



Labor Omnia Vincit

Attendance Policy

Our Ambition: To be the highest performing MAT in the country

Our Mission: To improve the communities we serve for the better



Vision:

***Challenging educational orthodoxies so that every child makes good progress in core subjects;
all teachers are committed to personal improvement and fulfil their responsibilities;
all children receive a broad and balanced curriculum;
all academies strive to be outstanding.***

Updated September 2022

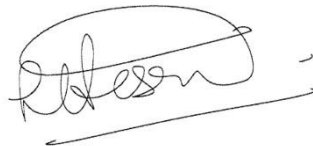
This policy has been written and agreed by Attendance Officers in The Forge Trust in conjunction with the CEO, who is also the trust's Attendance Manager.

Review Date: September 2023

Signed Chair of Trustees:

(Sue Trentini)

Signed Chief Executive Officer:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L Hessey', with a horizontal line drawn underneath it.

(Lee Hessey)

Attendance average in Nottinghamshire in 2021: 96.7%

Persistent absenteeism in Nottinghamshire in 2021: 7.6%

Attendance National Average in 2021: 96.4%

Persistent absenteeism Nationally in 2021: 8.8 % (90% or below)

Attendance Target for all Forge Trust schools for 2022: 97%

Attendance Officers

The Forge Trust-Lee Hessey (CEO)

The Sir Donald Bailey Academy-Debbie Hawley

The Parkgate Academy- Elaine Levers

The West Park Academy- Kelly Bannister

The Python Hill Academy-Joe Hessey

The Marton Academy-Marie Castelluccio

The St Augustines Academy- Kate Slatter

The Forest View Academy-Sarah Davison & Karen Johnson

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Aims

Across The FORGE Trust, we aim to maintain a caring, supportive and disciplined learning environment where children benefit from the best possible education. All staff are committed to this aim.

Racial Equality & Equal Opportunities

All children have equal access and inclusive rights to the curriculum regardless of their age, gender, race, religion, belief, disability or ability. We plan work that is differentiated for the performance of all groups and individuals. The FORGE Trust is committed to creating a positive climate that will enable everyone to work free from intimidation and harassment and to achieve their full potential. Policies are available on each of these that expand on this further.

All staff have equal access and inclusive rights to their work regardless of their age, gender, sexual orientation, race, religion, belief, disability or ability. The FORGE Trust is committed to creating a positive climate that will enable everyone to work free from intimidation and harassment and to achieve their full potential. Policies are available on each of these that expand on this further.

Trust Expectations

The FORGE Trust believes regular attendance is vital when it comes to children reaching their full academic potential; therefore we encourage all of our parents/carers to support us in giving your child every opportunity to achieve their best. At The FORGE Trust we expect each child to achieve 97% or above attendance during the academic year.

See Appendix E for table showing trust schools' attendance rates and trust attendance rate.

Legal Requirements

Parents have a duty to ensure that their children receive full time education. The Education Act 2002 places the responsibility for enforcing school attendance on the Local Authority. Legal action will be instigated against parents/carers in relevant circumstances using the wide range of available options including:

- penalty notices and prosecution;
- school attendance orders;
- section 444(1) and (1) (a) of the Education Act 2002.

Children should be at every academy across the trust on time every day the academy is open, unless the reason for absence is unavoidable. Permitting absence from school without a good reason is an offence by the parent and will be marked as unauthorised absence without any further notification.

Any absences should be reported to the academy before 8.40am on the first day of absence, and if possible the predicted date of return given.

Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the academy, the parents and the child. If a child is reluctant to attend we encourage parents and carers to talk openly with the academy so that this can be looked into and solutions put in place.

Academies and schools have a duty in law to refer any absence of 10 days or more (law) where they have been unable to make contact with the parent/child to the CME (Children Missing in Education) or have general concerns about the absence, to the relevant local authority department. **In our trust, we investigate absence on the first day. We use the following methods: Class Dojo, a home visit, contact other contacts of the child, telephone call parents, text message parents and contact secondary schools.**

Academies and schools are required to take an attendance register twice a day, and this shows whether the pupil is present, engaged in an approved educational activity off-site, or absent. If a pupil of compulsory school age is absent, every half-day absence has to be classified by the academy, as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. Only the academy can authorise the absence, not parents. This is why information about the cause of each absence is always required.

