Haberdashers' West Midlands Academy Trust

Haberdashers' Abraham Darby

ATTENDANCE POLICY 2026-2027	
Named Responsibility of Policy	Ms Lorna McCurdy Assistant Vice Principal - Pastoral
Date of Policy	September 2026
Date of next Review	September 2027
Governor Accountability	Pupil and Staff Welfare Committee
This policy will be readily accessible to Parents, carers, staff, visitors, and the public via the Academy website.	

COMMITMENT TO REVIEW

This policy will be monitored and reviewed by the named or relevant policy owner as indicated. It will also be reviewed on an ad hoc basis if there are any changes to Department for Education and/or National Curriculum or other related guidance and/or regulations before the stated review date.

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1. The Policy - Aims

This policy outlines a framework and guidance for staff, pupils, families and all stakeholders in accordance with legislation for school attendance. The Academy's expectations for attendance are in line with the DfE statutory guidance, Working Together to Improve School Attendance July 2026. The policy operates in tandem with other school attendance regulations and guidance which will be listed in the appendix.

2. Our Philosophy

Haberdashers' Abraham Darby is committed to the continuous raising of achievement for all pupils and providing them with a full-time education. Regular school attendance is vital for pupils to allow them to achieve their potential and to benefit from the many extra-curricular activities available to them. We expect every pupil to attend the academy every day on time and be ready to learn.

Our Academy culture and ethos places importance on good attendance for all pupils. We will:

- Set high expectations for attendance and punctuality for all,
- Promote good attendance and the benefits of good attendance,
- Reduce absence, including persistent and severe absence,
- Ensure every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled,
- Implement early interventions to address patterns of absence,
- Build strong relationships with families to make sure pupils have the right support to help them overcome any barriers to school attendance. We recognise that parents/carers play a vital role in ensuring good attendance and punctuality, and so we strive to build strong home-school links to ensure we work together to produce the best outcomes
- If a problem arises which impacts a pupil's attendance, we work in partnership with all our stakeholders (families and external agencies) to resolve these problems as quickly and efficiently as possible.
- We will do everything possible to work with families to ensure that our pupils attend regularly and punctually. We will do this with the support of our pastoral, safeguarding, wellbeing and medical teams as necessary.

Parents/carers have an important part to play too. They are legally responsible for ensuring their child attends regularly and punctually. Parents should familiarise themselves with this policy and work with us to resolve any issues that may impact attendance.

The Academy's attendance ambition is for every pupil to achieve attendance of at least 95%, wherever their individual circumstances allow.

Excellent attendance is the responsibility of the entire school community. Attendance is more than just an academic consideration. Attendance systems are a safeguarding response and therefore a priority for the Academy.

This policy and our offer of support for pupils who are not achieving a good level of attendance should not be seen as a standalone offer. It is a strand that runs throughout our commitments to pupils.

We make no apology for having high expectations and expect full attendance and punctuality from all our pupils given that:

- Regular attendance is crucial for development of personal and social skills
- Regular attendance leads to greater academic success
- Pupils with poor attendance are often at greater risk of harm within the community.

3. Legal Framework

The Government expects schools to promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence, to ensure every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled and to act early to address patterns of absence. Parents are expected to perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age who are registered at school attend regularly and arrive to school on time".

- Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act states that parents must ensure that children of compulsory school age receive an efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability, and aptitude to any special educational needs they may have by regular attendance at school.
- Under the Education Act 1996, the Local Authority has a statutory responsibility to ensure that parents secure education for children of compulsory school age and where necessary, use legal enforcement.
- The School Attendance (Pupil registration) (England) Regulations 2024, require schools to take an attendance register twice a day, one at the start of the morning session and then again during the afternoon session. The register must record whether the student is:
  - Present
  - Absent
  - Present at approved educational activity
  - Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

Relevant legislation, which set out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of the Education Act 1996
- Part 3 of the Education Act 2002
- Part 7 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 and the 2024 amendment
- School census guidance
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools

4. Responsibilities of stakeholders

The Academy will:

- expect pupils to attend regularly and on time, properly equipped and ready to learn.
- encourage good attendance, communicating with parents/carers as soon as it is possible if there is a problem with attendance and/or punctuality.
- support pupils who are returning to the Academy after prolonged periods of absence.
- investigate absences and lateness.
- work in partnership with parents/carers to resolve punctuality and attendance concerns as quickly as possible.
- enforce the requirements to attend school punctually and reserve the right to not authorise the absence for persistent offenders, or where there is no reasonable explanation.
- liaise with Telford and Wrekin Council where a pupil is regularly missing education.
- monitor and review children who are on a Modified Timetable, having a clear plan for them to return to full-time education.
- reward pupils who attend school regularly and are punctual

The Governing Board is responsible for:

- Setting high expectations of all leaders, staff, pupils and families
- Making sure leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties, including:
    - Making sure the Academy records attendance accurately in the register, and shares the required information with the DfE and Local Authority
    - Making sure the Academy works effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and keeps them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Recognising and promoting the importance of attendance across the Academy's policies and ethos
- Making sure the Academy's processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent support is provided for pupils who need it most by prioritising staff and resources
- Ensuring the Academy has high aspirations for all pupils, but adapts processes and support to pupils' individual needs
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data and helping leaders focus improvement efforts on individual pupils or cohorts who need it most
- Working with leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and providing support and challenge
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole Academy and repeatedly evaluating the effectiveness of the processes and improvement efforts to make sure they are meeting pupils needs
- Where the Academy is struggling with attendance, working with leaders to develop a comprehensive action plan to improve attendance
- Making sure all staff receive adequate training on attendance as part of the regular continued professional development offer, so that staff understand:
    - The importance of good attendance
    - That absence is almost always a symptom of wider issues
    - The Academy's legal requirements for keeping registers
    - The Academy's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up on and improving attendance, including working with partners and keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Ensure dedicated training is provided to staff with a specific attendance responsibility in their role, including in interpreting and analysing attendance data
- Sharing effective practice on attendance management and improvement across the Trust
- Holding the Principal to account for the implementation of this policy

The committee responsible for attendance is the **Pupil and staff Welfare Committee** and there is a link Governor.

The Principal is responsible for:

- The implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Referring appropriate cases to Telford & Wrekin Council for consideration of a penalty notice, in accordance with the Local Authority Code of Conduct
- Working with the parents of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where pupils with SEND face in-school barriers
- Communicating with the Local Authority when a pupil with an education, health and care plan (EHCP) has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs
- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents/carers through all available channels

The Designated Senior Leader – Assistant Vice Principal – Pastoral is responsible for:

- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the Academy
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations, procedures and processes
- Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance
- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff
- Liaising with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed
- Building close and productive relationships with families to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is **Ms Lorna McCurdy** and can be contacted via email lorna.mccurdy@taw.org.uk

The Attendance (Education Welfare) Officer

Is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance, and the principal
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the Principal and Assistant Vice Principal when a referral to the Local Authority for consideration of a penalty notice may be appropriate

The Education Welfare Officer is **Mrs Isobel Williams** and can be contacted via phone or email on isobel.williams@taw.org.uk.

The Class teacher/Mentor is responsible for:

- recording attendance for both morning and afternoon sessions daily, using the correct codes (see Appendix). Registers must be completed and submitted with the first 10 minutes of a lesson

Attendance staff (Assistant Head of Year and other assigned staff) are responsible for:

- taking calls from parents/carers, and pupils about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- route calls from parents/carers to the relevant pastoral leads or other where appropriate, to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

Parents and carers will:

- ensure their child attends regularly and punctually, fulfilling their legal responsibility.
- Contact the absence line, email HADattendance@taw.org.uk or notify us via Class Charts on the first day and every subsequent day of absence, informing the school of the specific reasons for absence.
- work actively with Haberdashers' Abraham Darby staff and any relevant agencies to solve any attendance/punctuality concerns.
- notify the Principal in advance if they are intending to remove their child from the Academy for a period of absence. Please note, this is not a parental right, and such requests are only authorised in exceptional circumstances.
- treat all staff with respect.

Pupils will:

- attend school regularly and on time.
- attend all lessons
- speak to their mentor or appropriate adult if they are worried about their attendance

5. Registration Procedures

The Academy will set attendance and persistent absence targets at the start of the academic year in consultation with the Governing Body. We keep an electronic attendance register and place all pupils onto this register.

By law, schools are required to record in the attendance register, once at the beginning of the morning session and once in the afternoon whether the pupil is

- Present
- Absent
- Engaged in an approved, supervised educational activity offsite or
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

A.M. Registration

All students are expected to be **on site by 8:30am, (9:30am on a Thursday)**, when our mentor session and soft-start routine begin.
Although the **A.M. register officially opens at 9:00am (9:30am on a Thursday)**, any student arriving **after 8:30am (9:30am on a Thursday)** will be recorded as **'Late'**.

Students arriving after **9:30am** (10am on a Thursday) will be marked as absent for the morning session and coded as **'U'**.

Any student arriving after AM registration has closed 10 times in a 10 rolling week period will be at risk of a penalty notice for unauthorised absences,

P.M. Registration

P.M. registration takes place during **Period 4**. The register opens at **12:15pm** and closes at **12:45pm**.

School Day

The school day finishes at **3:10pm, (3:20pm on Thursdays)**, although pupils may stay on site for voluntary extra-curricular activities. The current offer is available on our website.

Any amendment to the attendance register should include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

No pupil (except for sixth form) can leave the academy premises during the school day without written permission from a parent/carer or the appropriate permission from a Senior Leader or the Academy Health Co-ordinator, who will contact parents/carers to seek consent.

Mentor starts at 8:30am every morning. The AM register for the first session will open at 9:00am and will be kept open until 9:30am or not longer than 30 minutes after the session begins, or first lesson in which registration takes place. The register for the second session will be taken at 12:15pm and will be kept open until 12:45pm. Registration should be carried out in the first 10 minutes of every lesson. Registration and accuracy of the registers are monitored by the Assistant Vice Principal – Attendance, and the attendance team.

