



Holbrook Academy

Attendance Procedures

A Guide for Parents/Carers

1. When does my child need to be in the Academy?

Your child should arrive at the Academy in good time for registration. Your Child should be in form by 8.30am and the afternoon register 1.05pm

2. What happens if my child is late?

If your child arrives after the register (that is after 8.35) has been taken but before it is closed, he/she will be marked **late (L)** and receive an automatic detention. If your child arrives after 9.00am he/she will be marked as **late (unauthorised) (U)**. Students who arrive on school site after registration (8.30am and 1.05pm) must report to the Academy Office and sign in.

3. Does the Academy need letters explaining my child's absence or will a telephone call do?

If your child is unwell and is going to be absent from the Academy, please inform us by telephone or message via the School Gateway before 8.30am on the first day of absence and each subsequent day of absence. If you do not contact us, we will telephone you as we have responsibility to ensure your child's safety. If we do not receive a reply, whether to telephone messages or correspondence, we will not authorise the absence and this will show on your child's school report. When leaving a message please include student name, form and reason and the name of the person leaving the message.

4. What reasons will the school accept for absences?

- Illness
- Emergency dental/medical (please make routine appointments after school or during the holidays)
- Day of religious observance
- Family bereavement
- Attending an interview for a job, college, university, etc.
- Failure of school transport

Except in the case of illness, you should ask for permission for your child to miss school well in advance, giving full details and supply appointment letters. In cases of recurring absences through illness you may be asked to produce medical evidence.

5. What is unacceptable?

The Academy will not authorise absence for day trips, visiting relatives, shopping, birthdays or looking after brothers or sisters, etc.

6. Will the Academy contact me if my child is absent?

The Academy operates a daily contact throughout any period of absence. We will telephone you if we have not heard from you. If we are unable to contact you we will telephone your other contacts in order of priority as provided on your data collection form. If there is no response from any of your contacts we will send you a letter and may take further action by involving other authorities as appropriate. This is because we believe it is our responsibility to ensure your child's safety as well as their regular school attendance and we take a student's absence from school very seriously.

If we are concerned about aspects of your child's attendance or punctuality we will contact you by telephone and/or email/letter to discuss the best way forward. We may involve external agencies.

7. Can we take family holidays during term-time?

The Academy very strongly discourages parents/carers from taking their child out of school for a holiday. Family holidays should be taken during school holidays. Any holiday taken without the prior agreement of the Headteacher will be recorded as unauthorised absence.

If, in exceptional circumstances, you need to request permission for your child to accompany you on an **annual family holiday** during term time, you should complete and return a Leave of Absence Request form to the Headteacher, at least six weeks in advance. The form must be accompanied by a letter clearly stating the reason why the holiday cannot be undertaken in school holiday time. **Financial/economic reasons, availability of accommodation, ease of travel would not be considered acceptable reasons to grant leave of absence.** If the request is due to the limited times a parent is able to take holiday, then written evidence of this should be obtained from the employer.

If students miss work as a result of a holiday taken in term time, it is expected that responsibility for catching up on missed work lays with the child and parents/carers not their teachers.

Occasionally some students need to undertake an extended trip overseas. In this situation parents should contact the Headteacher as soon as possible to discuss the arrangements.

8. Implementation of Penalty Notices to tackle non attendance

In certain circumstances, the Education Attendance Service on behalf of Suffolk County Council, School, Academies issues fixed penalty notices (£60 per pupil per parent if paid within 21 days or £120 per pupil per parent if paid within 28 days).

The Local Authority states that the issuing of a Penalty Notice is considered appropriate

- Where a pupil/student has taken holiday during term-time and the absence is not authorised by the school.
- Where a pupil/student is stopped with parents/carers during a truancy sweep and the absence is not authorised by the school.
- Where a pupil/student has been identified for the first time as having 8 sessions of unauthorised absence in the current school term (4 school days).

Further information on Penalty Notices can be obtained from the Suffolk County Council website.

9. What can I do to encourage my child to attend school?

Make sure your child gets enough sleep and gets up in plenty of time each morning. Ensure that he/she leaves home in the correct uniform and properly equipped. Show your child, by your interest, that you value his/her education. Please ensure you look at Go4schools with your child to check for home learning tasks. Chat to him/her about school and ensure he/she feels happy and motivated and let us know if you feel they have stopped enjoying coming to school.

10. My child is trying to avoid coming to school. What should I do?

In the first instance contact your child's Form Tutor immediately and openly discuss your worries. The Family Liaison Officer (Mrs Michelle Jackson) is available to support in more complex cases. Your child could be avoiding school for a number of reasons – difficulties with school work, bullying, friendship problems, family difficulties. It is important that we identify the reason for your child's reluctance to attend school and work together to tackle the problem. We may involve other agencies to help and support you and your child.

In some cases you may find it helpful to discuss the circumstances of your child's difficulties with an Educational Welfare Officer. The Academy may also refer you to an Education Welfare Officer who works with staff and families if difficulties with attendance arise. The Education Welfare Service is based at:

Suffolk Family Focus School Attendance Service
Directorate of Health, Wellbeing and Children's Services
Suffolk County Council,
Endeavour House,
Ipswich, IP1 2BX

