All schools within the Link Academy Trust are committed to providing a full and effective educational experience for all pupils. We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.
We believe that if pupils are to benefit from education, good attendance is crucial. Irregular attendance undermines the educational process and can lead to educational and social disadvantage. As a Multi Academy Trust we do all that we can to ensure maximum attendance for all pupils. Any problems that prevent full attendance will be identified and addressed as speedily as possible in line with procedures agreed by the Directors.

It is the policy of the Trust to celebrate achievement. Attendance is a critical factor to a productive and successful school career and establishes a good pattern for later life. We will actively promote, encourage and reward 100 per cent attendance for all our pupils. We recognise that parents have a vital role to play and that there is a need to establish strong home-school links and communication systems that can be utilised whenever there is concern about attendance.

Objectives

- to encourage full attendance and punctuality
- to record and monitor attendance and absenteeism and apply appropriate strategies
- to acknowledge and reward a successful record of attendance through the Trust's rewards system
- to ensure a consistent approach in line with all schools within the Trust

Statutory Duty of Schools and Parents

The Education Act 1996 requires parents/carers to ensure their children receive effective full-time education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.
Schools are responsible for recording pupil attendance twice a day; once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session.
Parents/carers are legally responsible for ensuring that their children attend school. This extends to ensuring that pupils arrive at School on time, properly attired, and in a condition to learn. All schools will make every effort to promote good attendance, giving advice and support where needed.

The Educational Welfare Service and School Attendance

The EWS is a part of the Devon Local Authority. Its aim is to ensure that every child has the opportunity to benefit from a full time education by attending school regularly. The EWS can help and advise parents/carers who may be experiencing difficulties that prevent this. It is the responsibility of parents/carers to ensure that their child attends school regularly and the EWS expects parents/carers to do all that is necessary to make sure this happens.

What happens if your child does not attend school regularly (and their absence is not authorised)?

It is a criminal offence for a child not to attend school regularly and, as a parent/ guardian, this is your responsibility. A Penalty Notice may therefore be issued, requiring you to pay a fine of up to £60 per parent/carer, per child (if paid within 21 days) or £120 (if paid with 28 days) if their attendance is below an acceptable level. In certain circumstances you may be prosecuted and be required to attend the Magistrates Court where you could face up to 3 months' imprisonment and/or a fine of up to £2500.
You will be given every opportunity to improve your child's attendance and you will receive a written warning before any legal action is taken.

Statutory Attendance
There is a legal requirement to have an AM and a PM registration.

AM: Pupils will be registered at the beginning of each morning (9.00am) by the teacher. Registration closes at 9.15am; any arrivals between 9.00am and 9.15am will be classified as LATE (Code **L**) Arrival after 9.15am is recorded as an UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE (Code **U**).
PM: Registration takes place at the beginning of the afternoon session by the class teacher.
X: we shall be using this code for all children below statutory school age who are absent for any reason, including part time education.

All registration will be recorded on the SIMS system at the end of each week by the administrator.
Class registers must be taken at the beginning of all sessions by the teacher.
Accurate registration is very important and registration details can be used as evidence where parents/carers are prosecuted for school attendance offences.
The attendance register will be kept for three years by all schools.

Request for absence during Term Time

All requests must be made using the S2 form, available from the office, at the earliest convenience before the request absence. The schools within the Trust do not encourage any absence during term time and the Heads of School ***may no longer authorise absences unless for exceptional circumstances***. In this situation the Head of School will liaise with the Executive Principal.

- No absence will be authorised in the first two weeks of any term or during May when SATs for Years 2 and 6 take place.

If a parent/carer is refused an absence request and the pupil is still taken out of a school by the parent/carer, the School / Education Welfare Officer will be informed.

Reporting Absences
It is the responsibility of the parents/carers to inform the School of the reason for a pupil's absence on the first and each day of absence . The School will operate a First Day Calling system and the parents/carers of every absent pupil will be contacted by the Administrator. Parents/Carers will be asked to ensure that, should a safeguarding concern arise, one of the alternative emergency contacts they have registered with the school, will be able to gain access to their property to check all is in order.

