

The Canterbury Academy Trust

Schools for all the Talents



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Number of pages:	19 including appendices

In partnership with Simon Langton  Grammar School for Boys to provide a grammar school band for boys and girls in a comprehensive school for all the talents

The Canterbury Academy Trust Attendance Policy

The aim of the Attendance Policy is to encourage students compulsory aged to attend school regularly (definition of regularly means every day the school is open in term-time. The Canterbury Academy expects students to attend fully in order to take advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. Irregular attendance undermines the educational process and can lead to students being disadvantaged. It can also place children at risk and in some instances result in patterns of anti-social or criminal behaviour.

It is part of the school's responsibility to support attendance and to take seriously any problems which lead to non-attendance. In pursuing this aim, we see the need to work closely with parents/guardians who are legally responsible for securing that their children attend school.

The academy recognises the influence of the curriculum on promoting good attendance and maintains that its ethos and organisation also has a significant impact on student attendance. Coupled with effective following of process, will reduce significant numbers of persistent absentees.

From September 2022 the Department of Education produced their white paper 'Working together to Improve School attendance' guidelines. Please see link to this paper.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance>

For ease of access and to help define the responsibilities of School, Parents and external providers a 'summary table of responsibilities for school attendance' addendum, has been added into our attendance policy for your convenience.

Please see link to this paper.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1073619/Summary_table_of_responsibilities_for_school_attendance.pdf

Statutory Duty of Schools

The Education Act 1996 requires parents or guardians to ensure their children receive efficient, full time education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. Schools are responsible for recording student attendance twice a day: once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session. An entry should be made on the attendance register for all students of compulsory school age.

Implementation of the Policy

The Academy Trust will ensure that:

- Students are registered accurately at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions each day at The Canterbury Primary School and in 'mentoring' for morning and Period 5 for afternoon registration each day at The Canterbury Academy using a school agreed system of recording.
- The Trust sets annual attendance targets for both authorised and unauthorised absence, which will be reviewed, at least termly.
- Individual students and parents are given individual attendance targets where appropriate and progress towards achieving these targets will be reviewed as part of the initial review system.
- Parents are contacted on the first day of absence by the most appropriate means of communication.

- All medical appointments, where possible, should be made out of school time. The Canterbury Academy and The Canterbury Primary School will require evidence of medical appointments which must be shown to the appropriate attendance personnel.
- The use of a red, amber and green system identifies the process of interventions required for students and parents, which is implemented and closely monitored (see appendix 1 The Canterbury Academy and CCC see appendix 2 for The Canterbury Primary School)
- After 4 missed sessions of unauthorized absence parents are informed and penalty notice warning letters may be sent. After 10 sessions (equivalent to 5 days) of unauthorized absence a Penalty Notice may be requested.
- Academy attendance statistics are reported to Directors at their regular meetings.
- Academy attendance statistics are published weekly.
- At The Canterbury Primary School and The Canterbury Academy the attendance teams across the trust work collaboratively together to track and monitor attendance and discuss siblings.
- A review system is in place to reward good and improved attendance.
- Vulnerable students with specific problems will be supported with regard to their attendance.
- Attendance over 97% at The Canterbury Primary School will be celebrated weekly in 'Achievement' assemblies. The Canterbury Academy celebrates at termly assemblies.
- After 10 consecutive days of non-attendance without communication from home, The Canterbury Primary School, The Canterbury Academy and CCC will exhaust all methods of contact including home visits before completing a Child Missing Education (CME) Referral

In Addition

The Canterbury Academy and The Canterbury Primary School uses a system of electronic registration monitored by support managers and the attendance team at the Canterbury Academy and The Canterbury Primary School. This enables the tracking of internal absence/truancy as students are registered every lesson as well as at am and pm registration.

Students

Students will be encouraged to:

- Inform staff if there is a problem that may lead to absence.
- Report to the school office at The Canterbury Primary School and to the relevant year group Support Manager at The Canterbury Academy if they arrive late.
- If a student is leaving the school site to attend a medical appointment, they will need to report to the school office at The Canterbury Primary school or Student Reception at the Canterbury Academy
- The expectation for all students across the trust is that they attend every day the schools across the trust are open.

Lateness is recorded and monitored by members of the Attendance Team at The Canterbury Academy Trust. The Canterbury Academy will impose further sanctions, where appropriate if two or more late/punctuality marks are recorded in any one week, including lessons.

