



## **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

<b>REVIEW DATE</b>	<b>AUGUST 2019</b>
<b>REVIEW DATE</b>	<b>AUGUST 2020</b>
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# Attendance Policy

## 1. Mission Statement.

It is our intention to work in partnership with the Local Authority and parents/carers to support students attending Take 1 Studios. Parents and teachers share the responsibility for ensuring that attendance rates at Take 1 Studios are maximised and that rates of unjustified and unauthorised absenteeism are kept to a minimum.

**Context.** Take 1 Studios take account of and responds to Department for Education 'Advice on school attendance':

- The Education Act 1996 - sections 434(1),(3),(4) and (6) and 458(4) and (5);
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006;
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010; 2011 and 2013.

In law, Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states:

"The parent of every child or young person of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient, full time education suitable to his/her age, ability and aptitude and to any special need(s) he/she may have, either by attendance at school or otherwise."

### 1.1. Attendance target.

Take 1 Studios attendance target is 93% so Take 1 Studios define good attendance as 100% during the academic year.

### 1.2. Purpose of the 100% attendance target.

There is a clear correlation between good attendance and positive attitudes towards behavior and willingness to learn.

Persistent absence is a serious problem for students. The Department of Education state that any student with 90% attendance or below is a persistent absentee from education. Much of the work children miss when they are off school is never made up, leaving these pupils at a considerable disadvantage for the remainder of their school career. There is also a clear link between poor attendance at school and low levels of achievements:

- Of pupils who miss more than 50% of school, only 3% manage to achieve 5 A\* to C GCSE grades including English and Maths.
- Of pupils who miss between 10% and 20% of school, only 35% manage to achieve 5 A\* to C GCSE grades including Maths and English.
- Of pupils who miss less than 5% of school, 73% achieve 5 A\* to C grades including GCSE English and Maths.

Latest figures show that while 184,000 pupils miss 20% of lessons, more than 430,000 miss 15% of lessons a year – the equivalent of having a month off school for a year.

## 2. Aims.

Pupils who are on roll at Take 1 Studios to attend on time every day, on time, be ready to learn, therefore, and we aim:

- To increase students attendance.
- To reduce unauthorised absences and lateness.
- To encourage and support students to attend.
- To raise parental awareness regarding attendance and punctuality.

- To work in partnership, with the EWO, parent/carers and staff.
- To keep accurate, up-to-date records and have a robust and rigorous system for analysing attendance.

To work in partnership with external agencies to help support parents and students in resolving any issues that may be affecting their school attendance.

### **3. Expectations-**

#### **We expect the following from all our pupils**

- That they attend school regularly, every day and on time.
- That they will arrive on time
- That they will inform a member of staff/tutor of any problem or reason that may prevent them from attending school.

#### **We expect the following from parents**

- To guarantee their children attend school regularly and punctually.
- To ensure that they contact the school as soon as is reasonably practical whenever their child is unable to attend.
- To provide written evidence clarifying any absence and proof of all medical appointments.
- To contact the school in confidence whenever any problem occurs that affect the student's performance or attendance at school.
- To provide a recent contact numbers and address at all times.

#### **Parents and students can expect the following from school in relation to attendance**

- Regular, efficient and accurate recording of attendance.
- Early contact with parents when a student fails to attend school without providing good reason.
- Letters.
- Meetings.
- Occasional Home visits when applicable.

### **4. Absence from School.**

There are two types of absence: those which are authorised by the school and those which are unauthorised. Parents must contact the school on the **first day** and consequent days of absence to inform us of the reason for the pupil's absence. This may be in person, via telephone call or text, or letter. Only persons with parental responsibility for the pupil can report an absence.

The first day and last day of term are compulsory school days and all students are expected to attend unless they are ill. If your child is ill you need to contact the school on the first day of absence as per the Attendance Policy.

**The school will decide** in all cases whether to authorise an absence on the basis of evidence available to it.

#### **Unauthorised Absence.**

Examples of the type of absence which will not be authorised are:

- Lateness – arriving late is better than not arriving at all.
- Birthdays.
- Shopping.
- Haircuts.
- Special treats.
- Holidays in term time

## **5. Holiday times.**

Take 1 Studios discourages holidays taken in school time as they disrupt learning. Family holidays should be organised within the thirteen weeks of school holiday. From September 2017, the law has changed. The Government regulations stipulate that a: "... Head teacher may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Head teachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted."

Please note that the amendments make clear that Head Teachers may **not** grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

If permission is not granted by the Head Teacher/not requested by parents/carers and the student is absent because of an unauthorised holiday during term time this will be marked as unauthorised and we will request that the commissioning request a penalty notice.

If parents wish to request a leave of absence for a student during term time this request should be made in writing to the Head teacher of Take 1 Studios and sent to the Head teacher a minimum of 6 weeks prior to the requested period of absence. Any child who does not return by the agreed date of return will incur unauthorised absences until such time as they return and will be reported missing after two weeks to the Local Authority.