Unauthorised Absence

Unauthorised absences are those that the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given.

This includes:

- parents keeping children off school unnecessarily;
- truancy before or during the school day;
- absences which have never been properly explained;
- children who arrive at school too late to get a mark after registers close;
- absences which cannot be authorised (as medical proof) are requested but not provided;
- holidays;
- this includes where parents have received a warning letter and have been informed that they must provide medical evidence and they have failed to do this.

Examples of Unauthorised Absence

Academies will not authorise absences for shopping, looking after other children, haircuts, birthdays, visiting relatives, getting up late, having no clean uniform/shoes etc. Leave may be granted in an emergency (e.g. bereavement of a family member).

Please ensure all medical appointments are taken out of academy time wherever possible, or at the very least the beginning or end of the day. The academy will request medical evidence if absences become a concern.

Persistent Lateness

Please ensure your child is at the academy just before the beginning of each academy day. You will be able to find start and end times on the academy website. All children who arrive after the registers have been closed at 9.05am must report to Reception. Lateness will be recorded in the registers as follows:

- 8.40am -9am - "L" Code (times vary in each school)
- 30 minutes after school starts - "U" Code (times vary in each school)

A penalty notice may only be issued where a pupil is persistently late for 10 separate instances over a period of six school weeks and where these are signified as a "U" in the attendance register. The issuing of Penalty notices will be only in cases where the persistent lateness is marked as an unauthorised absence ("U" Code). **This has to be preceded with a penalty warning letter.**

Children who arrive late but before registers close get an 'L' code. If children get three 'L' codes per week a warning letter is sent out. If punctuality does not improve, a meeting is arranged and issues or barriers to good attendance are explored.

Persistent Absenteeism

When a child's attendance falls below 90% they can be categorised as 'persistent absentees'. Attendance needs to be monitored between September and October half-term before this classification can be given.

Recording Absence in Foundation Stage 1 (F1)

Recording absence in F1 is non statutory. However, in our schools we do record attendance in F1. When attendance statistics are collated and analysed F1 should not be included in the overall percentages.

Trust Network Meetings

All Attendance Officers meet in the Spring Term and Summer Term to discuss, reflect and improve the policy and reflect on attendance data. The aim of these meetings is to be proactive and ensure attendance rates are high across the trust.

Absence Safeguarding Guidance

Children who are subject to a Child Protection Plan are by definition vulnerable. In line with our Safeguarding Policy, we will always contact the allocated social worker promptly on the morning the child is absent.

Children are more vulnerable who:

- are on a plan (child protection plan, child in need plan, looked after child, early help);
- have specialist educational needs and or a disability;
- have an education health care plan;
- there are indications that the child is at risk of CSE, grooming, radicalisation etc.

Escalation Procedural Chart

STAGE 1-Attendance Procedure

For the first four weeks of term, attendance patterns will be closely monitored. PA (Persistently Absent) children from last academic year will be particularly focused on. If whole school attendance is below 95% send Stage 1 Letter out to all parents and carers.

Appendix B -Expectations letter to school community

Principal Meets with Attendance Officer every 3 weeks and monitors attendance.



STAGE 2-Concerning Attendance

Send a letter to parents of children who have concerning attendance (below 95%). Note: consider each individual extenuating circumstances. For example, a child has had chicken pox.

Appendix -Named letter to parents of a child who has 'concerning attendance'. **See 2022-2023 Academic Year 'concerning attendance' flowchart.**



STAGE 3-Attendance Meeting

Letter inviting parents of a named child to an attendance meeting when Attendance Officer informs Principal of continued poor attendance and engagement (Attendance Officers will have a list of names of children whose attendance is 90% or below).

Appendix B -Letter inviting parents to an attendance meeting

NB: meeting outcomes for pupils not of statutory school age only include options B and C



Outcomes of the meeting could be:

A

Issue a warning for a fixed penalty notice (a penalty warning letter) parents enter a rolling monitoring period of 6 weeks. If at any time absences are 3.5 days or over in any 6 week rolling period (throughout the academic year and beyond) this can be referred to the Local Authority for a penalty notice.