Parents

The following is expected of Parents or guardians:

1. Inform The Canterbury Academy Trust on the first day of non-attendance and all subsequent days of absence until the student returns to school.
2. At The Canterbury Academy absence should be reported using the absence line. option 2, or email absence@canterbury.kent.sch.uk. At The Canterbury Primary School calls must be made to the main school office using option line 2 to report absence. All absence must be reported by 9am.
3. Discuss planned absences with The Canterbury Academy Trust in advance. Any absence

requested for exceptional circumstances should be applied for in writing with at least 2 weeks' notice, where possible. All written requests will be reviewed on an individual case by case basis and parents will be informed of the decision as to whether the absence will be authorised. The decision can only be made by the Executive Principal.

4. During any unavoidable long term absences, we require parents/carers to maintain regular contact (agreed with the school/Attendance officer) to assist with the support of the student and the provision of work.

Staff

There is a whole school responsibility and approach for improving school attendance, with specific staff taking individual responsibility.

The Attendance Officers have overall responsibility for monitoring attendance issues in the primary and secondary phase. This is overseen by the Heads of School and Executive Principals.

Class teachers complete a register at the beginning of each lesson at The Academy (secondary phase) and once during the morning and afternoon sessions in The Canterbury Primary School and City and Coastal College. Marking the attendance registers twice daily is a legal requirement. (The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006). Teachers mark pupils present, absent or late. The class teacher notifies the Support Managers / Attendance team and/or Assistant Vice Principals of children whose attendance is causing concern.

It is the responsibility of the Support Managers/Attendance team and/or Assistant Vice Principals to ensure:

- Attendance and lateness records are up to date.
- If no reason for absence has been provided, parents are contacted on the first day of absence by Communication process across the Academy.
- Where there has been no communication, letters are sent to parents requesting reasons for absence.
- The appropriate attendance code is entered into the register (using National Attendance Codes)
- Parents are informed regularly of their child's attendance.
- Children Missing Education will be reported to the Local Authority following the Safeguarding Regulations.

Children with sustained health needs that cannot attend school

Children who have a chronic, long term diagnosed medical reason and cannot attend mainstream school, may be referred to The Rosewood School for short term support with their education. The class hub is on the Canterbury Academy Campus and provides support. This is subject to stringent criteria.

Attendance Flowchart Process

- Please refer to Appendix 1 for The Canterbury Academy and CCC and Appendix 2 for The Canterbury Primary School.

For students attending City and Coastal College that remain on the role of other schools, the home school will be notified of any action being taken. Whilst the responsibility is devolved to City and Coastal College, the home school must be fully aware to ensure that their registration records reflect the same registration certificate as CCC.

Local Authority Action

The Canterbury Academy Trust will seek support of the Local Authority (LA) through the digital front door, a referral will be made if it is believed that all previous strategies/interventions have not helped improve a pupil's attendance. Examples of action that could be taken by the LA include:

- Attendance Improvement Meetings (pre-referral meetings)
- Home visits with specialist from the Trust
- Liaison with other agencies CSS/EH
- Court action

Penalty Notices Proceedings for Unauthorised Absence

Penalty Notices are issued in accordance with Kent County Council's Education Penalty Notices Code of Conduct.

- A Penalty Notice can only be issued in cases of persistent unauthorised absence or where an excluded child is found in a public place during school hours.
- Absence for 10 or more half day sessions (5 school days) without authorisation during any 100 possible school sessions (150 school days) – these do not need to be consecutive days.
- The PRU, Inclusion and Attendance Service issue a warning letter setting out 15 school days during which no unauthorised absence is to be recorded.
- If unauthorised absence is recorded during the 15-day period a Penalty Notice will be issued by KCC (one per parent per child per household)
- Parents / guardians with legal responsibility will be issued with a Penalty Notice

Where Penalty Notices are imposed, the regulations state that the penalty will be £120 to be paid within 28 days, reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days. Penalty Notices are issued to each parent and any other household member over the age of 18 years for each child. Failure to pay the penalty in full by the end of the 28-day period will result in prosecution by the Local Authority.

Leave of Absence/Holiday

From September 2013 the Department for Education have amended the Pupil Registration Regulations, removing the Executive Principal's ability to authorise leave of absence for the purpose of a family holiday.

Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 says that parents are **guilty** of an offence of failing to secure regular attendance at school unless they can prove that the child was absent:

- with leave (the school has given permission)
- due to sickness or any unavoidable cause (the sickness or unavoidable cause must relate to the child, not the parent)
- religious observance
- failure by the Local Authority to provide transport

In law, these are the only acceptable reasons for a child being absent from school.