- A pupil can only be marked present if they are present in the room at the time of registration.
- If a pupil is absent, an N code will be marked on the register.
- If a pupil arrives late but the register is still open, a late mark will be entered on the register and the number of minutes late recorded.
- If a pupil arrives at the Academy after the registers have closed or later, a U code will be used. This is an unauthorised absence and will be closely monitored by the Education Welfare Officer.
- Students who are considered persistently absent (under 90% attendance) may have their absences automatically unauthorised without medical evidence.

Attendance data from registers will be monitored daily, weekly and half termly or as required.

If no reason for absence has been provided the absence will be coded as unauthorised. Please note, not all notified absences will be authorised, even if we have been notified of them

The number of unauthorised absences can be seen on Class Charts.

We will also record:

- For pupils of compulsory school age whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity, where a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances, where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 6 years after the date on which the entry was made.

6. Registration Symbols

The following symbols are used on our registers in line with the Department of Education guidance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
Attending a place other than the school		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement

B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
Absent – leave of absence		
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
S	Study leave	Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
C2	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
C	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
Absent – other authorised reasons		
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a 'mobile child' who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
E	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause		
Q	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
Y1	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home

		and the transport normally provided is not available
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
Y3	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open
Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
Y5	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are: • In police detention • Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or • Detained under a sentence of detention
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
Y7	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
Absent – unauthorised absence		
G	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
Administrative codes		
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered
#	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays

7. Absence Reporting

First day absence and contact

On the first day and every subsequent day of absence, parents/carers must contact the Academy with the reasons for absence and likely duration of the absence. This must be done before 8:30am. Contacts are as below:

- Email HADattendance@taw.org.uk
- Call 01952 386000 and then select the option for attendance and select the correct year group for your child.
- You can also report absences on Class Charts

We will mark absence due to physical or mental illness as authorised, unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If a pupil is recorded as being absent and the Academy have not received a reason for absence from the parent/carer then first day absence procedures will be initiated. A text message will be sent to parents/carers of the absent pupil from 9.30am onwards. The Assistant Head of Year or nominated staff member will contact families by phone to investigate reasons for absence. The Safeguarding Team (DSL/DDSLs) will be alerted with any concerns.

If we have not received any communication about an absence for a child deemed to be vulnerable, a home visit will be completed on the first day of absence. In such cases, the relevant agency will be informed of the absence and the outcome of the visit.

Professional judgement will be used to determine whether a pupil is vulnerable, but this will typically include families working with a Social Worker, pupils who are at risk from exploitation, pupils who are being supported by the school and the school are concerned parent/carer has not updated on the reason for absence.

The Academy will strive to complete home visits by the 4th day of absence unless medical evidence has already been provided by the family.

If a pupil's attendance starts to be a concern, then a Concern Letter will be sent. Pupil attendance will continue to be monitored. The decision to escalate to a second concern letter will be made if the pupil's attendance has not improved. Parents/carers may be invited to meet with Academy staff. The aim of this meeting is to identify and reduce the barriers to full time attendance and parent/carer will also be made aware of the support that the academy can offer plus next steps should attendance not improve. Support may include a support plan or Early Help support if the absence has been long-term.

Following up on unexplained absences

Where a pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the Academy will:

- contact the pupil's parent/carer to ascertain the reason. If we cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, a home visit will be conducted. If we have concerns, the Local Authority will be contacted
- identify whether the absence is approved or not
- identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session(s) for which the pupil was absent
- contact the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation, to make sure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, then we will involve an Education Welfare Officer
- where relevant, report the unexplained absence to the appropriate agency
- where appropriate, offer support to the pupil and/or their parent to improve attendance
- identify whether the pupil needs support from wider partners, as quickly as possible, and make the necessary referrals
- where support is not appropriate, unsuccessful, or not engaged with, a notice to improve, penalty notice, or other legal intervention will be initiated.

Planned absences - attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised if the pupil's parent/carer notifies the Academy in advance of the appointment. There will be a requirement to submit evidence of the appointment. Parents/carer should request leave of absence by writing to or contacting the Head of Year or Assistant Head of Year.

We encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. These requests should be addressed to the Principal.

8. Illness

It is at the discretion of the Academy whether an absence for illness will be authorised. Each absence is assessed on a case-by-case basis to use the correct attendance code on the register. Parents and carers should provide sufficient information to explain an illness or appointment. The academy may request additional evidence where there is reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness, where absence is prolonged, repeated, or where further information is needed to identify appropriate support.

Code N may be used temporarily where the reason for absence has not yet been established. The Academy will make reasonable enquiries and replace code N with the appropriate attendance code as soon as possible and no later than 5 school days after the session. Where no satisfactory reason is established, code O will normally be used.

Parents/carers are respectfully reminded that evidence of dental and medical appointments is always required, although where possible we would ask that routine appointments are made outside of the school day so that pupils do not miss lessons.

Pupils who have medical/dental appointments during the school day must sign out with the attendance co-ordinator or relevant staff member in reception as they leave. They must also sign back in on their return.

There is a School Nurse who visits the Academy each week. Pupils can access this service on a drop-in basis. Pupils are encouraged to use this confidential service to discuss any medical needs they have.