B

Referral to external support and/or completion of EHAF (Early Help Assessment Form)

C

A school action is agreed between leadership and parent.

Note: A fixed penalty warning can be issued at the same time as steps B and C.



STAGE 4a-Penalty Notice Letter

When unauthorised absences are 15% or above and school support has been given, an attendance enforcement needs to be completed and a case manager from the local authority will be allocated.

Appendix B-Penalty Notice Letter

STAGE 4b-EHAF (Early Help Assessment Form)

When unauthorised absences are 15% or above and school support has been given, an attendance enforcement needs to be completed and a case manager from the local authority will be allocated.



STAGE 5 -Penalty Notice Letter

When unauthorised absences are 15% or above and school support has been given, an attendance enforcement needs to be completed and a case manager from the local authority will be allocated.

Appendix B -Penalty Notice Letter

Holidays

In the **most** exceptional circumstances and after the consideration of a detailed written request, the Principal (in collaboration with the Trust) has the final decision whether to authorise any leave of absence – if parents/carers still take their child out of the academy during term time when permission is not granted, Legal Proceedings may be taken by the Local Authority. This is in the form of Fixed Penalty Notices (fines) or legal action through a Magistrates Court.

INSET Week

The FORGE Trust does appreciate the value of taking family holidays and also understands that many families wish to avoid inflated holiday costs during the traditional school holiday period. Therefore each academy within the trust will **not** have INSET days at various times during the year. Instead they will block their INSET days to create one week for families to book a holiday at a much more competitive price. Each academy will let you know their respective INSET week at the beginning of the academic year so that you have plenty of time to book a holiday.

Support and Incentives

All academies within the trust celebrate good attendance in the form of incentives and rewards on an individual, class and whole school basis. This information will be available on the academies website. 100% attendance is celebrated in every academy within the trust on a termly and annual basis.


Attendance Data

Attendance Officers post the data proforma each Monday on Teams in their own school folder for the previous week and year to date (see Appendix C-Data proforma to show weekly attendance)).

Appendix A-Good Attendance Posters

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW (add school logo) 'Don't be a Persistent Absentee'		
Above 95%	Children with this attendance have the best possible chance of achieving their full potential	We expect our children to maintain attendance at a minimum of 95% for all years of their education
90-95%	Children need to improve their attendance. 90% attendance equals 20 days of absence over the year.	<p>Meetings with teachers and attendance officers will take place and the policy will be followed systematically.</p> <p>Absence patterns will be looked into-same days off, a day off every 2 weeks, absences after behaviour incidents have been logged for example.</p> <p>Stage 2 letter to be issued and attendance monitored and at this stage if there is no sustained improvement then a fine will be applied.</p>
Under 90%	Your child is in danger of having a serious attendance problem which may affect their education and is classed as a persistent absentee (PA) : a referral to external agencies, including social services, may be made.	<p>90% attendance in a year = 4 WEEKS of school missed.</p> <p>90% attendance = HALF A YEAR of school missed over 5 years.</p>
Below 85%	Attendance under 85% is classed as a serious problem. Family Services become involved and a fine issued.	<p>85% attendance = THREE QUARTERS OF A YEAR missed over 5 years.</p> <p>80% attendance = A WHOLE YEAR OF SCHOOL MISSED over 5 years.</p>

EVERY SCHOOL DAY COUNTS 2022-2023

365 DAYS IN EACH YEAR	179 NON SCHOOL DAYS		 179 days to spend on family time, days out, holidays, shopping, haircuts, the dentist and other appointments.			
	186 SCHOOL DAYS IN EACH YEAR	10 days' absence	19 days' Absence	27 days' absence	37 days' absence	47 days' absence
	186 days of education	176 days of education	167 days of education	159 days of education	149 days of education	139 days of education
	100%	95%	90%	85%	80%	75%
	Good Best chances of success. Gets your child off to a flying start		Worrying Less chance of success. Makes it harder for your child to make progress		Serious Concern Not fair on your child. Makes it too hard to catch up on learning	