The Executive Principal may authorise absence in "exceptional circumstances" but this must be requested in advance and agreement to each request is at the discretion of the Executive Principal, acting on behalf of the Governing Body (Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006). Each individual case will be judged on its merits and the Executive Principal's decision is final. Once the decision not to authorise leave is taken, it cannot be authorised retrospectively. Failure to comply with a request for absence during term time will result in a Penalty Notice issued to Parents / guardians.

Exceptional circumstances could include:

- Service personnel returning from a tour of duty abroad where it is evidenced the individual will not be in receipt of any leave in the near future that coincides with school holidays.
- Where an absence from school is recommended by a health professional as part of a parent or child's rehabilitation from a medical or emotional issue.
- The death or terminal illness of a person close to the family.
- To attend a wedding or funeral of a person close to the family.
- Any examples provided are illustrative rather than exhaustive. It is acceptable to take a student's previous record of attendance into account when the school is making decisions. The fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional' are rare, significant, unavoidable and short. And by 'unavoidable' it implies that an event could not reasonably be scheduled at another time. It is important to note that Executive Principal can agree the absence of a child in exceptional circumstances and this discretion can be used also to determine the length of the authorised absence.

Authorising Absence

Only the Executive Principal can authorise absence and will use a consistent approach. The Executive Principal is not obliged to accept a parent's explanation. A letter or telephone message from a parent does not in itself authorise an absence. If absences are not authorised, parents will be notified. If no explanation is received, absences will not be authorised.

Absence (leave) during term time can only be approved in "exceptional circumstances". The following reasons are examples of absence that will not be authorised:

- Persistent nonspecific illness e.g. poorly/unwell
- Absence of siblings if one child is ill
- Oversleeping
- Inadequate clothing/uniform
- Confusion over school dates
- Medical/dental appointments of more than half a day without very good reasons
- Child's/family birthday
- Shopping trip
- Family holidays

Persistent unauthorised absence may result in an AS1 referral to the Local Authority School Liaison Officer for consideration of prosecution. The school will follow procedures prior to referral and parents will be notified in writing.

When a referral is made, the child's Registration Certificate, copies of all letters sent to parents and minutes of any meetings will be attached to the completed AS1 referral form with any other relevant information.

Children Missing Education

No child should be removed from the school roll without consultation between the Executive Principal and the PRU, Inclusion and Attendance Service when appropriate. Please see circumstances below.

Where a child is missing from education, Local Authority guidance will be followed, by completing a Child Missing Education referral for the following circumstances:

- If the whereabouts of the child is unknown and the school have failed to locate him/her.

- The family has notified the school that they are leaving the area but no Common Transfer Form (pupil file) has been requested by another school.

Monitoring, Evaluation & Review

The Canterbury Academy Trust will review the policy annually and assess its implementation and effectiveness. This policy will be developed and implemented throughout the Trust.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Attendance flowchart for The Canterbury Academy (secondary phase) and City and Coastal College
- Appendix 2 – Attendance flowchart for the Primary School
- Appendix 3 – Absence Concern Letter
- Appendix 4 – Attendance Concern Meeting Letter
- Appendix 5 – Penalty Notice Warning Letter
- Appendix 6 – Penalty Notice Request Letter
- Appendix 7 – Lateness Concern Letter
- Appendix 8 – Holiday Request Denied Letter
- Appendix 9 – Holiday (No Notice) Penalty Notice Warning Letter
- Appendix 10 – Holiday (No Notice) Penalty Notice Request Letter
- Appendix 11 – Evidence Request Letter
- Appendix 12 – Evidence Not Provided Penalty Notice Requested
- Appendix 13 - Kent School Referral Pathway – Pupil Attendance

Appendix 1 – Attendance flowchart for The Canterbury Academy and City and Coastal College



Appendix 2 – Attendance flowchart for the Primary School



Appendix 3 – Absence Concern Letter

<<Parental_addressee>>
<<Address_block>>

Dear <<Parental_Salutation>>

Re: <<Forename>> <<Surname>>

I am writing to express my concern over the number of occasions that <<Forename>> has been absent from school. I attach for your information a summary of attendance indicating the days <<Forename>> was absent.

A pupil's absence can seriously disrupt their learning, not only do they miss out on teaching while they are away, but they are less prepared for future lessons when they return.

I am sure you share my concern and would wish to work with the school to improve <<Forename>>'s attendance. If we can help in any way, perhaps via our School Nurse or Family Liaison Officer, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely

Mr J Watson
Executive Principal

Appendix 4 – Attendance Concern Meeting Letter

<<Parental_addressee>>

<<Address_block>>

Thursday, 03 November 2022

Dear <<Parental_Salutation>>

Re: <<Forename>> <<Surname>>

Despite previous warnings, I note with concern that your child's attendance at school has made no significant improvement. <<Forename>>'s attendance at school is currently <<M_Present>>% which means he/she has missed <<M_Authorised_absences>> half day sessions for authorised absence and <<M_Unauthorised_absences>> half day sessions for unauthorised absence. This will have an impact on your child's education which we cannot ignore.

