

Ninestiles Academy Trust Mission Statement

Ninestiles Academy Trust will be nationally and internationally acknowledged as a high achieving, innovative and exciting group of trusts which recognise and respect the richness and diversity of their communities. The trust will be structured and resourced to meet the needs of 21st century students and pupils. Within a caring environment, we will develop and reinforce the values, skills and attributes which promote good citizenship and lifelong learning. Parents, Trustees and academy councillors, and the wider community will work in partnership with our committed, appropriately skilled workforce and our students and pupils, to ensure that high quality learning takes place.
Outcomes will be outstanding

Policy Title	Attendance Policy
Monitoring & Review	Reviewed May 2019
Links	Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
Staff responsible	Executive Principals
Committee responsible	Board of Trustees
Date Approved	May 2017
Review date*	May 2019

**Please note that should any further national guidance be issued by external agencies that are relevant to this policy, it will be updated accordingly prior to the review date shown above and referred to the next academy council meeting*

CONTENTS

OVERVIEW – PHILOSOPHY, POLICY AND PRACTICE.	3
THE IMPORTANCE OF REGULAR SCHOOL ATTENDANCE	3
OUR PHILOSOPHY	4
OUR PRINCIPLES	4
OUR PRACTICE & PROCEDURES	5
OUR PERFORMANCE	6
ARRIVAL AND PUNCTUALITY	6
LATENESS	6
REGISTRATION	6

Overview – Philosophy, policy and practice.

THE IMPORTANCE OF REGULAR SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

The importance of regular school attendance cannot be overestimated. Regular school attendance is a prerequisite of a good education, the achievement of excellent outcomes and helps to keep students safe, making them less vulnerable to getting involved in negative social situations. Securing excellent attendance must therefore be a high priority for The Ninestiles Trust, its Directors, Academy Councillors, our parents and the students themselves. By failing to attend school regularly, students diminish the value of the education provided for them and they may also damage the learning of others.

The Ninestiles Trust wishes to encourage and promote good attendance in as many ways and for as many students as we can, but we recognise the need to balance this with measures to address the needs of those children who do – for whatever reason – find it difficult to attend.

Our whole school approach to attendance will focus primarily on promoting excellent attendance but will also address the issue of unauthorised and condoned absence where it occurs. It also relates to a wide range of other school based issues including punctuality, rewards and incentives, re-integration of long-term absentees, curricular provision and differentiation, home-school links, and the role of the all those who work to promote attendance.

LEGAL RESPONSIBILITIES

The legal framework governing attendance is set by the Education Acts and their associated regulations.

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that:

“The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient, full time education suitable to his/her age, aptitude and ability and to any special educational needs he/she may have either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.”

Section 444 further states that:

“The parent of a child of compulsory school age registered at school and failing to attend regularly is guilty of an offence punishable by law. An offence is not committed if it can be demonstrated that:-

- The student was absent with leave (authorised absence)*
- The student was ill or prevented from attending by unavoidable cause*
- The absence occurred on a day set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which students/parents belong*
- The school is not within the prescribed walking distance of the child’s home and no suitable transport arrangements have been made by the LA. The law relating to ‘walking distance’ effectively is defined as two miles for students under eight and three miles for all other students measured by nearest available walking route.*
- A limited defence is available to the parents of the travelling children.*

The Act also places a legal obligation on:

- The Academy Trust to provide and enforce attendance
- The Academy to register attendance and notify the local authority of a child’s absence from school without authorisation of 10 or more days.
- The Academy Council to make sure that school registers are kept, one for

attendance and one for admissions.

OUR PHILOSOPHY

The Ninestiles Trust is committed to providing a full, efficient and fulfilling educational experience to all of our students. We believe that, if students are to benefit from the education that we offer, punctuality and good attendance is crucial. As a Trust, we will organise and do all we can to ensure maximum attendance for all students. Any problems that impede punctuality and regular attendance will be identified and addressed as speedily as possible. It is the policy of our Trust to celebrate achievement, and attendance is a crucial factor to a productive and successful school career. Therefore;

- The Ninestiles Trust will actively promote and encourage 100 per cent attendance for all our students with a minimum expectation of 97%.
- The Ninestiles Trust will give high priority to conveying to parents and students the importance of regular and punctual attendance through regular updates. We recognise that parents have a vital role to play and there is a need to establish strong home-school links and communication systems that can be utilised whenever there is concern about attendance.
- If there are problems which affect a student's attendance we will investigate, identify and strive in partnership with parents and students to resolve those problems as quickly and efficiently as possible. We will adopt a clearly focused approach aimed at returning the student to full attendance at all times.

