

Attendance Policy

Aims and values

We are fully committed to ensuring that all students reach their full potential and achieve the best they can possibly be, by getting the most from their school experience, including their attainment, wellbeing, and wider life chances. To achieve this, a high level of attendance is essential. Every pupil has a right to access the education to which they are entitled. Serlby Park Academy aims to work in partnership with parents and other agencies to strive towards every pupil reaching excellent school attendance and punctuality. We are committed to creating a positive culture where all pupils feel valued and welcome, supporting student learning and success. By working in partnership with parents and other agencies, we can ensure that we have clear and robust strategies in place to manage and promote regular attendance, for all students at Serlby Park Academy.

Absences

Parents are expected to inform school of the reason for absences. However, it is school that makes the decision whether to authorise or unauthorise the absence. School will make this decision based on the information available to them.

Request for leave of absence in term time -

All parents who wish to take their pupil out of school for any reason (other than medical reasons) should complete a leave of absence request form. If parents proceed with the leave of absence in term time, the Academy may refer to the Local Authority for a penalty notice. Penalty notices may be issued due to the deliberate taking of leave of absence in term time without or against school permission (where it can be demonstrated that the parent/carer understood that permission had not or would not be given) and where this has created a period of unauthorized absence in the current term of at least 10 sessions.

Serlby Park Academy aims to achieve attendance of 100% for all students. The Academy will seek legal action through the Local Authority for continued poor attendance and punctuality.

Registers will close at 8.25am for secondary students and 8.50 am for primary students. Students who arrive after this time without a valid reason will be marked with a U code. This is an unauthorised mark and is included in any Local Authority action.

Serlby Park Academy follows the guidance on persistent and severe absence as outlined in section 5 of Working Together to Improve Attendance 22 (DfE).

Authorised absence is where the academy accepts there is good reason for an absence. Consideration for an authorised absence requires a written, or telephone communication, from the parent/carer. Parent/Carers are asked to notify the academy as soon as possible. Pupils who return to school following an absence without an explanation will be deemed to have had an 'unauthorised absence' until a suitable explanation has been given.

If an absence is deemed as unauthorised this may result in the issuing of a penalty notice (FPN) or other legal interventions outlined in section 6 of Working Together to Improve Attendance 22 (DfE), including parenting contracts, education supervision orders and parenting orders.

We recognise that attendance below 90% is poor and a pupil below this figure is treated as a Persistent Absentee (PA) by all academies and the DfE (Department for Education).

Examples of absence that might be authorised are:

- An absence caused by genuine illness or other unavoidable cause.
- An absence for an agreed religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong.
- Family bereavement.
- Situations where the academy authorises absence, e.g., study leave, work experience, interviews, and special occasions such as theatre/sporting/musical performance.
- Medical appointments where proof is available.
- Fixed term exclusion.

Where explanations are not forthcoming, the explanations are deemed unacceptable, or unreliable; these will be explored by the academy and, where appropriate recorded as 'unauthorised'.

Examples might include:

- minding the house / caring for younger siblings
- shopping
- no school uniform to wear
- to do homework / coursework
- lateness
- holidays
- day trips
- birthdays

To manage and promote regular attendance Serlby Park Academy will:

Keep parents updated on the overall attendance of students attending Serlby Park Academy, and individual pupil's attendance via letters home, newsletters, social media and the academy website.

Follow the DfE and Government guidance in relation to school attendance.

Report to parents how their child is achieving in school and how their child's attendance is impacting on this via phone calls/letters home, parents' evenings and school reports

Build positive relationships between home and school that can be the foundation of good attendance. The link between attendance, attainment and wider wellbeing will be discussed with parents.

Utilise attendance data, analysing patterns and trends to target attendance and punctuality improvement across pupil cohorts or individual pupils, to reduce persistent or severe absence from school.

Review the attendance policy annually and publish on the Academy website

Account for and consider the specific needs of pupils and their families where there may be other barriers to attendance (medical conditions or special educational needs and disabilities) and provide support to overcome these barriers. (e.g. Early Help or other wider partners)

Support pupils back into school following a length or unavoidable period of absence and provide support to build confidence and bridge gaps.

Monitor individual students' attendance to:

Celebrate good and improved school attendance and reward this through competitions, certificates, and events.

Notify parents when we are worried about their child's attendance

If your child is absent we will:

Telephone or text/app on the first day of absence

Our Education Welfare Officer may conduct a "safe and well" call on the first day of absence.

In the event your child has not been in the academy for 3 consecutive days, our Education Welfare Officer will conduct a home visit.

Our Education Welfare Officer will also visit home if the student's absence is an ongoing concern

To manage and promote the regular attendance of their children, parents will:

Understand their legal responsibilities by ensuring regular school attendance with regard to the Section 444(1) and 444 (1A) Education Act 1996 and Section 36 of the Children Act 1989.

Understand their responsibility to keep Serlby Park Academy up to date with at least 2 emergency contact details as required by the Children Missing Education requirements and in line with the Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance 2022.

Impress on their children the importance of regular school attendance by keeping absences to a minimum and ensuring that children are only out of school when they are too sick to attend.

Establish effective communication with the Academy to swiftly address any worries their children may have about coming to school so that we can work together to resolve this.

Contact the Academy on the first day of absence by 9:00 am to inform school of the reason and when the child is expected to return.

Keep school informed if the absence is likely to continue so that school and partner agencies can ensure that amendments or alternatives can be made to provision if required.

Provide the Academy with any medical appointment cards and where possible make appointments out of school hours. If this is not possible, parents should ensure that children attend prior to or following their appointment.

Attend any meetings called by Academy and partner agencies to discuss attendance.