9. Punctuality

The academy recognises the importance of arriving to school on time and the negative impact of persistent lateness. Pupils arriving late to the academy will be met by a member of staff who will sign them in and offer any necessary support. Registers close 30 minutes after the beginning of the school day and any pupil arriving after this time, will be marked as an unauthorised absence. Any student who arrives after 8:30am will be given a same day detention at break time

The Academy will work with parents/carers of persistently late pupils to help them to improve the punctuality of their child(ren). If punctuality continues to remain a concern, we will notify the Local Authority who may issue a Penalty Notice.

10. Leave of absence

Any leave of absence request must be made in writing to the Principal at least two weeks in advance. The Principal will review the application and parents/carers will be notified of their decision. **Only in exceptional circumstances will leave of absence be granted**.

Absences for the following reasons may be authorised by the Academy where parents/carers have confirmed or provided evidence for the absence:

- Religious observance.
- Family bereavement
- Interview.
- Sporting activities at regional or higher level.

- Performances linked to approved educational activities
- Taking part in a regulated performance, or regulated employment abroad
- Attending an interview
- Study leave
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable
- Parent(s) travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision
- If the pupil is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made)

Other reasons the school may allow a pupil to be absent from the school site, which are not classified as absences, include (but are not limited to):

- Attending an offsite approved educational activity, sporting activity or visit or trip arranged by the school
- Attending another school at which the pupil is also registered (dual registration)
- Attending provision arranged by the local authority
- Attending work experience
- If there is any other unavoidable cause for the pupil not to attend school, such as disruption to travel caused by an emergency, a lack of access arrangements, or because the school premises are closed

Generally, the DfE does not consider a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance.

Leave of absence should not be granted for a pupil to take part in protest activity during school hours - Working Together – Para 38.

In July 2026 the DfE reviewed and amended the 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance' statutory guidance. This guidance sits alongside the 'National Framework for Penalty Notices' which the Government introduced in August 2024 and 'The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024' and the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2024.

In Telford & Wrekin it is the delegated responsibility of the Attendance Support Team to issue Penalty Notices following referrals from schools, and only they can issue Penalty Notices relating to school absence.

It is only the Headteacher (or delegated member of School Staff) who has the discretion to authorise any request for leave in term time and it is also they that decide the duration of that leave. Parents must submit a request for leave in term time to the school, allowing ample time for consideration to be given. Any circumstances that parents wish to be considered should be included in the request. Holidays should not be booked before permission is granted. The legislation does not allow for any school to adopt a blanket ban, all requests for leave in term time will be considered to determine if there are exceptional circumstances and parents must be notified of that decision.

The government introduced changes in legislation from August 2024 that parents need to be aware of:

· If your child has 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 10-school week rolling period, you may be issued with a Penalty Notice. These 10 sessions may include any unauthorised absence, including leave in term time and sessions do not have to be consecutive.

· **If in an individual case the local authority believes a Penalty Notice would be appropriate, they retain the discretion to issue one before the threshold is met, so for eight sessions of unauthorised absence.** This might apply for example, when parent(s) are deliberately or purposefully avoiding the national threshold by taking several term time

holidays below threshold, or for repeated absence for events such as birthdays and taking their child out of school, or when there are only four pupil days in school and the fifth day is for example a PD day or bank holiday

· Penalty Notices increased to £160 from August 2024. This can be reduced to £80 but only for the first Penalty Notice issued, if paid within 21 days – this reduction does not apply to any subsequent Penalty Notice.

· Any 2nd Penalty Notice, to the same parent for the same child, issued within three years of the date of the first Penalty Notice will be charged at a flat rate of £160

· A third Penalty Notice will not be issued within a three-year rolling period, to the same parent for the unauthorised absence of the same child, - alternative action or legal measures will be utilised for subsequent offences.

· Penalty notices are intended to prevent the need for court action and should only be used where it is deemed likely to change parental behaviour and support to secure regular attendance has been provided and has not worked or been engaged with, or would not have been appropriate in the circumstances of the offence (e.g. as is usually the case for an unauthorised holiday in term time).

· In some circumstances a 'Notice to Improve' may be issued – However, a Notice to Improve will only be used in cases where support is appropriate. They will not be issued in cases of unauthorised leave in term time for holidays, where information for parents is included in schools' attendance policy and on school's website, or a warning by the school that a Penalty Notice could be issued if unauthorised leave in term time is taken will suffice.

'Parents should always apply to the Headteacher for any request for leave in term time by completing a request form available from the school. (DfE guidance states schools should not authorise leave retrospectively so any leave in term time taken without a request being submitted will be unauthorised absence)'.

In developing and publishing the National Framework, the Government renewed appeals to parents not to take their children out of school during term time. The Governors and Headteacher of this school support this initiative. The legislation does not allow for blanket bans, therefore all requests for leave in term time will be considered. However, in line with the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2024, The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, DfE guidance 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance - July 2026, National Framework for Penalty Notices 2024 and local Code of Conduct, students will only be given permission to take leave in term time if there are exceptional circumstances. The DfE Guidance- Working Together to Improve School Attendance (amended July 2026) states that: Generally, the DfE does not consider the need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance. (Paragraph 37.)

