

ATTENDANCE POLICY



**Resilience
Multi Academy
Trust**

Summary	The Attendance Policy is to support all stakeholders through the procedures of attendance at Trust Academies.
Responsible Person/Author:	Adam Marham - COO
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What to do as a Parent or Carer if your child is unable to attend school

1. Please see the guidance in Appendix 2 relating to the Academy your child attends for details of how to report a student absence.

Introduction

2. RMAT is a successful educational trust, and all our students play their part in making it so. We are committed to providing a quality education for all our students. Regular attendance is essential if students are to achieve their full potential.
3. RMAT believes that regular school attendance is the key to enabling students to maximise the educational opportunities available to them and become resilient, confident, and competent adults who can realise their full potential and make a positive contribution to their community.
4. RMAT values all students, and we will work with families to identify the reasons for unsatisfactory attendance and try to resolve any difficulties.
5. Our Attendance Policy should not be viewed in isolation; it is a strand that runs through all the aspects of school improvement, supported by our policies on Safeguarding, Bullying, Behaviour and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (“SEND”).

Aims of this Policy

6. Our Attendance Policy aims to support excellent levels of attendance to enable fulfilment of every student’s potential
7. This policy has been prepared with regard to RMAT’s statutory duties relating to attendance, including those set out in the Department for Education’s (DfE) statutory guidance entitled ***Working together to improve school attendance*** (2024) which is referred to in this policy as the “DfE Attendance guidance”

Key Principles

8. High levels of attendance and punctuality levels are promoted and rewarded.
9. It is the responsibility of everybody in RMAT to improve attendance and punctuality.
10. Where attendance or punctuality fall short of expected standards, steps will be taken to address this, and sanctions may be applied in accordance with the Positive Discipline (PD) behaviour policy.
11. Academy leaders are expected to monitor attendance for patterns of absence. Where a pattern is causing concern, for example students being absent on a specific day, or absent when they have received a detention or Isolation, this should be challenged with parents and absences will be unauthorised, unless medical verification is provided, until the pattern of concern has been resolved.
12. Some students find it harder than others to attend school. RMAT will work with students, parents, and other local partners to remove any barriers to attendance.

13. Subject to the terms of this policy, any day-to-day attendance issues that parents or students have should be discussed with. Where more detailed support around attendance is required, parents and students should contact their Academy Attendance Team or Head of Year.

Roles and responsibilities

Our Academies

14. Our Academies will:

- develop and maintain a whole academy culture that promotes the benefit of high attendance including for example, good teaching and learning experiences that encourage students to attend and achieve.
- work with students and their families, building strong relationships, to support high levels of attendance and punctuality and understand any barriers to attendance.
- investigate unexplained or unjustified absence, applying sanctions where appropriate
- take into account individual needs when implementing this policy, including having regard to the Academy's obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- share information, including returns information required to be shared in accordance with regulations¹ and the DfE Attendance Guidance, and work collaboratively with the local authority, other schools in the area and other partners including, where required, making appropriate referrals in accordance with local procedures, legislation, and guidance.
- regularly monitor, review, and analyse attendance and absence data including to identify pupils or cohorts that require attendance support and to set targets for the future.
- ensure that all students can access full-time education, putting strategies in place where this is evidence to suggest that this is not the case.
- ensure that the trust board and Academy's leadership team work together to monitor attendance levels and the effectiveness of this policy.
- ensure that all legislation and guidance are complied with and reflected in our policies and procedures, including the DfE Attendance Guidance.
- have in place appropriate safeguarding responses for children who are at risk of missing education, having regard to the statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (please refer to our [Child Protection policy](#))
- provide information requested by the Secretary of State, including termly absence data collected by the Department for Education.
- regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels.

¹ School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024

- support students who are returning to education following long term absence.
- ensure that effective systems to record and report attendance data are in place, including accurate completion of admission and attendance registers using an electronic management information system.
- assign overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance at the Academy to a designated senior leader, known as the Senior Attendance Champion.
- observe and fulfil the responsibilities set out in guidance issued by the Department for Education ([Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\) \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)) to the extent not covered above or elsewhere in this policy.

