** is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and parents will be informed of this immediately.

PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully by the school and a parenting contract

meeting will be offered between parent, pupil and school to try and help resolve any issues. All PA cases will be referred to the County Attendance Team and if necessary, they have a range of legal powers open to them to enforce attendance including parenting orders, education supervision orders and prosecutions. If convicted of an offence a parent could face a fine of up to £2,500 per parent and/or 3 months imprisonment.

An attendance contract (Anti social Behaviour Act 2003) is a voluntary agreement between the school and the parent. It can also be extended to include the child and other agencies offering support to resolve any difficulties and leading to improved attendance. The contract will outline attendance targets and will detail agreed actions that will help to achieve the target. The contract will be reviewed regularly.

Attendance Targets

The school will set attendance targets each year. A system for analysing performance towards the targets will be established and a senior school manager will be responsible for overseeing this work.

Our school's target for attendance is: 96%

Register and Admission Roll keeping

The legal requirements regarding register and admission roll keeping can be found in The Education [Pupil Registration] (England) Regulations 2006.

Categorisation of Absence

Any pupil who is on roll but not present in the school at the time of registration must be recorded within one of these categories:

- [1] Unauthorised Absence;
- [2] Authorised Absence;
- [3] Approved Educational Activity.

Unauthorised Absence

This is for those pupils where no reason has been provided, or whose absence is deemed to be without a valid reason.

Examples of Unauthorised Absence:

- Truancy during the academy day
- No reason for absence given by parent/carer
- Students who arrive late at School after 09:10 am when registration has closed
- Term time holiday and day trips
- Parents/carers choosing to keep their child from the academy or removing them from the academy unnecessarily

Authorised Absence

This is for those pupils who are away from school for a reason that is deemed to be valid under the Education Act 1996.

Illness – parents may be asked to provide medical evidence to allow the school to authorise absence where appropriate. This might be in the form of an appointment card, prescription etc.

Medical/dental appointments – parents are asked to make medical and dental appointments outside of the school day where possible. Where this is not possible, students must attend for part of the day. Parents must show the appointment card to school.

Other authorised circumstances

Traveller absence – it is expected that Traveller children, in common with all other children, are to attend school as regularly and as frequently as possible.

To protect Traveller parents from unreasonable prosecution for non-attendance, the Education Act 1944, section 86, states that a Traveller parent is safe from prosecution if their child accrues 200 attendances (i.e. 200 half days) in a year. This is only when the family are engaged in a trade or business that requires them to travel and when the child is attending school as regularly as that trade permits.

The academy will be regarded as the base school if it is the school where the child normally attends when they are not travelling. However, the child must have attended in the last 18 months. Traveller children can register at other schools temporarily while away from their base school, in such cases the student's place will be kept open for them whilst travelling. This is to protect them from unfairly losing their place at their school of usual attendance.

The academy can only effectively operate as the child's base school if it is engaged in on-going dialogue with Traveller families. This means that parents must:

- Advise of their forthcoming travelling patterns before they happen; and
- Inform the school regarding proposed return dates.

The academy will authorise absence of Traveller children if we are satisfied that a family is travelling and has given indication that they intend to return.

Traveller children will be recorded as attending an approved educational activity when:

- The child is on roll and attending another visited school.
- Undertaking supervised educational activity under the jurisdiction of another Local Authority's Traveller Education Service
- The child is undertaking computer based distance learning that is time evidenced

Where Traveller children are registered students at a school and are known to be present either at a site (official or otherwise) or in a house and are not attending school, the absence will be investigated in the same way as that for any student and appropriate statutory action may be undertaken.

Religious observance – the academy recognises the multi-faith nature of British society and acknowledges that on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside school holiday periods or weekends. Such absence will be authorised up to a maximum of one school day.