DAYS OFF SCHOOL ADD UP TO LOST LEARNING

Note: The above chart reflects The Forge Trust's Holiday Calendar for academic year 2022-2023

Appendix B-Letters

- Stage 1: concerning attendance at school level;
- Stage 2: concerning attendance for individual children;
Named letter to parents of a child who has 'concerning attendance'
(follow Stage 2 flow chart to determine what 'concerning' is each half term)
- Stage 3: invite to attendance meeting for parents/carers;
Letter inviting parents of a named child to an attendance meeting when Attendance Officer informs Principal of continued poor attendance and Engagement (Attendance Officers will have a list of names!)
Outcomes of the meeting could be:
 - A) *Issue a warning for a fixed penalty notice (a penalty warning letter) parents enter a rolling monitoring period of 6 weeks. If at any time absences are 3.5 days or over in any 6 week rolling period this can be referred to the Local Authority for a penalty notice.*
 - B) *Referral to external support and/or completion of EHAF (Early Help Assessment Form). Note: a fixed penalty notice can be issued.*
 - C) *A school action is agreed between leadership and parent.*
Note: A fixed penalty warning can be issued.
- Stage 4: penalty notice warning letter.
EHAF: When unauthorised absences are 15% or above and school support has been given, an attendance enforcement needs to be completed and a case manager will be allocated.

Date

Dear Parents/Carers,

RE: Attendance

At The ***** Academy we pride ourselves on the academic and sporting achievements of our pupils. One important way in which parents support children to achieve and get the most from school is by ensuring an exemplary attendance record is maintained. Recent attendance data have shown that improvements in attendance are now required at The ***** Academy to ensure each child is able to make the most of the opportunities available. Leaders at the academy and at trust level agree it is time to focus on improvements in this vital area to ensure all parents are supported to fulfil their responsibilities.

As we move into the ***** term we ask that parents/ carers work to ensure that their child attends school every day. On behalf of all pupils at our academy we understand that, as leaders, we have a duty to offer support and work with parents and children who face challenges in maintaining exemplary attendance. We also understand that at times we need to relentlessly challenge parents and carers who do not send their children to school often enough. Any child below 95% attendance will trigger our staff and leaders to take action. In the past I have played a full role in this area meeting and speaking with parents and am happy to do so again. The government fully back schools to do this, and it is clearly a priority for them to get all pupils to attend school every day.

As a school, we recognise that the vast majority of parents support their children in many ways and work well with school. I look forward to your ongoing support with ensuring our academy meets its ambitious attendance targets.

Yours sincerely,

Principal

Dear Parent/Carer,

RE: Absences from school

I am writing to express my concern at **Name of Pupil's** high levels of absence this school year to date. ***** attendance has fallen to ** days out of a possible ** as of ** date. This level of attendance will have an impact on academic achievement if a similar pattern continues. Please find attached a copy of ***** registration certificate, showing authorised and unauthorised absences.

The welfare and future success of each child at our academy is of paramount importance and regular attendance is key in enabling all pupils to fulfil their potential. With this in mind, I have taken the decision **not to authorise anymore absences** until further notice, unless I have medical proof of an appointment or prescription. If **Name of Pupil** is absent again, please report this to school on the first day. Absences can be reported either by ringing, texting or e-mailing [Insert relevant email address](#) You can also contact **Name of Staff Member** (Attendance Officer) on Class Dojo.

Please note that unauthorised absences can result in a Penalty Notice being issued if your child has more than 3 days of unauthorised absences within a 6-week period.

If an absence is not authorised by the school, the pupil's attendance is deemed to be irregular. Under section 444 of the Education Act 1996, if a child of compulsory school age, who is a registered pupil at a school, fails to attend regularly, his/her parent/carer (s) are guilty of an offence. Please also note that if you have more than one child, each child's irregular attendance is dealt with as a separate matter. The Local Authority may take formal action against you for failure to comply with the law. Penalty notices are issued as an alternative to prosecution, but may not be issued if prosecution is considered to be a more appropriate response to the attendance issues.