As there has been no improvement in <<Forename>>'s attendance, I must advise you that further absences from school as a result of illness may require medical evidence (e.g. copy of a prescription, Doctors/Dentist appointment card). If medical evidence is not provided when required, further absences will be marked as unauthorised.

I am inviting you to attend a School Attendance Meeting. The time and date have been set for **[INSERT DATE]** at **[INSERT TIME]**. It is important that you and <<Forename>> attend this meeting for us to explore the issues around poor attendance. The meeting will be attended by **[INSERT STAFF]**.

If this appointment is inconvenient, I would be grateful if you could contact me so that an alternative time can be arranged.

If you do not attend this meeting and <<Forename>>'s absence continues to deteriorate, a referral may be made to the Local Authority School Liaison Officer for further action and possible prosecution.

Thank you for your co-operation.

Yours sincerely

Mr J Watson
Executive Principal

Appendix 5 – Penalty Notice Warning Letter

<<Parental_addressee>>

<<Address_block>>

Dear <<Parental_Salutation>>

Re: <<Forename>> <<Surname>>

At our school we consider attendance of utmost importance and I am therefore bringing this information to your attention.

Our monitoring process has shown that <<Forename>> has been absent from school for a total of <<M_Unauthorised_absences>> unauthorised half day sessions. I refer you to legislation regarding Penalty Notices.

'As from 2005, Kent Local Authority (LA) introduced Penalty Notices for unauthorised absence from school of at least 10 sessions (5 days) during any 100 possible school sessions.' A separate Penalty Notice can be issued to each parent and for each child.

On receipt of the Notice, the penalty will be £120, reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days. Failure to pay the penalty in full at the end of the 28 day period may result in prosecution by the LA.

Please note this is a warning letter that a Penalty Notice could be requested if a total of 10 unauthorised sessions (5 days) are reached.

Should you wish to discuss this matter further please do not hesitate to contact me.

If further unauthorised absence occurs you will be contacted and invited in for a meeting at the school.

Yours sincerely

Mr J Watson
Executive Principal

Appendix 6 – Penalty Notice Request Letter

<<Parental_addressee>>
<<Address_block>>

Dear <<Parental_Salutation>>

Re: <<Forename>> <<Surname>>

With reference to our letter dated **[INSERT DATE OF PREVIOUS LETTER]**, <<Forename>> has now reached a total of <<M_Unauthorised_absences>> half day sessions of unauthorised absence. As a result we will now be requesting a Penalty Notice from the Local Authority.

A separate Penalty Notice can be issued to each parent and for each child.

Yours sincerely

Mr J Watson
Executive Principal

Appendix 7 – Lateness Concern Letter

<<Parental_addressee>>

<<Address_block>>

Thursday, 03 November 2022

Dear <<Parental_Salutation>>

Re: <<Forename>> <<Surname>>

I am writing to express my concern over the number of occasions that <<Forename>> has been arriving late at school. Below for your information is a summary of attendance indicating the days <<Forename>> was late (Code L):

Total lates: <<Lates_both>>

A pupil's lateness will seriously disrupt their learning and can be embarrassing for your child.

I am sure you share my concern and would wish to work with the school to improve punctuality. If we can help in any way, perhaps via our School Nurse or Family Liaison Officer, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely

Mr J Watson
Executive Principal

Appendix 8 – Holiday Request Denied Letter

<<Parental_addressee>>

<<Address_block>>

Dear <<Parental_Salutation>>

Request for leave during Term-Time

For the attention of the parents of <<Forename>> <<Surname>>

I have received your request to take <<Forename>> out of school for a family holiday between **[INSERT START DATE]** and **[INSERT END DATE]**, a total of **[INSERT NUMBER OF DAYS]** of school sessions.

From September 2013 the Department for Education has amended the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 removing the Executive Principal's ability to authorise leave of absence for a family holiday. Requests for holidays in term-time will **not** be authorised as the Regulations only allow me to authorise absence (leave) in "exceptional circumstances".

The School's Attendance Policy confirms that:

- agreement to each request is at my discretion, acting on behalf of the Governing Body
- each case will be judged on its merits
- my decision is final
- leave cannot be authorised retrospectively

I have considered your request but I am writing to confirm that on this occasion the leave will not be authorised. If you decide to take «Forename» out of school I will be making a request for a Penalty Notice to be issued.

