

## **Ipswich Academy – Attendance Information for Parents**

### **Expectations**

The academy takes pupil attendance very seriously as it is proven that regular attendance has a significant impact on educational achievement. A persistent absentee, a student with less than 90% attendance or 1 day off every 2 weeks, is at significant risk of underachievement. As a parent you have a legal obligation to ensure your child attends school regularly and the academy will strive to ensure your child reaches their full potential.

### **Absences**

**Daily Communication** – Parents/Carers should call the academy by 8.30am each and every day to report their child's absence from school (unless it relates to an authorised long term absence). If no reason has been received for a child's absence, the academy will initiate first day calling and/or home visits.

**Authorising absences** – Parents should provide medical evidence to support absences due to illness or medical appointment for the academy to then be able to authorise (ie. medical appointment card, copy of prescription, doctor's letter). If no appropriate medical evidence is provided then the academy cannot authorise the absence.

**Medical appointments** – Wherever possible parents should make appointments outside of school hours but if this is unavoidable then students should attend school before and after the appointment.

### **Lateness**

**Students arriving late to school (8.30-8.50)** receive a 60 minute detention after school the following day. (If a student already has a detention set for the next day, then the detention will be booked for the next available day). If students are persistently late then other measures will be explored with parents to improve this.

**Students arriving after the close of registration (8.50am)** will receive a detention as above and an unauthorised absence and this will affect their attendance %.

### **Pupil illness at school**

If a student is taken ill during the day then, depending on the pupil's condition, parents may or may not be contacted by the academy. For minor ailments/complaints reasonable attempts will be made to keep the student at school. Students who are ill will only be sent home following successful contact and consultation with a parent and in this instance the absence will be authorised.

### **Leave of absence/holidays during term time**

Term time holidays are not a parental right and are always unauthorised. Authorisation of any leave of absence during term time would only be in exceptional circumstances and would only be granted at the Principal's discretion. A Leave of Absence form, available from reception, is to be completed for any term time absence along with a covering letter explaining the reason for the request. Unauthorised absence for a holiday within term time will normally result in a Fixed Penalty Notice being issued (See 'Fixed Penalty Notice Policy' for details).

### **Attendance Procedure**

Base Group Tutors review pupil attendance with their tutees on a weekly basis. Students with good attendance are automatically rewarded with Star Points.

If there are concerns over pupil attendance then the Attendance Team will send a letter and/or invite parents into the academy for an Attendance Panel to discuss their child's attendance.

If there isn't a significant improvement in attendance and/or there continues to be unauthorised absences, then the academy will liaise with the Education Welfare Service to initiate legal action.

**\*\*Ipswich Academy Tel: 01473 550040 – Parents should always keep the academy informed if/when their contact details change\*\***

## **Fixed Penalty Notice Policy**

A Fixed Penalty Notice may only be issued in cases of unauthorised absence or unauthorised lateness or where parents/carers fail to ensure that their child is not in a public place during the first five days of exclusion from school.

Fixed Penalty Notices apply on an individual child per parent basis. Therefore a parent with 3 children who meet the criteria may receive 3 Penalty Notices. In a family with 2 parents/carers with three children who meet the criteria, each parent/carer may receive 3 Penalty Notices – meaning that a total of 6 Penalty Notices may be received.

The issue of a Fixed Penalty Notice may be considered appropriate in any of the following circumstances:

- **In instances of a pupil having 8 sessions (4 days) of unauthorised absence for unauthorised leave/holidays in term time. A session is a half-day and unauthorised means without the consent/authorisation of the school.**
- **Where parents/carers fail to attend, without reasonable cause, in-school local authority led Attendance meetings, to which they have been invited to discuss their child's unauthorised absences.**
- **In cases of pupils identified as having Persistent Absence (where the attendance of pupils falls below 90% in a period of a School term they are designated as having Persistent Absence) with 8 or more sessions of unauthorised absence (not authorised by the school) and with substantial evidence of failure on the part of the parent/carer to work in cooperation and partnership to address and improve the situation.**
- **In cases of frequent late arrival at school (after the register has closed) with 8 or more unauthorised lates occurring over a period of a school term. The journey involved and particular issues such as adverse weather conditions and disruptions to transport will be taken into account as necessary.**
- **Where there is a combination of unauthorised absence and avoidable lateness amounting to 8 sessions or more over the period of a school term.**
- **In cases where a pupil has been stopped by the truancy patrol on more than one occasion within the period of a school term, with no valid reason for not being in school. This would include pupils accompanied by parents/carers, guardians, or other adults.**
- **Where parents/carers fail to ensure that their child is not in a public place during the first five days of exclusion from school without reasonable justification.**

The school will refer pupils where there is cause for concern about unauthorised absence and/or lateness to the Education Welfare Service. In most circumstances each liable parent/carer will have received a formal warning of the possibility of a Penalty Notice being issued.

If following the issuing of the warning notice the pupil has further unauthorised absence or avoidable unauthorised late marks, the parents/guardians of the pupil may each receive a Fixed Penalty Notice for £60 which must be paid within 21 days or it will increase to £120 each which must be paid within a further 7 days. Failure to pay the Fixed Penalty Notice will lead to prosecution in the Magistrates Court for the original non-attendance and a possible criminal conviction.

In those specific circumstances related to:

- **the taking of 8 sessions (4 days) or more of unauthorised leave/holidays in term time where it can be clearly demonstrated that the parent/carer understood that permission had not or would not be given**
- **where parents fail to ensure that their child is not in a public place during the first five days of exclusion from school without reasonable justification**

the pupil will be referred immediately to the Education Welfare Service for issue of the Penalty Notice.

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