

Attendance Guidelines

The MAT is firm in the belief that all pupils have the right to an excellent education, delivered in an environment that values each of them as an individual and creates aspirational opportunities for them.

The MAT also seeks to work to ensure that our academies become centres of excellence, leading to high achievement for all pupils with no significant gaps in attainment or progress between different groups.

As part of our aims to ensure that all pupils within the MAT achieve highly, we recognise the importance of good attendance. Each school within the MAT has its own Attendance Policy which should be referred to but as a group of schools we have discussed and agreed the following common guidelines.

How does attendance in primary schools affect outcomes for pupils?

- 1 in 5 pupils miss 17 days a year- these pupils will drop at least ONE GCSE grade
- 1-4 GCSE grades can increase your wages by 17%
- 5 or more GCSE A- C grades can increase your wages by 41%
- If you improve your attendance by 1% you could see a 5- 6% improvement in your attainment

(Data supplied by Suffolk EWO service)

How important to Ofsted inspection outcomes is attendance?

In order to be a GOOD school – ‘Pupils value their education. Few are absent or persistently absent. No groups of pupils are disadvantaged by low attendance. The attendance of pupils who have previously had exceptionally high rates of absence is showing marked and sustained improvement.’ (Ofsted School Inspection Handbook April 2018)

In order to be an OUTSTANDING school – ‘Pupils value their education and rarely miss a day at school. No groups of pupils are disadvantaged by low attendance. The attendance of pupils who have previously had exceptionally high rates of absence is rising quickly towards the national average.’ (Ofsted School Inspection Handbook April 2018)

What is the National Picture?

National Average for Attendance 95.3% Of the 4.7% absence 3.4% was authorised and 1.3% unauthorised

(Pupil Absence in Schools in England 2016-17)

Does 90% Attendance seem okay?

Pupil attendance of 90% means that a child is missing the equivalent of one half day every week. Over a school year this is the equivalent of 4 whole weeks (eg the whole of September) If a pupil’s attendance is 90% over 5 years that is the equivalent to missing half a school year. Low attendance impacts pupil’s learning, friendships and wellbeing. Attendance of below 90% is considered Persistent Absence.

Attendance

Schools within the MAT use a variety of strategies to encourage good attendance including the services of Suffolk EWO. In the case of regular or persistent patterns of absence schools within the MAT will consider the use of fines.

Illness

Across Suffolk this accounts for the greatest number of absences.

Schools within the MAT have a first day absence policy which includes ringing home every day during a child's absence. This is to support safeguarding. Schools have close links with local Doctors and School Nursing Teams and seek to support pupils within school. Schools may ask for medical evidence or consider the use of a Care Plan to support pupils who have consistent illness.

Medical appointments also count as absence.

If a child is absent for more than 8 sessions (equivalent to four days) then a referral may be made to the EWO service, depending on circumstance.

Lateness

Lateness is another form of absence. Statistics show that:

- 5 minutes late each day is 3 days lost learning in a year
- 10 minutes late each day is 6.5 days lost learning in a year
- 15 minutes late each day is 10 days lost learning in a year

Every Minute Counts! Many of the schools within the MAT offer Early Bird or Breakfast Clubs to support parents.

Holiday Requests

Within schools, there is no automatic right to absence and any absence needs to be requested in advance. Leave of absence can only be granted under exceptional circumstances and it is the role of the Headteacher of the school to decide whether to authorise any form of absence.

Attendance plays a part in ensuring that pupils achieve highly:

Secondary School Key Stage 4 Performance by Average Absence Sessions 2003/4

Average No. of Sessions Absence per Pupil 2003/4