Therefore your child's irregular attendance could result in one of the following actions:

- 1. A Penalty Notice being issued. Each penalty notice is £60 if paid within the first 21 days, rising to £120 if paid between 22-28 days. Failure to pay will result in prosecution.*
- 2. Prosecution. This could lead to fines of up to £2500 and/or 3 months imprisonment.*

You can find more information about Penalty Notices in our school Attendance Policy. Copies of the policy are on the school website.

As an academy, we recognise that every family's circumstances are different and we aim to work with you to support your child. Please contact school if you would like to arrange a meeting to explore any particular attendance difficulties that you face.

I will continue to monitor **Name of Pupil's** attendance for the next school term and I am sure with your support we will see a significant improvement.

Yours sincerely,

Principal

Date

Dear *****,

RE: Invite to Attendance Meeting due to Persistent Absence/ attendance being consistently below 95%

On **Date** I wrote to you as I was concerned about **Name of Pupil's** attendance. I informed you that I would no longer be authorising absences without medical evidence of an appointment or prescription. Since that date **Name of Pupil** has been absent on ** occasions bringing their attendance to ** out of **.

As you are already aware from my previous letter, unauthorised absences can result in a Penalty Notice being issued if your child has more than 3 days of unauthorised absences within a 6-week period.

In light of the continued absence, I write to invite you to a meeting to discuss next steps including actions you intend to take to improve the situation and to consider how the academy may be able to continue to support. Please be aware that a decision to refer your case to the Local Authority for a Fixed Penalty Notice is one possible outcome of the meeting. Failure to attend the meeting on your part without notice or sufficient explanation may also result in such a referral as would repeated cancellation of arranged appointments.

A meeting has been arranged for you at ** on the **. Please contact ***** (Attendance Office) if you are unable to attend.

Yours sincerely,

Principal

PENALTY NOTICE WARNING**Name of Pupil DOB Current Percentage Attendance is 80%**

Dear,

I wrote to you on **Date** to inform you that **Name of Pupil's** attendance would not be authorised without medical evidence in the form of an appointment or prescription. After continued concerns about **Name of Pupil's** rate of absence, I wrote to you again; this time to invite you to a meeting with me to discuss matters further. An outcome of this was **(refer to steps 3A, 3B or 3C of the Attendance Policy)**. Since that letter **and or** meeting, there have been ** more days of unauthorised absence. In line with The Forge Trust Attendance Policy, as there has been **(insert from the following: no improvement, insufficient improvement, a deterioration)** I have no option but to proceed to initiate the issuing of a Fixed Penalty Notice. Please find attached a copy of **Name of Pupil's** registration certificate, showing authorised and unauthorised absences.

If an absence is not authorised by the school, the pupil's attendance is deemed to be irregular. Under section 444 of the Education Act 1996, if a child of compulsory school age, who is a registered pupil at a school, fails to attend regularly, his/her parent/carer (s) are guilty of an offence. Please also note that if you have more than one child, each child's irregular attendance is dealt with as a separate matter.

The Local Authority may take formal action against you for failure to comply with the law. Penalty notices are issued as an alternative to prosecution, but may not be issued if prosecution is considered to be a more appropriate response to the attendance issues.

Therefore, your child's irregular attendance could result in one of the following actions:

- 1. A Penalty Notice being issued. Each penalty notice is £60 if paid within the first 21 days, rising to £120 if paid between 22-28 days. Failure to pay will result in prosecution.*
- 2. Prosecution. This could lead to fines of up to £2500 and/or 3 months imprisonment.*

Please ensure you *continue to* obtain/ obtain **medical evidence** if **Name of Pupil** is too ill to attend. Any other reason for absence should be discussed with **Name of member of staff** (Attendance Officer).

Yours sincerely,

Principal

Appendix C-Weekly Data Proforma (*add school logo*)

Attendance Figures Across The Forge Trust

Name of school:	Attendance to date:
Week ending:	Attendance Manager:
Schools weekly % attendance figure: (Y1-Y6) %	Schools weekly % unauthorised figure: (Y1-Y6) %

Year Group	Weekly Attendance figure	Number of unauthorised absence sessions (Code O)	Number of holiday absence sessions (Code G)	Total number of UA absence sessions (Code O + Code G)
F1				
F2				
Y1				
Y2				
Y3				
Y4				
Y5				
Y6				

Any individual classes causing concern:
(Record with attendance figure)

Any individual children causing concern:
(Record with attendance figure)

Checked by Principal:

Checked by Forge ESLT:

Comments:

Appendix D- Attendance Officer & Principal Discussion Form (Attendance Success Plan-*add school logo*)

(Principal and Attendance Officer Meeting Proforma to be used every 3 Weeks)

Note: There should be 12 meetings a year where this proforma is used.