Examples of Authorised Absence:

- Valid illness
- Permission from Futures Institute Principal
- Educated off-site
- Academy authorised work experience
- Treatment for illness supported by medical evidence
- If your child is unwell and sent home from the academy
- Hospital, CAMHS or Orthodontic appointments **supported by appointment letters or cards**
- Unavoidable GP or dental appointments **supported by cards or slips**
- Advance notice of religious observance
- A student suspended for a fixed period while remaining on roll with the school

Approved Educational Activity

This covers types of supervised educational activity undertaken off site but with the approval of the school. This would include:

- Field trips and educational visits;
- Sporting activities;
- Link courses or approved education off-site;
- Most types of dual registration.

Note: Pupils recorded in this category are deemed to be present for attendance returns purposes.

Leave of Absence

The Principal will not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are **exceptional circumstances**. Parents/Carers should seek permission from the Principal prior to the leave of absence period in question.

The Principal will determine the number of school days a child can be away from school **if** the leave is granted. Parents/carers who remove their children from school without authorisation or do not return their child to school on the agreed date following an authorised period of leave of absence, may face a Penalty Notice Warning which could lead to a fine/prosecution (see Penalty Notices and Legal Action above).

Exceptional circumstances

The Principal may only grant a leave of absence for a student during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. The following would be considered as 'exceptional circumstances', and you may be asked to provide written evidence of this.

- Return of parent from active service (Forces)
- Death or terminal illness of a parent, step-parent or sibling
- Young Carers
- Disability or respite leave

The following are examples which may not be counted as exceptional circumstances and may lead to requests not being granted:

- Cheaper holiday dates
- Attendance at a wedding or christening
- Visiting relatives either abroad or in the UK
- Limitations on parents/carers leave

The academy considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the Principal's discretion. If leave of absence is taken without authorisation it will be considered as an unauthorised absence.

Deletions from the Register

In accordance with the Education (pupil registration) (England) regulations 2013, students can be deleted from the register when one of the following circumstances applies:

- The student has ceased to be of compulsory school age
- Permanent exclusion has occurred and procedures have been completed
- Transfer between schools
- Pupil withdrawn to be educated outside of the school system
- Failure to return from an extended holiday after the school has tried to locate the student
- A medical condition prevents attendance and return to the school before ending

compulsory school age

- In custody for more than four months
- 20 days continuous absence and the school has tried (unsuccessfully) to locate the student
- Death of a student

Roles and responsibilities

The academy believes that improved school attendance can only be achieved if it is viewed as a shared responsibility of the school staff, the Trust's regional board, parents, students and the school's wider community.

The Regional Board will:

- Regularly review the academy's attendance policy and ensure that the required resources are in place to fully implement the policy
- Ensure that the Registration Regulations, England, 2013 and other attendance-related legislation are complied with
- Monitor the academy's attendance and punctuality data through Regional Board meetings and monitoring visits etc.

The senior leadership team will:

- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to students and their parents
- Ensure that there is a clear and well-communicated whole-school approach to attendance
- Monitor the impact of the Attendance Policy and review it regularly to ensure that it is fit for purpose
- Ensure that there is a named senior leader who will take on the strategic lead on attendance and be given sufficient time and resources to enact the policy · Ensure that school attendance data is shared with appropriate bodies in a timely manner
- Ensure that there are robust systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all students, including any who are educated off-site.
- Ensure that attendance data is collected and analysed frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence
- Use the data analysis to implement appropriate actions to support young people to improve their attendance
- Ensure that there is a multi-agency approach to improving attendance by supporting students and their families

Parents will be asked to:

- Take a positive interest in their child's education
- Encourage their child to look to the future and have aspirations and dreams
- Contact the school immediately if their child is absent to let them know the reason why and the expected date of return. Follow this up with a note where possible. · Avoid unnecessary absences and make appointments for the dentist, doctors, etc outside of school hours whenever possible
- Contact their child's mentor for help as soon as there seems to be an issue
- Inform the academy of any change in circumstances that may impact on their child's attendance
- Encourage healthy routines at home for example bedtimes, preparing their school bag and uniform the night before etc
- Avoid taking their child out of school during term-time and only in exceptional circumstances send a written leave request to the principal

APPENDIX 1

Letters and forms

[A Letter template for inviting a parent/carer to first Fast Track to Attendance Meeting](#)

[PCM form with student voice](#)