Each application for leave in term time will be considered and if it is agreed and authorised the Headteacher will determine the duration of any leave. However, if the application is not agreed and the absence occurs the dates will be unauthorised. Parents will be notified of any decision in writing. This notification may be hand delivered directly to the parent, emailed to the registered email address of the parent held on school records or posted to the parents' home address.

As a school we are asked to inform you that in line with Telford and Wrekin Council Policy, if your child is absent for 10 school sessions within a 10 week rolling period and that absence is unauthorised, you may be subject to a Penalty Notice fine, criteria is as detailed above.

Please follow the links below for more detailed information: Working together to improve school attendance: July 2026 The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2024 https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/back-into-school/resources-for-families/

11. Truancy

Truancy is a safeguarding concern and so our Attendance Co-ordinator will liaise with the Academy safeguarding team to address this. Parents/carers will be alerted as a matter of urgency (as will any agency supporting the pupil). It may be deemed necessary to report the pupil as missing to the police. It is the responsibility of the parent/carer to ensure all contact details including emergency contacts are kept updated.

12. Condoned absence

Parents may on occasion keep their child away from the academy for what they perceive as a legitimate reason as they may feel they are protecting their child. This form of absence is as damaging as any other absence and will be addressed by the Education Welfare Officer. When Academy staff recognise a pattern of non-school attendance, they work closely with internal and external support to return the pupil to fulltime education as quickly as possible.

13. Attendance monitoring

The Senior Leadership Team recognise that effective use of data will support the improvement of attendance. The Academy attendance team monitors pupil attendance and contact parents/carers if attendance is causing concern. Contact may be via text, phone call, school meeting or home visit.

The Education Welfare Officer monitors attendance closely. If attendance is of concern, then school staff will meet with parents/carers to discuss plans to help remove any existing barriers. A plan will be agreed to include all partners to resolve any attendance concerns. If non-attendance continues, the Education Welfare Officer will liaise with the Local Authority who may consider legal interventions.

The Education Welfare Officer will also follow Local Authority guidance and procedures for pupils missing education:

> "*Failure to ensure a child's regular attendance at the school at which he/she is a registered pupil is a criminal offence under the Education Act 1996. If convicted under Section 444 (1)*
> *of the Act a parent can be fined up to £1000 for each offence. A conviction under Section 444 (1a) – which is the more serious offence when a parent knowingly allows a child to be absent from school without authorisation – can lead to a fine of up to £2,500 and/or 3 months in prison. If a parent is prosecuted under Section 444 (1a) he/she will be formally cautioned and interviewed under the Police and Criminal Evidence (PACE) Act 1984*."

Pupils and their parents/carers are kept informed of their attendance via the Class Charts App. The Academy will inform parents/carers of any concerns via Class Charts, letter, email or phone contact.

14. Consequences for absence – sanctions

The Academy is committed to and will ensure that support available for any pupil/family struggling to meet attendance expectations. However, there are range of potential sanctions including, but not limited to, those listed below – to tackle poor attendance. Decisions will be made on an individual, case-by-case basis.

15. Penalty notices

Telford & Wrekin Council, through its delegated Attendance Support Team, is responsible for issuing penalty notices for the unauthorised absence of children of compulsory school age from school. The Academy may refer appropriate cases to the Local Authority for consideration in accordance with the Telford & Wrekin Code of Conduct.
Before referring a case to the Local Authority for consideration of a penalty notice, the Academy will consider the individual circumstances, including:

- whether the national threshold for considering a penalty notice has been met (**10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks**)

- whether a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve attendance for that pupil
- whether further support, a notice to improve or another legal intervention would be a more appropriate solution
- whether any obligations that the school has under the Equality Act 2010 make issuing a penalty notice inappropriate

Each parent who is liable for the pupil's offence(s) may be issued with a penalty notice by the Local Authority, but this will usually only be the parent/parents who allowed the absence. Payment must be made directly to the Local Authority. If payment has not been made within 28 days, the Local Authority may pursue prosecution for the original offence. A penalty notice will only be withdrawn where the strict withdrawal criteria set out in the Telford & Wrekin Code of Conduct are met. If issued with a first penalty notice, the parent must pay £80 within 21 days, or £160 within 28 days. If a second penalty notice is issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil, the parent must pay £160 within 28 days.

16. The Local Authority may also issue an exclusion penalty notice where a parent/carer allows their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification during the first 5 days of a suspension or exclusion (where the Academy has notified the parent/carer that the pupil must not be present in a public place on that day). These penalty notices are separate from attendance penalty notices, are not included in the National Framework, are not subject to the same considerations about support being provided, and do not count towards the limit as part of the attendance penalty notice escalation process. In these cases, the parent must pay £60 within 21 days, or £120 within 28 days.

A penalty notice may also be issued where a parent/carer allows their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification, during the first 5 days of a suspension or exclusion (where the Academy has notified the parent/carer that the pupil must not be present in a public place on that day). These penalty notices are not included in the National Framework, not subject to the same considerations about support being provided, and do not count towards the limit as part of the escalation process. In these cases, the parent must pay £60 within 21 days, or £120.

If in an individual case the local authority believes a Penalty Notice would be appropriate, they retain the discretion to issue one before the threshold is met. This might apply for example, when parent(s) are deliberately or purposefully avoiding the national threshold by taking several term time holidays below threshold, or for repeated absence for events such as birthdays and taking their child out of school, or when there are only four pupil days in school and the fifth day is for example a PD day or bank holiday.