Autumn/Spring/Summer 1/2/3/4

Date :

[illegible]

Names of 'concerning' children and year group	Is attainment at ARE? Yes or No	Pupil Premium/ Send Status	Outcome (Further monitoring/letter 1/2/3, school or agency support, letter 4, EHAF and or Fine	So What? Resolutions (Highlight yellow when situation rectified)

Appendix E-2022-2023

National Averages: overall: 96.4% (2021) persistent absenteeism: 8.8% (2021)

Notts Averages: overall: 96.7% (2021) persistent absenteeism: 7.6% (2021)

School	Attendance %	% Persistent absenteeism	Next steps
The Sir Donald Bailey Academy	Autumn: Spring: Summer:	Autumn: Spring: Summer:	
The Parkgate Academy	Autumn: Spring: Summer:	Autumn: Spring: Summer:	
The Marton Academy	Autumn: Spring: Summer:	Autumn: Spring: Summer:	
The Forest View Academy	Autumn: Spring: Summer:	Autumn: Spring: Summer:	
The West Park Academy	Autumn: Spring: Summer:	Autumn: Spring: Summer:	
The Python Hill Academy	Autumn: Spring: Summer:	Autumn: Spring: Summer:	
The St Augustines Academy	Autumn: Spring: Summer:	Autumn: Spring: Summer:	
The Forge Trust	Autumn: Spring: Summer:	Autumn: Spring: Summer:	

Note: this table is to be completed by ESLT of The Forge Trust each term and reflected upon each network meeting with all Attendance Officers.



Appendix F 2022-2023

Addendum to Stage 2 'Concerning Attendance' Escalation Procedural Chart

Autumn Term

1st half-term: Children must attend **31/34 days**. If children have more than **3 days absence** during the first half-term then attendance is 'concerning' and a stage 2 letter is sent out to parents. **However, consider: were the absences authorised? Were the absences unauthorised? What were the individual circumstances for the absence? Ensure that school is engaging with the family.**

2nd half-term: Children must attend **64/69 days**. If children have more than **5 days absence** during the first term then attendance is 'concerning' and a stage 2 letter is sent out to parents. **However, consider: were the absences authorised? Were the absences unauthorised? What were the individual circumstances for the absence? Ensure that school is engaging with the family.**

Spring Term

1st half-term: Children must attend **91/97 days**. If children have more than **6 days absence** up to the end of Spring 1 then attendance is 'concerning' and a stage 2 letter is sent out to parents. **However, consider: were the absences authorised? Were the absences unauthorised? What were the individual circumstances for the absence? Ensure that school is engaging with the family.**

2nd half-term: Children must attend **120/127 days**. If children have more than **7 days absence** up to the end of the Spring Term then attendance is 'concerning' and a stage 2 letter is sent out to parents. **However, consider: were the absences authorised? Were the absences unauthorised? What were the individual circumstances for the absence? Ensure that school is engaging with the family.**

Summer Term

1st half-term: Children must attend **143/151 days**. If children have more than **8 days absence** up to the end of Summer 1 then attendance is 'concerning' and a stage 2 letter is sent out to parents. **However, consider: were the absences authorised? Were the absences unauthorised? What were the individual circumstances for the absence? Ensure that school is engaging with the family.**

2nd half-term: Children must attend **177/186 days**. If children have more than **9 days absence** up to the end of the Summer Term then attendance is 'concerning' and a stage 2 letter is sent out to parents. **However, consider: were the absences authorised? Were the absences unauthorised? What were the individual circumstances for the absence? Ensure that school is engaging with the family.**

NOTE: To hit the school target of 97% attendance children need to attend 180/186 days.

Note: For staff use only. Leaders 'quote' figures verbally but do not give this out in writing.