Parents and carers

15. We expect parents and carers to

- ensure that their child arrives at the Academy on time, in the correct uniform and with the necessary equipment.
- ensure that their child attends the Academy when due in isolation or detention unless they are absent due to illness. If absent on these days the absence will be unauthorised unless medical verification is provided
- promote the importance of regular attendance at home.
- follow the correct procedure for reporting the absence of their child from the Academy.
- avoid unnecessary absences.
- keep the Academy informed of any circumstances which may affect their child's attendance.
- not take their child out of education for holidays during term time.
- inform the Academy in advance of any proposed change of address for their child(ren), along with the name of the parent with whom the child shall live.
- observe and fulfil their responsibilities set out in the guidance issued by the Department for Education: [Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\) \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#) .

Students

16. We expect students to

- Attend the academy every day it is open, on time, achieving a minimum of 98% or above attendance, unless they are genuinely ill.
- Be appropriately prepared for the day and punctual to all lessons.

- Attend the Academy when due in isolation or detention unless they are absent due to illness. If absent on these days the absence will be unauthorised unless medical verification is provided
- Inform their Form Tutor, Head of Year, Mentor or the Attendance and Welfare Officer of any problems which affect attendance or punctuality.
- Follow the correct procedure if they arrive to the Academy late.

Senior Attendance Champion

17. The Senior Attendance Champion (“SAC”) at each RMAT Academy is:

- BBG Academy – Paula Shannon
- Brayton Academy- John Levick
- Featherstone Academy- Chris McColl
- Rodillian Academy- Joe Birkbeck
- Southway- Adam Collins
- UTC Leeds - Tim Smeaton

18. The SAC has overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance at the Academy and will:

- set a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance.
- establish and maintain effective systems for tackling absence and ensure that all staff follows these.
- evaluate and monitor attendance expectations and processes.
- have a strong grasp of absence data to focus the collective efforts of the Academy.
- ensure that key attendance messages are communicated to parents and students.
- provide data and reports to support the work of the board of trustees (see below).

RMAT Board

19. The RMAT Board of Trustees will

- take an active role in attendance improvement, recognise the importance of school attendance, and promote it across the trust and Academy’s ethos and policies.
- ensure the Academy’s leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.
- regularly review attendance data, discuss, and challenge trends and help Academy leaders focus improvement efforts on the individual pupils or cohorts who need it most.

- ensure Academy staff receive adequate training on attendance, including dedicated training for staff with specific attendance responsibilities and any additional training that would help support pupils or cohorts overcome common barriers to attendance.
- share effective practice on attendance management and improvement across RMAT academies.
- Review Academy attendance at least termly.
- Require Academies to report to the trustees on the Academy's attendance at regular intervals.
- have a dedicated attendance lead (the Director of Attendance) who will drive improvement in attendance across RMAT and function as a central point for academies with attendance queries.

Academy Local Review Boards

20. LRBs will

- Monitor students' attendance in specific year groups and cohorts through regular reporting and discussion at Local Review Board meetings.
- Discuss any concerns that they have regarding any specific year group or cohort's attendance at Local Review Board meetings with Principals and monitor whether any intervention has led to improvement in the specific cohort's attendance.
- Report any continuing concerns about a specific cohort's attendance to the Standards Committee of the RMAT Board

The Director of Attendance

21. The Director of Attendance is RMAT's dedicated attendance lead who will:

- Drive improvement in attendance across RMAT.
- Lead RMAT's academy attendance teams.
- Function as a central point of contact for academies with attendance queries

Attendance Register

22. 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. If form tutors are aware of any appointments elsewhere, in or out of academy, these should be recorded using the relevant code. All academies follow the DfE Attendance guidance on the use of attendance codes and do not deviate from this. Please see Appendix 1 for further guidance on attendance codes.

23. 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 on call immediately. The absence register is emailed out to all key staff.
24. Students who arrive after the start of a registration session but before the end of the registration session will be marked as late. Where students arrive after the end of a registration session, the process set out on Late arrivals applies.
25. Where a student attends a registration session but does not attend subsequent lessons, we will treat this as a truancy and non-attendance matter in accordance with the behaviour policy and engage parents where necessary.

Late Arrival

26. If a student arrives at the Academy after the relevant registration period has ended but within the relevant session, they must immediately go to the Academy office to sign in and provide a reason for the lateness to enable the Academy to establish the appropriate attendance or absence code. In the absence of a satisfactory explanation, the register will be marked as unauthorised absence.
27. Persistent lateness will be treated as a disciplinary matter and will be dealt with in line with the PD policy.