If parents disregard these regulations, the absence will be unauthorised and the school may apply for a penalty notice to be issued by the local authority in accordance with the Code of Practice and the Education (Penalty Notices) Regulations 2007. The penalty is £60 if paid within 21 days of receipt rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. The payment must be paid directly to the local authority. The parents may be prosecuted if 28 days have expired and full payment has not been made.

There is no right of appeal by parents against a penalty notice. If the penalty is not paid in full by the end of the 28-day period the local authority must decide either to prosecute for the original offence to which the notice applies or withdraw the notice.

## **6. Truancy before or during the school day.**

Pupils who are discovered to have truanted will be recorded as unauthorised. Parents will be contacted and a meeting with parents will be requested at Take 1 Studios. All pupils on roll at Take 1 Studios are expected to attend all sessions during school day. Take 1 Studios has a zero tolerance for absconding from Alternative Provision. If this occurs the pupil will be marked on the register as an unauthorised absence and a parent will be contacted. In some circumstances, if a pupil absconds during the school day, the police may be contacted.

## **7. Lateness.**

Any pupil who arrives in school after the given time is late. Take 1 Studios expect all pupils to arrive on time. Students who arrive late for lessons will serve a detention to make up the time missed.

## **8. Persistent Lateness.**

Where punctuality becomes an issue of concern parents will be contacted, in the first instance, via telephone call and/or letter and punctuality must be considerably improved within a 10-day period. Where punctuality is not improved for those pupils' parents will be invited in for a meeting with members of the Senior Leadership Team. The student

will be monitored for 4 weeks. If they are still persistently late, the feeder provision will be notified and risk the possibility of a penalty may be issued to parents. The school reserves the right to apply to the Local Authority to issue a penalty notice on its behalf for any pupil registered 'late after the register has closed' five times in a four-week period in accordance with the Nottingham Local Authority guidelines.

## **9. Reintegrating Students with Poor Attendance.**

The return to school for a student after long-term absence can require special arrangement.

Designated staff will be responsible for deciding on the programme for return and for the management of that programme.

All staff are aware that this is a difficult process, that can require careful handling and that any problems should be notified to the responsible staff member as soon as possible.

Programs may need to be tailored to meet individual need and may involve phased, part-time re-entry with support in lessons as appropriate. Support from the SENCO may be required.

## **10. Staff Roles and Accountabilities.**

In order for the attendance and punctuality policy to be successful, Take 1 Studios believe that every member of the staff must make attendance a high priority and should convey to students the importance and importance of education.

## **11. Managing Persistent Absence.**

Patterns of absence are most likely to be spotted by the Attendance officer. The school will exercise caution in authorising any absence and may not do so without a discussion with parents as to the exact nature of the absence.

Parents will be invited to Take 1 Studios to discuss their child's attendance. If a child misses 2 consecutive days a letter will be sent home if there is no valid reason for the absence. If there are no immediate improvement further procedures will be taken such as attendance meetings with family and student, (and potential commissioning school attendance team), home visits may be made where there are concerns that telephone contact is not possible. If attendance does not improve after these measures have been taken, referrals to the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) will be made.

Where a student's attendance is lower than 90% the student is classed as a persistent absentee. For this reason, we will request intervention from the Education Welfare for students whose unauthorised absence is above **10%**.

The Attendance Officer and Senior Leadership Team will identify those students who need Education Welfare involvement. A referral will then be made and we will gather the evidence and this will be sent to the Education Welfare Service. Parents will be informed by letter of what action we are taking when we are requesting penalty notices to be issued.

*Note: The DfE defines persistent absentees as school-age pupils missing more than 10% of sessions in a school year. There is no set number of days allowed for absence. Other than in exceptional circumstances, all pupils must attend all school sessions while they are of compulsory school age.*

*Parents are guilty of an offence if their child fails to attend regularly:*

*The duty for parents to ensure their child receives a suitable "efficient full-time education" is set out*

*in section 7 of the Education Act 1996.*

Parents/carers are legally responsible for ensuring their child's regular attendance. By 'regular' we mean that pupils should aim to have a 100% attendance.

The Attendance Officer, Senior Leadership Team and where necessary the feeder provision school will identify those students who need Education Welfare involvement. Take 1 Studios will consider referring pupils to the Education Welfare Service if:

- a pattern of irregular attendance or persistent absenteeism is either continuing or worsening;
- parents do not accept their responsibilities for ensuring their child attends school and are refusing to discuss ways of improving attendance with the school.