Penalty Notices are issued to **each parent of each child** and the amount of the penalty will be £120 to be paid within 28 days, reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days. Failure to pay the penalty in full at the end of the 28 day period may result in prosecution by the Attendance Service.

Yours sincerely

Mr J Watson
Executive Principal

Appendix 9 – Holiday (No Notice) Penalty Notice Warning Letter

<<Parental_addressee>>

<<Address_block>>

Dear <<Parental_Salutation>>

Re: <<Forename>> <<Surname>>

You failed to apply in advance for permission for <<Forename>> to be absent from school.

From September 2013 the Department for Education has amended the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 removing the Executive Principal's ability to authorise leave of absence, except in exceptional circumstances. ***(State why you are treating this absence as a family holiday and/or why there are no exceptional circumstances)***

Requests for holidays in term-time will **not** be authorised as the Regulations only allow me to authorise absence (leave) in "exceptional circumstances".

I am unable to authorise leave retrospectively therefore this absence will be recorded as unauthorised absence, where a child has 10 unauthorised sessions within 100 school session a Penalty Notice may be issued.

The Penalty Notice gives you the opportunity to pay a penalty instead of being prosecuted for failing to secure your child's regular attendance at school. The amount of the penalty is £120 per parent, per child, but if payment is made by you within 21 days of receipt of this Notice it will be £60 per parent, per child. If you pay this penalty within the time limits, no further action will be taken against you in connection with the offence, i.e. your liability for the offence will be discharged.

Yours sincerely

Mr J Watson
Executive Principal

Appendix 10 – Holiday (No Notice) Penalty Notice Request Letter

<<Parental_addressee>>
<<Address_block>>

Dear <<Parental_Salutation>>

Request for leave during Term-Time
For the attention of the parents of <<Forename>> <<Surname>>

You failed to apply in advance for permission for <<Forename>> to be absent from school.

From September 2013 the Department for Education has amended the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 removing the Executive Principal's ability to authorise leave of absence for a family holiday. Requests for holidays in term-time will **not** be authorised as the Regulations only allow me to authorise absence (leave) in "exceptional circumstances".

The School's Attendance Policy confirms that:

- agreement to each request is at my discretion, acting on behalf of the Governing Body
- each case will be judged on its merits
- my decision is final
- leave cannot be authorised retrospectively

As stated above, I am unable to authorise leave retrospectively and I will be making a request for a Penalty Notice to be issued.

Penalty Notices are issued to **each parent** of **each child** and the amount of the penalty will be £120 to be paid within 28 days, reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days. Failure to pay the penalty in full at the end of the 28 day period may result in prosecution by the Attendance Service.

Yours sincerely

Mr J Watson
Executive Principal

Appendix 11 – Evidence Request Letter

<<Parental_addressee>>
<<Address_block>>

Dear <<Parental_Salutation>>

Re: <<Forename>> <<Surname>>

I believe **[INSERT REASONS FOR YOUR BELIEF]** that your child has been taken on holiday during term time, between **[INSERT START DATE]** and **[INSERT END DATE]** which was not requested and has not been authorised. This absence will be recorded as code G, which is an unauthorised mark, unless you are able to provide us with evidence that your child was absent for another reason within the next 10 days.

Where a child has 10 unauthorised sessions within 100 school sessions a Penalty Notice may be issued. The Penalty Notice gives you the opportunity to pay a penalty fine instead of being prosecuted for the offence of failing to secure your child's regular attendance at school. The amount of the penalty is £120 per parent, per child, but if payment is made by you within 21 days of receipt of a Penalty Notice it will be £60 per parent, per child. If you pay the penalty within the time limits, no further action will be taken against you in connection with the offence as set out in the notice, i.e. your liability for the offence will be discharged.

Yours sincerely

Mr J Watson
Executive Principal

Appendix 12 – Evidence Not Provided Penalty Notice Requested

<<Parental_addressee>>
<<Address_block>>

Thursday, 03 November 2022

Dear <<Parental_Salutation>>

Re: <<Forename>> <<Surname>>

With reference to our letter dated **[INSERT DATE OF PREVIOUS LETTER]**, the leave of absence taken between **[INSERT START DATE]** and **[INSERT END DATE]** has now been recorded as unauthorised absence and as a result, a Penalty Notice has been requested.

A separate Penalty Notice can be issued to each parent and for each child.

Yours sincerely

Mr J Watson
Executive Principal

Appendix 13 - Kent School Referral Pathway – Pupil Attendance