Reasons for absence and how to report or request authorisation

Authorised absence

28. Absence will only be authorised where the Academy has given approval in advance for a student to not be in attendance or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for the absence. Only the Academy can authorise absence.

Unauthorised absence

29. Absence will be marked as unauthorised where the Academy is not satisfied with the reasons given for the absence.

Reporting absence from the Academy

30. Where a student is to be absent from the Academy without prior permission, the parent/carer should inform the Academy by telephone on the morning of the day of the first absence and let the Academy know when they expect the student to return. The Academy must be notified every day the student is absent. Please see Appendix 2 on how to contact the Academy.
31. On the day of return to the Academy, parents must also provide written confirmation of the reason(s) for the full period of absence.
32. Any unexplained absence will be followed up by the Academy promptly.

33. In cases where the academy needs clarification to accurately record the absence in the attendance register, the parent/carers may be asked to provide the Academy with medical evidence. If your child is absent from the academy for 4 days or less, please provide a written note in their planner. If your child is absent from school for 5 days or longer, please provide medical evidence, i.e. an appointment card, copy of any prescription or photograph of medication prescribed. In both cases, the reason for absence should be indicated. If satisfactory evidence is not provided, the absence may be marked as unauthorised.

Illness

34. If your child feels ill in the morning, please provide them with appropriate pain relief/medication and send them to the Academy. Any medication should be handed in to Student Services/reception who will administer it when required. Your child should be in the Academy if they have a minor illness such as a headache, cold, sore throat, or period pain.
35. If your child is ill i.e., to the extent that they cannot get out of bed, then please contact the Academy to notify the attendance team of their absence. Please ensure that your child returns to the Academy as soon as possible, even if they are not 100%.
36. Where a student is absent from the Academy with a medical condition for more than 15 days either cumulatively or consecutively in the academic year, the Local Authority will be informed of the absence as they have a responsibility to ensure the student is receiving an education.

Appointments

37. Medical, dental, and other essential appointments for a student should take place outside of school hours where this is possible.
38. Where an appointment must take place during school time, the student should attend the Academy for as much of the day as possible.
39. As much prior notice as possible should be given including a copy of the paperwork for the appointment as soon as possible (such as letter or appointment card) marked for the attention of the Attendance/Welfare Officer, or bring the original into the Academy, where they can copy it for you.
40. On the day of the appointment write a note in your child's planner, this will then excuse them from the lesson and enable them to sign out. Students should report to Student Services/reception to sign out.
41. A full day's absence will not be authorised for a medical appointment. Any full day's absence will be marked as parental condoned truancy.

Leave of absence (including holidays during term time)

42. Due to Government legislation the Academy is no longer able to authorise any holiday during term time. This absence will therefore be recorded as unauthorised absence on your child's attendance record.

43. The Academy will grant permission for a student to be absent from school in the circumstances described in paragraph 37 of the DfE Attendance Guidance which can be summarised as follows:
- taking part in a regulated performance or employment abroad
 - attendance at an interview for entry into another educational setting or future employment
 - study leave for public examinations
 - temporary, time-limited part-time timetable
 - other exceptional circumstances.
44. To request a leave of absence, parents/carers must make the request in advance by completing a leave of absence request form and, wherever possible, at least 4 school weeks ahead of the planned leave.
45. In respect of requests for leaves of absence for taking part in a regulated performance or employment abroad, parents should be aware that any absence which is authorised **will** affect a student's overall attendance percentage.
46. Where a leave of absence is requested as above, the Principal will consider the specific facts and circumstances relating to the request. The decision:
- will be confirmed in writing
 - is solely at the Principal's discretion and
 - is final.
47. Where permission is granted, the Principal will confirm the number of days and dates of absence which are authorised.
48. If permission is not granted and the parents/carers proceed to take their child out of the Academy, the absence will be marked as unauthorised, and parents may be issued with a penalty notice or be subject to prosecution by the local authority.

Religious observance

49. We recognise that students of certain faiths may need to participate in days of religious observance. Where a day of religious observance:
- falls during school time and
 - has been exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the student belongs,
- the absence from the Academy will be authorised.
50. We ask that parents/carers notify the Academy by writing to the Principal in advance where absence is required due to religious observance.