In any case of absence**,** parents/carers should contact the school by one of the following methods:

- By phone to the Administrator.
- Personal contact with Administrator at school, where a note will be passed to the teacher.

In the case of long term illness the school should be notified.
If it is known that the pupil will be absent for more than 2 weeks, the EWO should be notified.
Where over the course of an academic year, a pupil misses 16 sessions due to illness, the School will write to parents to ask them to provide medical evidence for each future period of illness related absence. This evidence could be a Doctor's note, appointment card or copy of a prescription.

Truancy
It is the legal responsibility of parents/carers to ensure their child attends all lessons as required. Parents/carers will be informed by the Administrator if their child has been identified as truanting from the school. Persistent cases may be referred to the EWO who may consider issuing a Penalty Notice.

Punctuality
It is the responsibility of parents/carers to ensure their child attends full time education and arrives at school on time. Punctuality is monitored by the school and parents will be contacted if their child is not arriving on time.
Persistent cases will be referred to the EWO who may consider issuing a Penalty Notice.

Staff guidance and procedures .

Reporting to Parents
Annual Report to parents/carers includes summative information on attendance as well as a comment on punctuality.

Distribution of Data
The Administrator will produce for Head of School:
a) printout of all attendances for previous week
b) reports on persistent lateness to school in the mornings (6 or more) .
c) all pupils below 95% attendance
d) % attendance figures for all pupils half termly.

The Head of School will report attendance data to the Governors via the Executive Principal termly and targets annually.

User Codes and reconciliation of registers

- *If a pupil is absent, use Code **N (**unless there is already a code which has been entered.*
- *If a pupil is late during registration use Code **L** .*
- *Only the national attendance codes issued can be used.*

Absence from School
Authorisation of absences from school :
- *Parent/Carer provides written, signed note from parent/carer on pupil's return, unless parent/carer has contacted the school by another acceptable means. (see above)*
- *Teacher to record on registration system using appropriate code.*
- *Teacher to hand in absence notes/records at end of every week to the Administrator. These will then be archived for 3 years.*

Follow up procedures for unauthorised absence or persistent absence (including illness) from School: *See attached flow chart 'Encouraging Good Attendance'.*

Follow up procedures for lateness to school in the morning:
Admin contacts home or sends standard letter if pupil regularly arrives late at school.
Admin will alert Head of School to any pupil who has 6 or more lates in any half term. Head of School will contact parents.
Where there is no improvement if lateness continues to persist the Head of School will refer the pupil to EWO who may consider instigating legal procedures.

Roles and Responsibilities
Role of Local Governing Board: *Reviews policy, receives a termly report via Executive Principal's Report to Governors.*

Executive Principal: *Oversight and implementation of policy.*

***Administrator**: Administration of attendance and punctuality data within the framework of this policy, first day contacts.*

Teachers:
Keep an accurate register and follow up of absences and lateness within the systems and procedures of this policy.

***Education Welfare Officer**: Implementation of LA procedures in enforcing attendance and assisting year teams with advising pupils and parents of the legal consequences of failing to meet these obligations. The EWO is the attendance enforcement arm of the LA. The EWO for our schools will be fully informed of all absences giving cause for concern and will have full access to the electronic registration system*

This Policy is reviewed by the Standards & Curriculum Committee on an annual cycle and must be approved by the Board of Directors and signed by the Chair of Directors and Chief Executive Officer.

Policy Reviewed:	July 2018
Next Review:	July 2019
Signature of Chair of Directors:	Signature of CEO:

Encouraging Good Attendance

Ongoing

Teacher and Admin

- Weekly Attendance Data provided to Admin.
- First Day Calling.

Teachers

- Keep accurate AM and PM register.
- Follow up Absence promptly.
- Inform Head of School of any attendance concerns.

Head of School

- To co-ordinate and monitor the above.
- Ensure Escalation Process consistently followed with discretion where appropriate.
- Responsible for Pupil & School Attendance Data and meeting Local and National Attendance Targets.
- To co-ordinate / monitor attendance of vulnerable groups (SEN / CIC / EAL /

Intervention

8 sessions missed unauthorised (4 days) EWO informed

16 sessions (8 days) missed due to illness, medical evidence required

Lateness

If persistent lateness, Head of School send Late letter.
Discuss lateness with parents/carers.
If no improvement escalate to EWO

10 unauthorised sessions missed (5 days) EWO informed and penalty notice issued

If No Improvement

- School and EWO consider Fast Track or alternative action.