OUR PRINCIPLES

The Ninestiles Trust will:

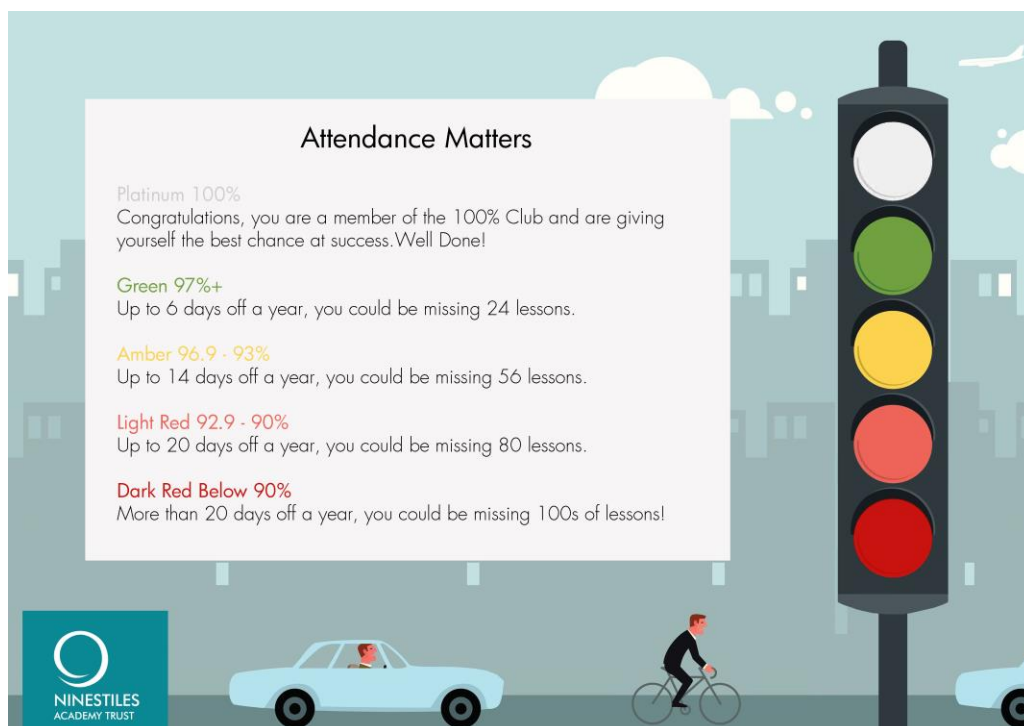
- Expect all staff to see improving attendance as their responsibility and understand their role within that.
- Ensure that all staff are aware of the registration procedures and receive training on registration regulations and education law.
- Meet and greet students at the school gates promoting punctuality and readiness to learn.
- Complete 'roll call' registers accurately at the beginning of each morning (as part of tutor time) and during the afternoon session.
- Stress to parents/carers the importance of contacting staff early on the first day of absence. If no contact from parent/carer when a student is absent then a 'Truancy Call' message will be activated and phone calls made.
- Require all staff to complete a register in every lesson to monitor unauthorised absence and minimize internal truancy.
- Display attendance rates around the school and reward good and improved attendance of all students.
- Promote good attendance through displays, Attendance Focus Weeks and multi-agency working.
- Promote positive staff attitudes to students returning after absence.
- Consult with all stakeholders of the Trust, school and community in developing and maintaining the Trust attendance policy.
- Ensure regular evaluation of attendance procedures by senior managers and the Academy Council of each individual school.
- Include information on attendance matters in each copy of School newsletters and on school websites.
- Work towards ensuring that all students feel supported and valued. We will send a clear message that, if a student is absent, she/he will be missed. This includes a conversation between student and form tutor on return.