Coronavirus (Covid-19)

51. There may be circumstances in which students cannot attend school due to Covid-19. The Academy will adhere to any current guidance issued by the Department for Education relating to the recording of attendance in relation to Covid-19.

Addressing poor attendance and punctuality

52. The Academy will use data to target attendance improvement efforts to the students or groups of students who need it most. In doing so, the Academy, led by the SAC, will:

- monitor and analyse weekly attendance patterns, proactively using data to identify students at risk of poor attendance.
- provide regular attendance reports to class teachers and relevant leaders.
- identify students who need support from wider partners as soon as possible and deliver this support in a targeted manner.
- conduct thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and fully year data to identify patterns and trends.
- benchmark Academy attendance data at each level against local, regional, and national level.
- monitor the impact of academy strategies and actions to improve attendance on particular students and particular groups.
- collaborate with the local authority and other local partners to identify groups.
- hold regular meetings with the parents or carers of students who the Academy and/or local authority consider to be vulnerable.

53. Where absence or punctuality is a cause for concern, for example because there is:

- a pattern of unauthorised absence
- a question over the reasons provided for a particular absence or late arrival
- persistent truancy or lateness

we will make contact with the parents/carers with a view to working together to support improved attendance and/or punctuality.

54. In cases where the Academy has been unable to establish a clear reason for absence and/or has welfare concerns about the student, a home welfare check may be conducted.
55. We may conduct a home visit on each fourth school day of absence, even if you have contacted the Academy each day with reasons for the absence.
56. Absences of more than 12 school days will be treated as a safeguarding concern:

- After 12 school days absence, a safeguarding concern card will be issued
 - After 15 school days absence, Police will be notified via 101
 - After 20 school days absence, a referral to the Local Authority will be made as the child has been absent from education for a prolonged period.
57. Failure to attend or arrive at lessons on time may also be dealt with as a disciplinary matter in accordance with the behaviour policy.
58. Absence will be classed as persistent where it falls below 90% across the academic year. Absence at this level is highly likely to hinder educational prospects and we expect full parental co-operation and support to urgently address these cases. Intervention steps may include implementation of an attendance action plan, referral to other agencies and/or seeking to put in place an attendance contract.
59. Where out of school barriers to attendance are identified, the Academy will signpost and support access to any additional services.
60. Where parents/carers have failed to ensure that their child of compulsory school age is regularly attending the Academy and wider support in accordance with this policy is not appropriate or effective, we may consider issuing a penalty notice. A penalty notice is a financial penalty (£80 if paid within 21 days, £160 if paid within 28 days) imposed on parents which is intended to change behaviour without the need for criminal prosecution.
61. When considering whether to issue a penalty notice, we will have regard to:
- the National Framework for penalty notices as set out in paragraphs 175 – 201 of the DfE Attendance Guidance; and
 - the local authority's Code of Conduct for issuing penalty notices.
62. In the event that a penalty notice is issued but is not paid within 28 days, the local authority will decide whether to proceed to prosecution. The local authority also has separate powers to prosecute parents if their child of compulsory school age fails to attend school regularly.

Following up absence

63. Where we have had no contact from a parent/carer the Academy will respond in the following manner:
- First day telephone contact/text will be implemented for **all** students after 9.30am, further attempts at communication may also be made.
 - A home visit will be conducted where possible.
 - Telephone calls may be made to parents/carers who leave messages on the answer machine to obtain further details about an absence; and
 - If a student is having their attendance supported or monitored medical evidence will be required to support the absence.

- If the Academy has been contacted by a parent/carer a home visit may still be undertaken in line with safeguarding responsibilities to engage families and ensure children are safe.

Strategies to support attendance that falls below the Academy target and is a cause for concern.

64. With continued non-attendance the case will be brought to the attention of the Attendance/Welfare Officer. Further action may include participation in attendance improvement initiatives, home visits and/or meetings between the Academy, parents/carers, and students and, if appropriate, other agencies to identify and solve the problems which are preventing the student from attending the Academy.