#### **Guidance on parental responsibility:**

- *"For the purposes of education law, section 576 of the Education Act 1996 defines a 'parent' as:  
all natural (biological) parents, whether they are married or not;*
- *any person who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person (this could be a step-parent, guardian or other relative);*
- *any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person.*
- *A person has care of a child or young person if they are the person with whom the child lives and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their relationship is with the child.*

Please see:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/489901/Parental\\_Responsibility\\_Advice\\_for\\_School\\_January\\_2016.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/489901/Parental_Responsibility_Advice_for_School_January_2016.pdf)

## **12. Covid-19.**

Due to the current climate, Take 1 now has an online remote learning system for those who may need to self isolate. They will be expected to work from home which means we can give them an authorised absence mark – code Y. This complies with government guidelines and pairing schools/ alternative provisions. Should a student not be completing the online work, then they will not receive the authorised absence mark, (unless they are too ill).

- Students who refuse to take the Covid-19 test but have displayed symptoms and can't be let back on site, will be expected to use the remote learning and will be marked accordingly.

- Students who are confirmed cases and test positive will be expected to complete the work when they are fit to do so and until they are allowed back on site.

### **Children at Risk of Missing Education**

School governing bodies, academy trusts, and other school proprietors must have regard to the statutory guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' when making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Schools should put in place appropriate safeguarding responses for children who go missing from school, particularly on repeat occasions. Where reasonably practicable, for every pupil, schools should hold an emergency contact number for more than one person. Emergency contact numbers should be provided and updated by the parent with whom the pupil normally resides. This goes beyond the legal requirement but is good practice. Doing so provides schools with additional options for making contact with a responsible adult when a child is missing school and is also identified as a welfare and/or safeguarding concern.

Where school staff have concerns about a child, they should use their professional judgement and knowledge of the individual pupil to inform their decision as to whether welfare concerns should be escalated.

Local authorities have a duty to put in place arrangements for identifying (as far as it is possible) those children of compulsory school age in their area who are not school registered or receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school. Local authorities should trace those children and ensure that they receive full-time education.

All schools (including academies) must agree with the relevant local authority, the regular interval that the school will inform the local authority of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 days or more.

## Appendix

1. Attendance stage intervention.

2. Attendance letters\*:

- I. Letter 1 – Attendance concern
- II. Letter 2 - Medical reason
- III. Letter 3 - Attendance meeting
- IV. Letter 4 – Request for service

\* Please note that in order to support attendance and punctuality Denewood and Unity Academies might send other/addition attendance letters not included within this policy.

LETTER 1

DATE

Dear Ms Dyson

**Re: Billy Dyson**

I am writing to make you aware that we are very concerned about the level of Billy's attendance which is currently **67.97%**. We would expect it to be at least **96%**.

Should you or Billy be experiencing difficulties which may affect his attendance and you would like some advice or support, please contact me on 0115 970 8982.

As a parent it is your legal responsibility to ensure Billy attends school regularly and arrives on time.

Yours sincerely,



Ms N Fearon

Education Lead  
Take 1 Studios

LETTER 2

**ADDRESS**  
**DATE**

Dear Ms Dyson

**Re: Billy Dyson**

We remain concerned about Billy's level of attendance which is currently **\*\*%**. This is unacceptable.

As a parent it is your legal responsibility to ensure Billy attends his educational provision regularly and arrives on time. Failure to ensure this may result in legal action being taken against you.

Should you wish to discuss the matter further, please contact me on **0115 970 8982**

We have informed Unity/Denewood Academy of our concerns.

Yours sincerely,



Ms N Fearon

Education Lead  
Take 1 Studios

LETTER 3

DATE

Dear Ms Dyson

**Re: Billy Dyson**

Despite writing to you previously about our concerns regarding Billy's attendance level there has not been an acceptable improvement.

I would like to invite you to a meeting to discuss his attendance and ways in which we may be able to support you.

**The meeting has been arranged for Monday 25th December, 2018 at 2.00pm.**

If this date and time is not convenient, please contact me on 0115 9278963. Please leave a message and a contact number if I am unavailable and I will return your call.

Should you fail to attend this meeting, and there is not an immediate and sustained improvement in Billy's, I will inform Unity/Denewood Attendance Officer which may result in a referral to the Education Welfare Service for possible legal action.

Yours Sincerely  
Yours sincerely,



Ms N Fearon

Education Lead  
Take 1 Studios

LETTER 4 -

«address\_block»  
**DATE**



Dear **Ms Dyson**

**Re: Billy Dyson**

We were disappointed that you did not attend the meeting arranged for **27th March 2018**. We have not received any contact from you regarding the reason why you were unable to attend.

We remain very concerned about the level of **Billy's** attendance which is currently **62%**.

I will continue to monitor the register on a daily basis. If there is not an immediate and sustained improvement in **Billy's** attendance the matter will be referred to Denewood/Unity academy for a possible further referral to the Education Welfare Service.

Yours sincerely,



Ms N Fearon

Education Lead  
Take 1 Studios