- Have in place procedures which allow absentees to catch up on missed work without disrupting the learning of other class members.
- Provide parents with regular attendance information regarding their children to enable them to see the level of progress made.
- Expect any student to have at least 97% attendance before a parent requests exceptional leave of absence.
- Expect all parents requesting a leave of absence to make an appointment with a senior member of staff to determine whether the leave will be authorised, prior to making any external arrangements.

OUR PRACTICE & PROCEDURES

If no contact is received from parents/carers of an absent student on the first morning of absence we will:

- First day contact. Contact parent/carer via 'Truancy Call/Call Parents' system. And/or a phone call.
- Expect attendance personnel will discuss situation with senior member of staff responsible for attendance.
- Undertake home visits if no contact made in terms of safeguarding and attendance to establish the reason for absence and appropriate education support plan is put in place.
- Ninestiles Health and Safety practice for home visits should adhered to at all times.
- Implement a Student tracking system to ensure early intervention where absence occurs.
- Identify and track students at risk of becoming persistently absent and improve pupil attendance to reduce PA (Persistent Absence). (Form staff monitor those colour coded in green, Attendance team for those in amber and light red, attendance support team for those in deep red – See traffic light poster below).



- Run Trust attendance panels for parents/students unless other action is planned. This meeting will include a senior member of staff, a member of the Trust attendance team parent/carer and the student. The aim of this meeting will be to

identify and resolve the difficulties, which are preventing the student from attending school. The parent/carer will be made aware of the legal requirements regarding school attendance.

- The individual school's Attendance team will help the student's re-integration where a student is returning to school after an absence of longer than two weeks. In the event of a student returning after a long term absence then an Individual Reintegration Programme (IRP) will be implemented and monitored by the Attendance team.
- Instigate legal interventions when the Trust believe the parent /carer is failing in their duty to secure regular attendance.
- Follow the agreed Children Missing From Education procedures where students cannot be located.

OUR PERFORMANCE

When evaluating success each school will consider whether or not:

- Attendance has improved.
- Punctuality has improved.
- Parental response to absences has improved.
- Re-integration plans have been successful.
- The school has been successful in raising the profile of attendance both within the school, Academy council and the local community.
- Students are fully aware of the importance of punctuality and regular attendance and the attendance procedures operating within each school.
- Attendance issues have been included as topics in school assemblies, as part of the school's PSHE/Aspire programme or as a theme for any other lessons during Attendance Focus weeks.

Arrival and Punctuality

Students are expected to arrive in time to be seated in their classroom or assembly whichever is applicable before the start of registration.

Staff will be present outside of the Academy to meet, greet and encourage punctuality.

Lateness

Arrival after the start of registration will mean the student is marked late and if the arrival is after 30 minutes from the start of registration the absence will count as unauthorised absence. Students arriving late on a regular basis before the close of registration will be subject to sanctions. Those accruing unauthorised absence will risk being subject to attendance panels and parents may face legal action.

Registration

Class/ tutor time is a vital opportunity to reinforce the need for regular attendance and the impact of absence.

All staff must understand that registers are a legal requirement and must be taken first thing in the morning and at a time in the afternoon stipulated by the Principal. Register should be completed accurately. Unless a code has already been submitted

for the student on the register the class teacher / tutor should mark the student – present / (morning) \ (afternoon) or absent with no reason known - code N. The attendance administrator will amend the coding as necessary and in accord with legal guidelines.

Staff should ensure they welcome students in the room, make reference to any student who is late and encourage them to rectify this in future (age appropriate conversation should be used as very young children can rarely influence the time they get to school).

All students should be welcomed back following absence and an age appropriate discussion should take place.

If a student returns and the code N is still in the register for the previous absence the class teacher/ tutor should try to ascertain the reason for absence and ask the student to ensure the parent/ carer contacts the school.

Secondary Academies will have a programme for form tutor time and this should be adhered to so that students are engaged in learning when they arrive in school.

Year 11 students in vertical tutor groups will be expected to support the tutor to promote attendance and punctuality.