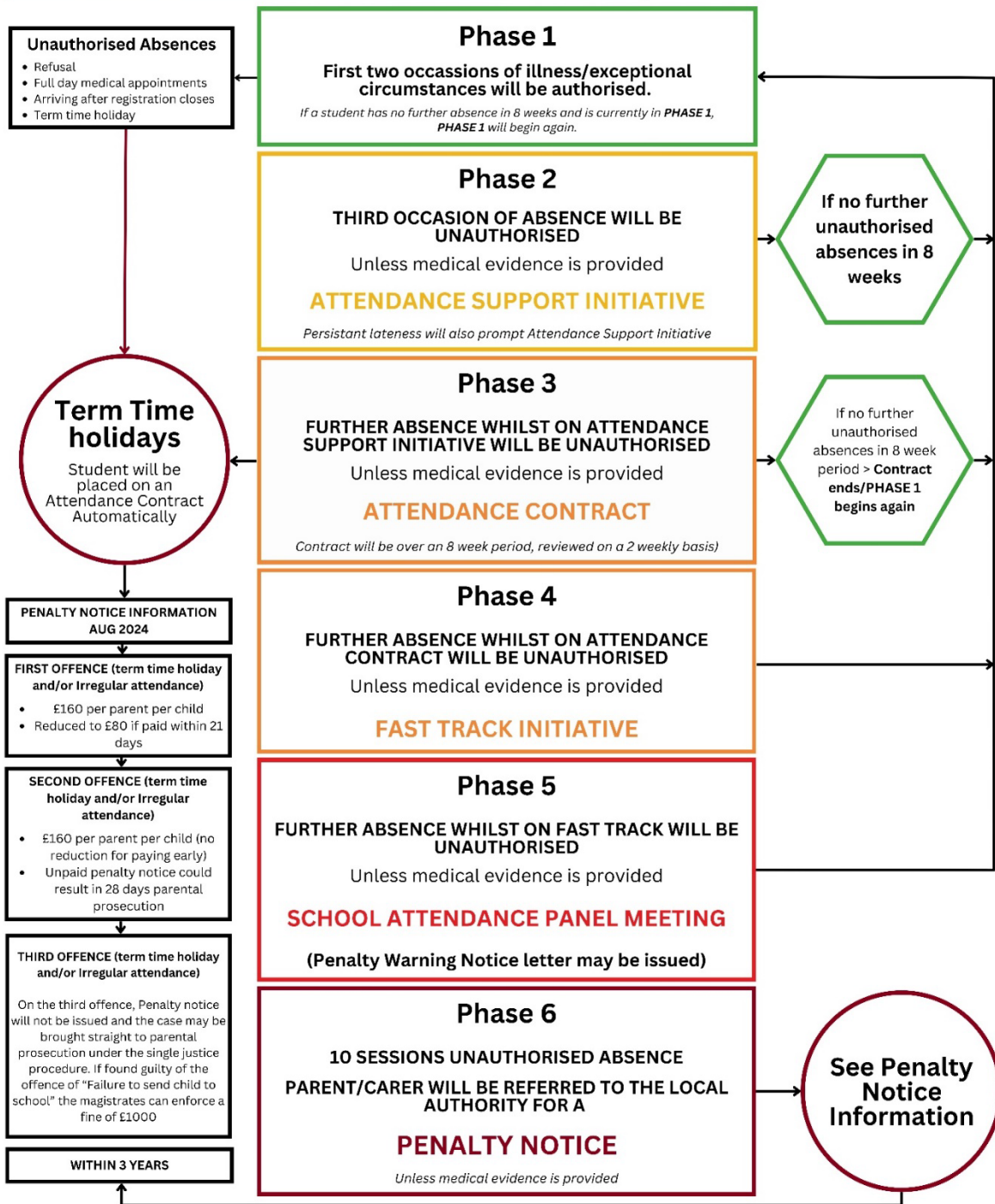
Academy led support strategy.

Attendance Support Initiative

65. We will write to you when your Child's attendance becomes a concern to explain your child has been placed on an Attendance Support Initiative. Your Child will take part in an assembly which advises them their attendance has dropped below the Academy target and that their attendance will be monitored for the following half term.
66. Your Child will receive an attendance support card. One day a week they will meet with a pastoral member of staff to discuss the previous week's absence and attendance. This gives further opportunity for any attendance worries or concerns to be discussed on a 1 to 1 basis with a pastoral member of staff.
67. If your child has no unauthorised absence within the half term that their attendance is being monitored, provided it is at the Academy's attendance target, they will be removed from the attendance pathway.
68. Our attendance pathway appears below:



Attendance Pathway



69. Our attendance support package is designed to assist students and families in maintaining regular school attendance. This guide outlines the standard procedures we follow; however, flexibility may be necessary to accommodate Local Authority processes and the specific needs of students and families.