17. Notices to improve

If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate, but parents/carers do not engage with offers of support, the Academy may offer a notice to improve to give them a final chance to engage with support.

Notices to improve will be issued in line with processes set out in the local code of conduct for the Local Authority.

They will include:

- Details of the pupil's attendance record and of the offences
- The benefits of regular attendance and the duty of parents under section 7 of the Education Act 1996
- Details of the support provided so far

- Opportunities for further support, or to access previously provided support that was not engaged with
- A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued if attendance doesn't improve within the improvement period, along with details of what sufficient improvement looks like, which will be decided on a case-by-case basis
- A clear timeframe of between 3 and 6 weeks for the improvement period
- The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period

18. Target for good attendance

The Government's target is that every pupil will have a minimum attendance rate of **95%.** To achieve this, a pupil must have no more than **9.5 days of absence in a year.**

The Education Act 1996 states that all pupils should attend school regularly and punctually. 'If a child of compulsory school age, who is a registered pupil at a school fails to attend regularly, their parent is guilty of an offence.'

Some key attendance facts:

- Attending 90% of the time or less will have a serious effect on learning.
- One day's absence every two weeks will give 90% attendance.
- Up to the age of 16, 90% attendance will mean losing over a year of school

How does a child's absence translate to days and hours missed?

For each day missed, a child will miss out on 5 lessons and a mentor/pastoral session equating to a total of 6 sessions. They will also miss out on other activities and social interactions with their peers.

Attendance	Days lost	Sessions Missed	Descriptor
100%	0	0	Perfect
99%	2	4	Excellent
98%	4	8	Very Good
96%	7.5	15	Good
95%	10	19	Satisfactory
92%	15	30	Cause for concern
91%	17	38	
90%	19	38	Persistent absence
89%	21	42	Unsatisfactory
88%	23	46	
85%	28	56	Significant concern

Our commitment to improving attendance

The strategic attendance team comprising of Assistant Vice Principal – Pastoral, Education Welfare Officer and year teams will complete regular analysis of attendance to identify patterns and trends, and will evaluate success on the criteria below:

- Attendance has improved
- Persistent absence has reduced
- Punctuality has improved
- Parental response has improved
- Re-integration plans have raised the attendance of a pupil
- The academy has been successful in promoting good attendance
- Attendance is included in the curriculum and daily school activities such as assemblies and Insight
- An increase in the number of families referred to outside agencies to support the improvement of attendance

- The Education Welfare Officer will liaise with the Principal and Assistant Vice Principal for attendance to report attendance data, which will also be discussed fortnightly at senior leadership meetings

19. Strategies for promoting attendance

The Academy uses several strategies to improve attendance and reduce absence. This includes supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school due to complex barriers, mental/physical/ill health or SEND, and pupils returning to school after a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence. Though not exhaustive, this includes:

  - Having a whole school approach - all staff
  - Year teams
  - Mentors
  - Class teacher
  - Behaviour, First aid, Pastoral Support Officers
  - Family Liaison Officers/ Designated Safeguarding Leads
  - Attendance team – Coordinator, EWO
- An effective rewards and recognition system
- Strategic use of data – analysis and trend identification
- Absence reduction strategy
- Daily visits and calls
- Daily absence monitoring reports to all staff
- Effective use of Modified Timetables to support pupils who may need staggered days
- On site THRIVE and ADAPT provision
- Parental/family engagement – phone calls, meetings, early help
- Working with external agencies and partners
- Legal proceedings (as a last resort) and only when necessary

20. Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school. Reducing persistent and severe absence is central to the school's strategy for improving attendance.

The Academy will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Consider potential safeguarding issues and, where suspected or present, address them in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026
- Hold regular meetings with the parents/carers of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable or at risk of persistent or severe absence, or who are persistently or severely absent, to:
- Discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Listen, and understand barriers to attendance
- Explain the help that is available
- Explain the potential consequences of, and sanctions for, persistent and severe absence
- Review any existing actions or interventions
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance, in conjunction with the local authority, where relevant
- Consider alternative support that could be put in place to remove any barriers to attendance and re-engage these pupils. In doing so, the school will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence
- Implement sanctions, where necessary

21. Modified timetables

All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have.

In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in the pupil's best interests, the Academy may agree a temporary modified or part-time timetable to meet the pupil's individual needs. A modified timetable must not be used as a behaviour-management measure, as an alternative to suspension or exclusion, or as a long-term solution to poor attendance.

Any modified timetable will:

- be agreed in advance by the Academy and the parent or carer with whom the pupil normally lives;
- specify the days and sessions during which the pupil is expected to attend;
- have a clear purpose and form part of a wider support, healthcare or reintegration plan;
- include the views of the pupil, where appropriate;
- have an agreed start date, regular review dates and a proposed end date;
- remain in place for the shortest period necessary;
- set out how the pupil's education will be provided and how they will return to full-time education; and
- be reviewed regularly with the pupil, their parents or carers and any relevant professionals.

