



Subject: Attendance Absence	Number: POL00130
Approved by: Managing Director	Type: Policy
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1. Objectives

The Robert Holme Academy aims to ensure that all students receive a fulltime education which maximises opportunities for each of them to realise their true potential. We strive to provide a welcoming, caring environment, so that every student feels valued and secure.

We also aim to provide outstanding provision for all students with the expectation that students will attend the Robert Holme Academy regularly and on time.

All our staff work with students and their schools to support parents/carers in helping them meet their legal duty to ensure that their children attend education regularly and on time.

The attendance/absence policy and supporting practices are intended to ensure that children are kept safe and ensure their welfare needs are met.

The Robert Holme Academy will work closely with local authority children’s services where school absence indicates a safeguarding concern.

2. Scope and Applicability

This policy sets out the standards for attendance within the Robert Holme Academy, including practices for encouraging good habits in attendance, along with the procedures for approving and dealing with unauthorised absence.

This policy applies in all instances where reciprocal arrangements have not been established with schools.

The policy applies to all members of staff and students attending the Robert Holme Academy.

3. Procedures

3.1 Responsibilities

3.1.1 Responsibilities of the Managing Director

The Managing Director has overall responsibility for managing attendance and absence within the Robert Holme Academy. In this capacity, the Managing Director will:

- co-ordinate the implementation of attendance and absence policies and practices and monitor their effectiveness in meeting obligations;
- make adequate provision for necessary attendance and absence training and resources to ensure that attendance and absence is managed effectively;
- ensure that all staff are accountable for managing attendance and absence in areas of their control and monitor compliance;
- review ongoing compliance with this policy and mandatory standards and ensure any corrective or preventive actions are taken to minimise potential exposures.

The Managing Director is also responsible for monitoring attendance figures on a least a termly basis.



3.1.2 *Responsibilities of the Headteacher*

The Headteacher has primary responsibility for the implementation of our attendance and absence policy and responsibility for managing attendance and absence effectively. As part of this the headteacher ensures procedures and working practices are established to:

- promote positive attendance;
- monitor attendance data;
- document concerns about attendance;
- work with schools and education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence;
- arrange calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues;
- re-engage disaffected students;
- act quickly to combat patterns of absence, including persistent absence;
- support parents/carers, schools and authorities with absences;
- facilitate regular communication with schools and other organisations associated with absent students.

The Headteacher monitors the implementation of the attendance and absence policy and procedures.

The Headteacher also reviews all attendance records regularly in order to identify reasons for absence and patterns of attendance.

3.1.3 *Responsibilities of all Staff*

The Robert Holme Academy expects all staff to reinforce attendance and punctuality expectations, and ensure students understand the importance of attendance on overall attainment. Teachers therefore promote all aspects of learning, while offering exciting and engaging learning opportunities in order to encourage the attendance of sequential lessons. Staff always follow the behaviour policy and offer achievement points as well as positive reinforcement from marking and feedback.

Teaching staff are responsible for recording attendance daily and submitting this information. Staff are expected to take calls from parents, as necessary, about absence and note it on the recording systems or report it to the relevant person.

Staff are responsible for following the attendance policy and ensure all steps are followed if there is an absence. Staff notify the Headteacher if they have any information, notice any patterns or have concerns about the attendance of a student.

3.1.4 *Responsibility of Students*

The Robert Holme Academy has clear expectations for staff, students and parents. We aim for every student to achieve 100% attendance in order to access the full curriculum. Any attendance under 95% will come under scrutiny of the Headteacher.

If attendance is affected for legitimate reasons, such as valid medical conditions, specific support and timetables are produced in order to meet the student needs. These arrangements are agreed with the school and other stake-holders on an individual needs basis. When required, outreach support and education is offered.



3.2 *Term Times and Holidays*

Term dates are updated on the Robert Holme Academy website on an annual basis. The academic year includes 190 teaching days comprising 380 sessions. This includes holidays, training days and specialist days throughout the year.

The academic day is divided into two sessions: a morning session and afternoon session. The sessions are divided by a lunch time break. The morning session includes 3 lessons and a morning break. The afternoon session includes 2 lessons. During the day there are timetabled sessions for tutor time and socialisation.

Where possible, we will try to make time up if a working day is interrupted due to an unavoidable event, such as bad weather, power failure, etc.

Any changes in term times or teaching hours will be shared, at the earliest opportunity with schools and parents/carers.

3.3 *Monitoring Attendance*

Registers are taken every lesson. Students are registered within 5 minutes of arriving at the premises (onto the central register). Transport and parents are made aware that they must inform us if a student is going to be late. The absence protocol (below) is followed if a student is absent without authorisation or prior notice.

