



## Attendance policy

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1** Within the Pegasus Academy Trust we believe that good attendance plays a key part in ensuring personal development, learning and achievement in all areas. Parents, carers and all staff have a duty to encourage maximum attendance at school.

### 2. Rationale

- 2.1** At our schools we are committed to:

- a) maintaining a school culture that prioritises and celebrates high attendance rates;
- b) good practice, which encourages children to take a pride in their attendance and punctuality;
- c) a partnership with parents to ensure understanding, support and co-operation;
- d) encouraging children/students to take full advantage of their educational opportunities by attending regularly;
- e) working transparently with families and key staff members to identify and mitigate any barriers to education at the earliest possible stage acknowledging the diverse external factors that can impact a child's ability to attend school regularly;
- g) following efficiently the Trust systems for accurate recording and monitoring of attendance and punctuality.

### 3 Definitions

#### 3.1 Authorised absence

- a) An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or guardian. For example, if a pupil has been unwell the parent/carers must report the absence to the school;
- b) Only the school can authorise an absence. Parents do not have this authority. Consequently, not all absences supported by parents will be classified as authorised. For example, if a parent takes a child out of school to go shopping during school hours, this will not mean it is an authorised absence.

#### 3.2 Unauthorised absence

- a) An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of both the school and a parent;
- b) Therefore, the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent;
- c) In instances where a pupil's attendance reaches a level of concern, the school may request supplementary medical evidence in order to authorise absences.
- d) These pupils may be placed on a medical evidence list. For pupils on this list, parents and carers are still required to report any absences via the standard school procedures. However, these absences will only be classified as authorised once valid medical evidence has been provided;
- e) The school accepts a variety of documents as evidence, including but not limited to GP/hospital appointment cards and official SMS reminders, extracts from GP records or formal letters from medical professionals, official prescription labels and emails or digital notes from qualified healthcare providers;

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- f) The medical evidence list is reviewed annually in July. Requirements will be removed for pupils showing sustained improvement but maintained for those requiring ongoing support into the new academic year;

### 4. Procedures

- 4.1** Children within The Pegasus Academy Trust must attend their school punctually and regularly. Parents and pupils new to any of our schools should ensure that they familiarise themselves with the start and end times that apply to their children.
- 4.3** A general rule which will ensure that your child is always on time throughout their time with us is to be in school from 8.45am and be in class and ready for learning by 9.00am. **Any child arriving after 9:00am is late for school.** Parents whose children arrive late must notify the appropriate school office and the child or parent must use the tablet running the 'SignIn' app to sign in on each site. The child's attendance is then amended with the appropriate mark by the office staff. **Any child arriving after 9:30am will be marked as absent for the morning session.**
- 4.4** If a pupil is absent, parents and carers must inform the school on the first day of absence and on each day of absence until they return so that the absence is not recorded as "unauthorised." Parents are encouraged to inform the school through our Studybugs App or alternatively by email or telephone.
- 4.5** If we do not receive a message on any day of absence an auto alert is sent to the child's parent/carer via '[Studybugs](#)' or email to ask why the pupil is absent. If no response is received a phone call is made to the parent/carer. If necessary, all contact numbers are phoned in our attempt to ensure the child is safe.
- 4.6** If no response is receiving following these actions, we notify our Admissions and Attendance Officer who may decide to visit the family home. If we have previous concerns about a child's welfare e.g. the child is on the child protection register or we believe could be in danger, we notify our Attendance and Admissions Officer and/or the police or Social Care at the end of the first day of absence.
- 4.7** We clearly communicate our expectations about attendance and punctuality to all members of our schools' community. We seek to address any emerging concerns in this respect at the earliest possible stage and work proactively, with all staff, to ensure that minor problems are addressed and not allowed to escalate or become entrenched. Notwithstanding this, if a significant problem emerged and no response to the usual interventions/support packages was forthcoming, we would ask for the issue of a Penalty Charge Notice (PCN). The local authority either for general attendance concerns or for term-time holiday issues this.
- 4.8** In the event that a PCN is not paid within a stipulated period, court action automatically follows and could lead to a parenting order and/or heavy fine being imposed the Court. However, we would do everything we could to avoid the issue of an PCN.

### 5. Exceptional leave

- 5.1** Parents receive a list of holiday dates at the beginning each academic year. These dates can also be found on the Trust's website <http://www.pegasusacademytrust.org/term-dates>. Parents are expected to take their holidays outside term time. Pupils should attend school for the maximum number of days possible since absences can have a detrimental effect on their learning.
- 5.2** It is the Trust's policy, in line with the Department for Education regulations, not to authorise any leave for holidays during term time.

