



Attendance Handbook

Manchester Academy

attendance@manchester-academy.org



Manchester Academy
The best in everyone®
Part of the Learning

Every Day in School Matters

Good attendance is one of the most important factors in helping your child achieve their full potential. When children attend school regularly, they learn more, build stronger friendships, and feel more confident about their future.

We understand that, at times, it can be difficult to make sure your child attends every day — life can be busy, and challenges can arise. This booklet is designed to help you understand why regular attendance matters, what counts as too many absences, and what you can do if things start to feel difficult.

Inside, you'll find practical tips, clear information, and details of the support available both in school and through local services.

Together, we can make sure your child gets the best possible start — by being in school, every day they can.



Attendance Team
Manchester Academy



Why is School Attendance Important?



Attending school regularly...



helps students keep up with lessons, build good habits, and move confidently to the next year.



helps students stay connected with friends and teachers who support their learning and confidence.



keeps learning manageable and reduces stress by staying on track with class.



builds the skills and qualifications needed for future success and better job opportunities

How Many Absences is a Lot?

5 absences per month may seem like a small number, but this adds up to nearly a quarter of the school year missed.

Excellent

0–2 days missed per term

6 days or less missed per year. Roughly 97–100% attendance. Little to no impact on learning.

Needs attention

3–5 days missed per term

between 8–18 days missed per year. Some impact on learning; worth addressing

Too many absences

6+ days missed per term

19 days or more missed per year. Below 90% attendance. Learning gaps start to become significant.

The Cost of High Absence

Academic Progress

Missing just 10 extra days a year reduces the likelihood of achieving grades 9–5 in English and Maths by around 50%

Students with 19+ days absent often fall a full grade behind their peers

Social & Wellbeing

Missing school makes it harder to keep up with friends and feel part of the class

Absences can lead to feeling anxious or left behind

Future Success

Poor attendance reduces the chances of getting into preferred sixth form, college, or apprenticeships

School attendance is linked to future earnings – students who miss 19+ days a year could earn £10,000 less

What Can You Do?

Simple steps to help your child attend school



Let your child know that **you believe school is important**; motivate them to go and teach them that it is necessary to be in school every day.



Set and keep a specific time for them to go to bed and wake up on school days.



Try to schedule medical appointments **before or after school**, where possible. Crucially, avoid appointments during registration times (08:30AM, 12:20-13:00PM).



Help or encourage your child to prepare everything they need for school the night before.



Do not allow your child to be absent unless they are truly sick.



Remind them **what they enjoy about school** and **celebrate small wins**.



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Is my child too ill for school?

It can be tricky deciding whether or not to keep your child off school, nursery or playgroup when they're unwell.

There are government guidelines for schools and nurseries about managing specific infectious diseases at GOV.UK. These say when children should be kept off school and when they shouldn't.

If you do keep your child at home, it's important to phone the school or nursery on the first day. Let them know that your child won't be in and give them the reason.

If your child is well enough to go to school but has an infection that could be passed on, such as a cold sore or head lice, let their teacher know.

Feeling Anxious or Worried

It's normal for children to feel a little anxious sometimes. They may get a tummy ache or headache, or have problems eating or sleeping.

Avoiding school can make a child's anxiety about going to school worse. It's good to talk about any worries they may have such as bullying, friendship problems, school work or sensory problems. You can also work with the school to find ways to help them.

If your child is still struggling and it's affecting their everyday life, it might be good to talk to your GP or school nurse.

Coughs and colds

It's fine to send your child to school with a minor cough or common cold. But if they have a high temperature, keep them off school until it goes.

Encourage your child to throw away any used tissues and to wash their hands regularly.

Sore Throat

You can still send your child to school if they have a sore throat. But if they also have a high temperature, they should stay at home until it goes away.

A sore throat and a high temperature can be symptoms of tonsillitis.

High Temperature

If your child has a high temperature, keep them off school until it goes away.

Chicken Pox

If your child has chickenpox, keep them off school until all the spots have crusted over.

This is usually about 5 days after the spots first appeared.

Vomiting and Diarrhoea

Children with diarrhoea or vomiting should stay away from school until they have not been sick or had diarrhoea for at least 2 days (48 hours).



Getting Support with Attendance

Barriers to Attendance

Sometimes there is more to school absence that meets the eye. Encouraging your child to attend regularly can become difficult for a number of reasons:

- **Feeling anxious or stressed about school:** some children find lessons, exams, or social situations overwhelming.
- **Mental health or wellbeing concerns:** worries, low mood, or stress can affect attendance.
- **Learning difficulties or special educational needs:** if your child finds learning challenging, they may avoid school.
- **Health issues:** chronic conditions or frequent appointments can make it harder to attend consistently.
- **Social challenges:** problems with friends, bullying, or feeling isolated can lead to absences.
- **Family or home circumstances:** moving house, family stress, or other practical issues can affect a child's ability to get to school.

We Are Here to Help

If you believe your child is struggling to attend school for any of these reasons—or for any other reason—it's important to get in touch with us. Manchester Academy has a wide range of staff who can offer support, and we also work with external agencies that can provide additional help outside of school. We can signpost or refer you to additional services, and work with you to find the right support for your child.

Remember: if you're worried something is affecting your child's attendance, let us know so we can work together to support them

Support Available

Below are some of the different ways you and your child can be supported with school attendance

In-School Support

Form Tutors and Year Team:

Your child's first point of contact for any attendance concerns. They can work with other staff members to address worries.

Attendance Contract:

Child/family/school agreement on set of personalised actions to encourage improved attendance. Progress reviewed after agreed period.

Attendance Report:

Reward-based approach – tracking days in school attended in order to reach desired attendance goal.

School Counsellor and Wellbeing Support:

Provide emotional support and strategies to help students manage stress, anxiety, or other challenges.

External Support

Early Help:

Provide early intervention services to families facing challenges such as housing, mental health, and education.

42nd Street:

A mental health charity offering free, confidential support to young people aged 11–25 experiencing emotional and mental health difficulties.

CAMHS / NHS Services:

Support children and young people with emotional, behavioural, or mental health difficulties.

Contact

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Early Help

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Manchester Academy

Make Manchester Magic

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