The attendance register is taken at the start of the first session of each academic day (in the morning) and once during the second session (in the afternoon). The attendance register records whether every pupil is:

- present;
- attending an approved off-site educational activity;
- absent;
- unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances;

Attendance registers are held for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

If a student leaves the premises after registration, for a medical appointment for example, they may still be counted as present. However, to ensure that effective safeguarding practices are in place, it is essential that the student's details are recorded as being signed out by a member of staff.

3.4 *Approval for Absence*

The Robert Holme Academy considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the Headteacher's discretion.

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an unauthorised absence. Advance notice is required for authorising these absences. However, we encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of teaching time where possible. Where this is not possible, the student should be absent for the minimum amount of time necessary to attend the appointment.

Parents must notify us on the first day of an unplanned absence (for example - if their child is unable to attend due to ill health) by 9am or as soon as practically possible. Absence due to illness will usually be authorised unless we have a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, we may ask parents to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of documentation. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If we are not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified of this in advance.



Leave of absence will not be granted to pupils during term time, including absence for holidays, except under exceptional circumstances. Exceptional circumstances for leave of absence must be so significant to the student’s emotional or educational well-being that it outweighs the loss of time in education.

Valid reasons for authorised absence may include, for example:

- illness and medical or dental appointments;
- religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the student’s parents belong (if necessary, we will seek advice from the parent’s religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart);
- an immediate member of the family is seriously or terminally ill and there are compassionate grounds for absence;
- the recent death of an immediate family member;
- any arrangements for access determined by a court order;
- service personnel where annual leave is dictated by an employer (evidence will be required)

3.5 Following-up on Absence

We will follow up any absence to determine the reason for absence and ensure proper safeguarding action is taken. If no contact has been made by the parent/carers by 9:30am the following protocol will be initiated. An unexplained absence form is completed in all cases.

Time	Action
09:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Call home (phone number 1) to determine a possible reason for absence.• Leave a message if ‘no answer’ explaining a need to contact as soon as possible
09:45	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Call parent/guardian/carer mobile. (Phone number 1&2)• Leave a message if ‘no answer’ explaining a need to contact as soon as possible.
10:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Call parent/guardian/carer mobile. (Phone number 1&2)• Leave a further message if ‘no answer’ explaining a need to contact as soon as possible.
10:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Call secondary contact such as the school, friends, relatives, social worker, etc., to determine a possible reason for absence
12:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If still no contact or explanation, arrange a home visit the same day.
15:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If still no contact inform the police with concerns and log details.



3.6 *Lateness and Punctuality*

A student who arrives up to 30 minutes after register has opened, but before the register has closed will be marked as late.

Repeated poor punctuality is reported to the school and parents/carers.

The Robert Holme Academy regard lateness as a lost opportunity for learning time. A student will therefore be reported as less than 100% attendance if they are late on a significant number of occasions within term time.

3.7 *Persistent Absence*

Contact is made with the school and parents when a student is persistently absent. Initially this is likely to be verbally via informal face-to-face contact to determine if there are any underlying reasons for absence and agree appropriate mitigating actions.

If attendance does not improve, this is followed by a tailored and focused plan of action to promote engagement. The plan is based on encouragement and praise and includes targeted intervention to address gaps in learning and confidence.

The plan is backed up by formal reporting to the school and parents/carers to highlight progress being made.

Further guidance for children who are absent from education for prolonged periods and /or on repeated occasions can also be found in the safeguarding handbook.

3.8 *Reporting*

The Robert Holme Academy will report the attendance of every student to schools and parents/carers. As a minimum, attendance information will be included in end of term reports.



4 **References**

This policy has been developed in line with the following guidance:

1. DfE School Attendance Guidance 2016, available at:
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/907535/School_attendance_guidance_for_2020_to_2021_academic_year.pdf
2. Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended by the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016).
3. The Education Act 2011, available at:
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/21/contents/enacted>
4. The Education (School Day and School Year) (England) Regulations 1999, available at:
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/1999/3181/introduction/made?view=plain>
5. Actions for schools during the coronavirus outbreak 2020, available at:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak>
6. Keeping children safe in education 2023, available at:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>
7. Children missing in education 2016, available at:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-missing-education>
8. School behaviour and attendance: parental responsibility measures 2020, available at:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/parental-responsibility-measures-for-behaviour-and-attendance>
9. Working together to improve school attendance, (2022, revised August 23), available at
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1099677/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance.pdf