COPY AND PASTE TO SCHOOL HEADED PAPER

Insert Date

Dear **<<Name Name>>**

Persistent Absence

NAME OF YOUNG PERSON:
DATE OF BIRTH:
ATTENDANCE PERCENTAGE:

I am writing to inform you our records show that your child has had 8 or more unauthorised absences (equivalent to 4 days), which is above the acceptable level allowed for our school. Due to our continuing concerns over low attendance, we now ask that you meet with me, as the Head of School and the Education Welfare Officer to discuss your child's attendance. The meeting will be on xxxxxx at xxxxxxx, xxxxxx school.

I must make you aware at this stage that if your child's attendance does not improve and your child's absence reaches 10 or more unauthorised sessions (5 days), then this could lead to possible legal proceedings. The purpose of this meeting is to help you to address any issues so that this can be avoided.

I have attached a copy of your child's attendance record so that you can see the seriousness of the situation and carefully consider the reasons for it before the meeting.

Please confirm your attendance at the proposed date and time or arrange an alternative meeting by contacting the school on ***<<School Contact Details>>*** on receipt of this letter.

Yours sincerely

Insert Name
Head of School

COPY AND PASTE TO SCHOOL HEADED PAPER

Insert Date

Dear **<<Name Name>>**

Unauthorised Leave Request.

NAME OF YOUNG PERSON:
DATE OF BIRTH:

As you will be aware, leave during term time is not a parental right and is entirely at the discretion of the school. It is both School and the Link Academy Trust's Policy not to grant leave unless it is for exceptional circumstances. Unfortunately this means that we have had no option but to refuse your application for /leave on **<<dates from/to>>**.

We believe that if **PUPILS** are to benefit from education, good attendance is crucial. It is the policy of our school to celebrate achievement and full attendance is a critical factor to a productive and successful school career.

I must take this opportunity to remind you, that should you choose to take your child out of school unauthorised, then you make yourself liable to receiving a Penalty Notice from the Education Welfare Service. This absence will make you liable for a £60/120 (per parent/carer per child) Penalty Notice.

This policy is shared by all schools within the Link Academy Trust. We understand the disappointment that this refusal may cause and we apologise, but as you can appreciate this policy represents the school's responsibility and commitment towards ensuring your child's full and efficient education.

Yours sincerely

Insert Name
Head of School

COPY AND PASTE TO SCHOOL HEADED PAPER

Insert Date

Dear **<<Name Name>>**

Persistent Lateness to school.

NAME OF YOUNG PERSON:
DATE OF BIRTH:
ATTENDANCE PERCENTAGE:

Our records show that your child's punctuality falls below the acceptable level allowed for our school. You will be aware that regular and punctual attendance at school is vital so that pupils are able to take full advantage of the opportunities available to them.

I have attached a copy of your child's attendance record for your information, with "L" recording a late attendance.

I hope that my drawing your child's persistent lateness to your attention, you will be able to ensure they are in school in time for registration. This will help their learning. If there is a particular reason for the lateness, please call me so the school can help to resolve this. The 1996 Education Act, states that the required attendance for children to attend school is every day school is open.

Yours sincerely

Insert name
Head of School

COPY AND PASTE TO SCHOOL HEADED PAPER

Insert Date

Dear **<<Name Name>>**

Persistent Absence - Medical Evidence Required

NAME OF YOUNG PERSON:
DATE OF BIRTH:
ATTENDANCE PERCENTAGE:

Any absence for sickness is authorised purely at the discretion of the school. Currently the school is authorising your children's absence with a medical coding. Your child has now had in excess of 16 missed sessions due to sickness. In line with both school and the Link Academy Trust's policy, the school will now be requesting medical evidence in order to authorise future absences. If we do not receive this, we may record the absence as unauthorised.

Please ensure that all future absences are covered by medical evidence (this can be a GP's note, GP's appointment slip or copy of a prescription).

Yours sincerely

Insert Name
Head of School