



## MELIOR COMMUNITY ACADEMY ATTENDANCE POLICY

Melior Community Academy aims to ensure that all students are able to access the learning experiences available to them by maximising attendance rates. Legally, a pupil is required to attend regularly and punctually the school at which they are registered under section 444 of the 1996 Education Act.

We differentiate between authorised and unauthorised absence. The Principal has the ultimate responsibility for agreeing to authorise an absence if she or her representatives are satisfied that the reason for absence is a valid one. A letter from or telephone conversation with a parent does not automatically authorise an absence.

### Morning Registration

This is a legal obligation on the part of the school and takes place between 8.40am and 9.00am. Any student arriving after the start of registration should be marked as late by the Form Tutor or sent to sign in at Student Services. Where a student does not arrive to Form, they should be marked with "N".

Student Services check all registers and check Period 1 for any late arrivals who have missed Form time but not signed in. Where a student is less than 30 minutes late, they are marked with "L" for the morning session; where they are more than 30 minutes late, they are marked with "U" (Unauthorised Absence) for the morning session.

Period 1 is always checked by means of a memo to class before a call is made home if a student is not present in school. We frequently remind parents that they must contact school before 9am if their child is not attending school on that day. Where we have had no call from home, and the student is absent, First Day Contact is made. Details of these calls are logged as evidence should it be needed.

### Afternoon registration

This takes place during Period 5 and the same applies in terms of lates as to the morning session. Calls home are made where a student has been present for the morning session and they have not signed out.

### Absence – Authorised and Unauthorised

Where there is no concern over a student's level of attendance and the parent has contacted school to give a valid reason for absence, the register will be marked with the correct code. If no contact has been made by telephone, a letter with a tear off return slip is sent to the parent to seek clarification for the reason for absence. This is returned to school and authorised where there is no attendance issue.

Absence is marked as unauthorised where there is no contact with parent, or the school is not satisfied with the explanation provided.

Where patterns of absence develop, or attendance is adversely affected by frequent medical issues, school will send a letter of concern or a medical evidence request letter.

A referral to the Education Welfare Service will be made where there are 10 sessions of unauthorised absence and they will work with the student and the parents to seek to improve school attendance. Where this does not happen, a penalty notice will be issued or a prosecution will be pursued.

### Truancy

Leaving school after registration without authorisation or not arriving in school without the consent or knowledge of parents is classed as truancy. Failure to attend lessons whilst remaining on the school site is classed as internal truancy. In both cases, a lunchtime detention is set for every 2 instances of truancy or internal truancy.

### Lateness

A detention will be issued by the Form Tutor or subject teacher for each 3 sessions of lateness to form or to a lesson. It may be appropriate to place the student on an attendance report if there is a persistent problem. If the extent of lateness means that the mark for the session is "U", this will be included in the tally for referral to the Education Welfare Service. Information on lates is printed for Form Tutors and placed in their register folder every Monday and Thursday.

### Holidays in Term Time

Leave of absence during term time is not an entitlement and will not be granted for the sole purpose of a family holiday. Permission may only be granted by the Principal of the school if the application was made in advance (retrospective consent will not be given) and there are exceptional circumstances relating to the request. The parent with whom the child normally resides must provide evidence relating to the exceptional circumstances and include this when completing the leave of absence request form. Each request will be considered on the exceptional circumstances detailed on the application form.

Any absences taken without the Principal's permission will be recorded as unauthorised in the school register and may result in a Penalty Notice or other legal intervention by the Education Inclusion Service.