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- 5.3** Any request to remove a child during term time for a period of exceptional leave should be made to the Head of School in writing using the "leave of absence in exceptional circumstances" form provided in the schools' offices. (**Appendix A**) Each request is considered by the Head of School on a case by case basis. Requests must be made in advance in order to be considered.
- 5.4** We may ask for supplementary evidence for authorisation purposes. Supporting documentation, such as medical certificates or other official records, may be requested at the discretion of the Head of School.
- 5.5** From September 2024 parents and carers should refer to [The National Framework for Penalty Notices for School Absence](#), for further information

## **6. Strategies for improving punctuality and attendance**

- 6.1** Staff across our schools are dedicated to employing all available strategies to ensure consistent pupil punctuality and attendance. This commitment is underpinned by a rigorous monitoring framework that scrutinises authorised and unauthorised absences, alongside the incidence of lateness, to maintain high standards across each setting.
- 6.2** In an attempt to improve rates of punctuality and attendance we:
- a) engage in early-intervention meetings with families where attendance levels require improvement, ensuring that all barriers to learning are identified and addressed through a comprehensive support plan;
  - b) embed the values of regular attendance and punctuality within the student body through proactive pastoral discussions and assemblies;
  - c) maintain consistent communication with parents and carers regarding their child's attendance and punctuality through real-time automated notifications via Studybugs, formal inclusion within the student's annual progress report, and during scheduled parents' evenings;
  - d) ensure our registers are completed accurately;
  - e) involve members of our academy councils in our monitoring procedures;
  - f) work in conjunction with the local authority and multi-agency partners to assist families in identifying and resolving the underlying barriers to consistent attendance;
  - g) use comprehensive attendance data to strategically direct intervention efforts toward specific pupils or cohorts exhibiting the greatest need for support.

## **7 Long-term absences**

- 7.1** Where a pupil has a complex or long-term health issue, the school will discuss the pupil's needs and how these may best be met with the LA, relevant medical professionals, parents and, where appropriate, the pupil.
- 7.2** Children who present with features of emotionally-based school non-attendance (EBSNA) are supported in a way that best suits the child and family's specific needs on a bespoke basis.

## **8 Monitoring and review**

- 8.1** It is the responsibility of the local governing body (Academy Council) to monitor overall attendance. The Directors of the Academy Trust have the responsibility for this policy, and for ensuring that it is carried out. The Directors will therefore examine closely the information provided to them, as well as concerns raised by local governing bodies, and seek to ensure that our attendance figures are as high as they should be. Attendance is a Key Performance Indicator (KPI) for the Directors of the Trust.

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- 8.2** Each school will keep accurate attendance records on file for a minimum period of three years.
- 8.3** Class teachers will be responsible for monitoring attendance in their class, and the office staff in each school within the Trust will be responsible for following up absences in the appropriate way.
- 8.4** The Trust Attendance and Admissions Officer is responsible for the systemic monitoring of attendance trends and the management of family support interventions encompassing high-level liaison with external statutory bodies, weekly strategic consultation with SLT, and the provision of formal progress reports to the Academy Council and Board of Directors to ensure statutory compliance and the promotion of high attendance standards.

### 9. Roles and responsibilities

- 9.1** Within PAT everybody is responsible for improving attendance. Lynne Sampson, one of the Executive Principals, has overall responsibility for the strategic approach to attendance in school. She can be contacted via email at [lsampson@pegasusacademytrust.org](mailto:lsampson@pegasusacademytrust.org)

### 10. Revision history

Date	Brief description of changes
V1 May 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Revision history added;</li><li>• Clarification of medical evidence request processes;</li><li>• Enhanced focus on early intervention, whole school strategy and multi-agency partnership;</li><li>• Integrated EBSNA guidance;</li><li>• Clarification of operational role and responsibilities of the Attendance &amp; Admissions Officer.</li></ul>

Appendix A – Exceptional leave request form.

# The Pegasus Academy Trust



## Application for leave of absence in exceptional circumstances

School (please underline):  
Whitehorse Manor Infants/ Whitehorse Manor Juniors/ Ecclesbourne Primary/Beulah Infants  
/Cypress Primary/Atwood Primary

Full name of child/children:

Class/classes:

Name/s of siblings in other PAT school/s:

Home address:

Reason for application:

Dates pupil(s) will be absent from school: From \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ (inclusive)

Signature of parent/carer: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please be aware that it is the Trust's policy in line with Department for Education regulations to not authorise **any** leave during term time. However, each request will be considered on a case by case basis. **Requests must be made in advance in order to be considered.**

### School response

Date seen by Head of School/Admissions and Attendance Officer:

Decision: Agreed  Not agreed

Reasoning:

Letter attached

Signed:

Entered on computer [ ] Parent's copy [ ]

### Please note

If your request for exceptional leave is not agreed and you decide to go ahead regardless this absence will be noted as 'unauthorised' on your child's attendance record. This will show up on your child's end of year report and may mean that other professionals (such as the Admissions and Attendance Officer) may wish to speak to you regarding this absence. You may also be liable for a Penalty Charge Notice (PCN)