Where the pupil has a social worker, they will be informed and involved in the planning and review process. Where the pupil has an Education, Health and Care Plan, the Academy will discuss the proposed timetable with the Local Authority so that the pupil's needs and existing support arrangements can be reviewed.

The Academy will notify the Local Authority of modified timetables in accordance with locally agreed procedures. For pupils of compulsory school age, sessions that the pupil is not required to attend under an agreed modified timetable will normally be recorded using code C2. Where the pupil is expected to attend but does not do so, the appropriate attendance or absence code will be used and the absence will be followed up in the usual way.

22. Children Missing Education

A child missing education is a child of compulsory school age who is not registered at a school and is not receiving suitable education otherwise. A pupil who remains registered at the Academy but is persistently or severely absent is not formally a child missing education, although their absence may place them at risk of becoming missing from education and may require an urgent safeguarding response.

The Academy will monitor attendance and admission information carefully and take prompt action where a pupil's whereabouts or education arrangements are unclear. Where a pupil is unexpectedly or unexplainedly absent, the Academy will immediately make reasonable enquiries to establish their whereabouts and confirm that they are safe. These enquiries may include contacting parents, carers and emergency contacts, consulting staff and relevant agencies, completing a risk-assessed home visit and checking available education records.

Where there is any concern that a pupil may be at risk of harm, neglect or exploitation, the Academy will follow its safeguarding and child-protection procedures without delay. This may include making a referral to children's social care and contacting the police where appropriate.

Where enquiries indicate that a pupil may no longer be attending the Academy and the parent or carer has not provided written confirmation that the pupil will attend another school or receive education otherwise, the Academy will make a referral to the pupil's home Local Authority Children Missing Education team as soon as possible.

The Academy will continue to work jointly with the Local Authority and undertake reasonable enquiries after a referral has been made. Relevant information will be shared securely with

the Local Authority, other schools and agencies where this is necessary to locate the pupil, establish their circumstances and ensure that they receive suitable education.

Accurate records will be maintained of all enquiries, contact attempts, home visits, referrals, information received and decisions made. A pupil's name will not be removed from the admission register unless one of the statutory grounds for deletion has been fully met. Where joint reasonable enquiries are required, removal will not take place until those enquiries have been completed by the Academy and Local Authority.

22. Safeguarding

Haberdashers' Abraham Darby is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all its pupils. Every pupil's welfare is of paramount importance, but we recognise that some pupils may be especially vulnerable. Your child may be at risk if they do not attend school. Safeguarding the interests of our pupils is everyone's responsibility, but within the context of the Academy, promoting the welfare and life opportunities for your child encompasses attendance, behaviour management, health and safety and access to a broad curriculum. The Academy recognises that poor attendance may need a safeguarding response and so our Education Welfare Officer is also Senior Deputy Safeguarding Lead.

23. Missing from education

The Academy refer all pupils who are not receiving an education or are out of school to the Local Authority within 10 school days. The Local Authority discuss these pupils at their Ensuring Access to Education For All meetings.

24. Removing a child from roll

The Academy adopts the Local Authority's policies for removing a child from the school roll. The Academy will issue an AD1 within 5 working days of a child being removed from roll. When a parent/carer alerts the Academy that they are moving out of area and gives a new address, we will contact the new school/Local Authority. If confirmed, the child can be removed from school roll. If we are unable to locate the child or they have not enrolled at a new school, a Child Missing Education referral will be made to Telford and Wrekin.

When a Telford and Wrekin school is the parent/carer school of choice, the parents will liaise directly with Telford and Wrekin Council and once admission is confirmed an AD1 will be completed. When a parent has contacted the Academy wishing for their child's name to be removed from the school roll as they intend to take responsibility for their education, our Education Welfare Officer will invite the family to meet with a representative from Access and Inclusion, and school staff. The Local Authority Elective Home Education policy will be implemented.

If a child has been continuously absent for 20 school days and the school has made all necessary enquiries to find the child but has failed, removal from school roll will only be undertaken when authorised by the Principal after all enquiries have taken place. This information will be submitted via AD1, and the Academy will have also completed a Child Missing Education form. Schools may be contacted by the Local Authority Tracking Officer whilst further investigations are made. The Academy will liaise with the Local Authority for all such cases.

It is illegal for the academy to remove a pupil from roll for poor behaviour or attendance.

25. Pupils with Medical Needs

Some pupils face greater barriers to attendance. These may include (but not exhaustive) pupils with long-term medical needs and/or Special Educational Needs. These pupils have the same rights to an education as all our pupils and therefore the attendance ambition is the same as it is for all other pupils. That said, Academy staff will be mindful of the barriers these pupils face and make reasonable adjustments or provide additional support to help them access fulltime education where necessary.

26. Links with other policies

This policy links to other Academy and Trust policies including:

- Safeguarding & Child protection policy
- Behaviour policy
- Teaching & Learning Policy

Appendix A: Parent/Carer Information & Procedures

Haberdashers Abraham Darby "Our school day"

Our school day starts promptly at 08.30am on a Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday. On Thursdays the day starts at 9:30am. Mentors go straight to their mentor rooms where their uniform and equipment is checked.

Mentors welcome pupils to the Academy, check their uniform and equipment and make sure they are ready for the day.