Long term Absence Re-Integration

70. The return of a student to the Academy after long term absence requires special planning. The Head of Year and Attendance/Welfare Officer in consultation with the Form Tutor and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Co-ordinator, Mentors or Director of Key Stage who will be responsible for establishing and managing a programme for return which meets the individuals' needs. Staff will be informed of the return of long-term absentees and of any special arrangements that have been made.

Celebrating Good Attendance

71. Good and improved attendance is rewarded by Academies with various incentives for individual students, form groups and the whole Academy. These include some of the following:
- 100% Attendance Certificates.
 - 100% Attendance/Punctuality Stamps.
 - 100% Attendance Texts.
 - Postcards.
 - Praise Assemblies and
 - Prize draws.
72. Rewards trip attendance criteria:
- 94% Attendance (between August 2024-June 2025)
 - No isolations.
 - No Principal detentions.
 - No suspensions.

Appendix 1: Attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's Attendance Guidance

Table 1- Attendance Codes

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Student is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Student is present at afternoon registration
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Student is attending an approved place for education which is not a sporting activity or work experience.
D	Dual registered at another school	Student is attending another school
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Student is attending College or an unregistered alternative provision
L	Late arrival	Student attends after the register has been taken but before it is closed
P	Sporting activity	Student is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the Academy
V	Educational trip or visit	Student is on an educational visit/trip organized, or approved, by the Academy
W	Work experience	Student is on a work experience placement

Table 2- Authorised Absence Codes

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Exceptional circumstances ²	Student has been authorised leave for exceptional circumstances
C1	Leave for participating in a regulated performance or undertaking employment abroad	Student has been authorised to take part in a regulated performance or work abroad
C2	Part time timetable	Student is subject to a part time timetable
E	Excluded	Student has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Student has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	Academy has been notified that a student will be absent due to illness
J1	Interview for employment or admission to another educational institution	Student is attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational establishment
M	Medical/dental appointment	Student is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Student is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 student is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Student is a mobile child travelling in the course of their Parent's trade or business

² Exceptional Circumstances cannot include term time holidays

Table 3- Unauthorised Absence Codes

Unauthorised absence		
Code	Definition	Scenario
G	Unauthorised holiday	Student is on a holiday that was not approved by the Academy
N	Reason not yet established	Student is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)
U	Arrival after registration	Student arrived at Academy after the register closed

Table 4 - Other Attendance Codes

Code	Definition	Scenario
Q	Unable to attend School	Local Authority have failed to put in place access arrangements
X	Not required to be in school	Student at non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available.	Student is unable to attend because the school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport to and from the school that is normally provided for the Student by the school or local authority is not available

Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Student is unable to attend due to disruption to travel caused by an emergency
Y3	Partial school closure	Part of the premises are unavoidably out of use and the student cannot be accommodated
Y4	Whole school closure	Whole school closed unexpectedly
Y5	Criminal Justice detention	Student is in police detention, remanded or detained under a sentence
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Student's travel to school is contrary to guidance or legislation relating to an infection or disease
Y7	Unavoidable cause	Student (Not parent) has been affected by any other cause which has prevented them from attending school
Z	Student 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 day

Appendix 2 – Contacting the Academy to Report an Absence

Procedure

If your child is ill i.e., to the extent that they cannot get out of bed, then please notify the Academy attendance team **before 9am**. Please advise them the reason for absence and the expected date of return.

Where we have had no contact from a parent/carer the Academy will respond in the following manner:

- First day telephone contact/text will be implemented for all students after 9.30am.
- Further attempts at communication may also be made. On occasions throughout the week members of the attendance team and other school staff may visit any child who is absent from the Academy. If your child is well enough to attend lessons, then the member of staff may accompany them back to the Academy.

Telephone and E-mail Contacts to report an absence.

Academy	Telephone	E-mail
BBG	01274 871 225	
Brayton	01757 293243	attendanceTeam@braytonacademy.org.uk
Featherstone	01977 722 812	attendance@featherstone.academy
Rodillian	01924 874 762	attendance@rodillianacademy.co.uk
Southway	07944 185 540	attendance@southway.org.uk
UTC Leeds	0113 353 0140	