- If a pupil arrives after this time will be marked as 'L' on the register.
- Pupils who arrive after 9.00am will be marked as U i.e., '*Late after the register has closed*'. This will impact their attendance.
- School officially finishes at 3:10pm but pupils may stay on for extra-curricular activities. Check our website to see what's on offer.

Illness or medical appointments, Let us know.

- If your child is going to be absent for school, please contact the academy no later than 08.30 am.
- If you know in advance of the absence please contact the attendance team and let us have a copy of the appointment.
- **A call or email is required for every day of absence, so we know your child is safe.**

We understand it is not always possible but if you can, please arrange appointments outside of school hours. Several of our local GP surgeries now have weekend appointments.

If we don't hear from you, we will send a message and follow up with a phone call where possible. If we can't contact you, we may complete a home visit.

If your child is absent and we can't contact you, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

If you are worried about your child's attendance, please do not hesitate to contact school staff. We are here to help.

Our aim is that all children attend school, every day and on time. We will refer to the Local Authority only when we have exhausted all other opportunities to address absence and improve attendance.

Appendix B: Staff Procedures

Teacher and Mentor Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the teachers/mentors to register the pupils, and it is the responsibility of the Attendance Co-ordinator to administer the registration process. The Academy has a statutory responsibility to maintain accurate records of attendance and the Academy should know where every pupil is at any given time. At the start of each lesson registration, teachers/mentors should ensure that, if they see a pupil, they mark them present, if they do not see the pupil in their classroom, they mark them absent.

Teachers who oversee a school trip should take a manual register and return it to the Attendance desk BEFORE departure. If the trip departs before the Attendance desk is manned, the completed register should be emailed to the attendance co-ordinator.

Class/subject teachers will…

- ensure attendance in every lesson is registered accurately in SIMS (or, when necessary, by using the paper registers issued by the Attendance Coordinator) within the first 10 minutes.
- notify the Attendance team and Data Manager immediately if there are any inaccuracies or discrepancies in the class list displayed in SIMS.
- ensure that pupils arriving late, particularly but not exclusively during Lesson 1, have signed in at Reception.
- check the register status of any pupils who appear to be missing (e.g. they were present for the previous lesson), whilst registering classes during periods 2, 3, 4, 5 or Mentor/PRIME time.
- The names of any pupils appearing in your lesson who do not have a register mark for the previous lesson should be sent to the Attendance team

Mentors …

- must register their group using SIMS (or, when necessary, by using the paper registers issued by the Attendance Coordinator)
- must pass on to the Assistant Head of Year immediately any prior information about pupil absences (this is very important because the Assistant Head of Year will try to contact the parents to find out why a pupil is absent).
- must regularly emphasise the importance of good attendance to pupils, reminding them of the link between attendance and achievement.

Year Teams will…

- encourage good attendance and emphasise the link between attendance and achievement.
- praise and reward pupils with good attendance.
- attend, as appropriate, meetings with parents/carers for pupils with poor attendance
- engage in other strategies to improve attendance
- liaise with the EWO to plan action for persistent absentees
- liaise with Health Co-ordinator of pupils who have diagnosed medical conditions and where appropriate arrange additional support.

Daily Procedures

- Registers are taken electronically during the first 10 minutes (using SIMS or paper registers as applicable) by class/subject teachers in timetabled lessons; AM registration between 9:00-9:30am (9:30-10am on Thursdays) and Lesson 4 for PM are the official roll calls.
- Parents/carers must phone or email the Academy **before 8.30am** to report any absence of their child. No child can report their own or sibling's absence.
- The attendance team will run the morning roll call report to identify absent pupils.
- All pupils arriving late must report to the side gate and enter the school through the late door. Here they will be met with a member of the senior leadership team who will discuss their punctuality with them.
- Any student arriving after 8:30am will receive a same day break time detention unless they are able to provide a valid reason (such a medical appointment)
- Registers close at 9.30am. Pupils arriving after this time will be recorded as U (unauthorised absence for that session), unless there are special or medical circumstances. They will also receive a same-day break detention.
- Persistent lateness will result in contact with parents/carers and further support or escalation.
- After 9.15am and as soon as is possible, a member of the attendance team will send a text message to parents/carers of absent pupils who have not given notification of absence.
- Dedicated attendance and pastoral staff will follow up on any parents/carers where no prior reason is given for their child's absence.
- Messages not responded to, will be followed up by the attendance team.
- Pupils are not allowed to leave the premises at lunchtime so any unexplained differences between AM and PM roll calls will be followed up immediately by the attendance team.
- A register report for pupils on our Academy vulnerable list, will be produced daily by 9.20am (10:20 on Thursdays) and shared with the safeguarding team. Follow-up calls and visits will be carried out as appropriate and applicable on the day of absence.

Monitoring Procedures

- Academy attendance will be tracked by the attendance leads
- Daily checks will be carried out by the Attendance team and absences rigorously investigated.
- Persistent and severe absences (<90%) will be monitored closely.
- Weekly attendance reports will be provided for mentors and year leaders
- Weekly attendance summaries will be provided to the senior leadership team as required
- Periodic reports will be produced for Governors