



Transforming Attendance at The East Manchester Academy

Attendance and Punctuality Procedures

November 2020

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1. STATEMENT OF INTENT

The East Manchester Academy is committed to the continuous raising of progress for all students. Regular and punctual attendance is critical if students are to benefit from the opportunities available to them and enjoy a successful and fulfilling school experience.

2. WHY REGULAR ATTENDANCE IS SO IMPORTANT

Any absence disrupts the pattern of a student's education, disrupts teaching routines and will have an adverse effect on the learning of others. The academy offers a broad and balanced curriculum and to facilitate this many academic topics may not be re-visited. Before permitting any absence, we urge families to carefully consider the negative implications of any missed learning opportunities.

The academic year consists of 195 days of which 5 are staff inset/training days with students not being required to attend on these days. Students who attend for the full 190 days will achieve 100% attendance for the academic year and are highly likely to achieve the greatest progress for their ability, enabling them to continue their studies and raise their earning potential in the world of work.

3. THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK AROUND ATTENDANCE

Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act states that parents must ensure that children of compulsory school age receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude to any special educational needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

A child is of compulsory school age at the beginning of the term following their 5th birthday. A child ceases to be of compulsory school age on the last Friday in June of the school year in which they reach the age of 16.

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, require schools to take an attendance register twice a day, once at the start of the morning session and then again during the afternoon session.

The register must record whether the pupil was:

- Present.
- Absent.
- present at approved educational activity. or
- unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

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3.1. Promoting regular attendance

An academy attendance target is set each autumn term to ensure statutory compliance with legislation governing school attendance.

At The East Manchester Academy our aim is for all students to achieve at least 98% attendance and we recognise that attendance below this will impact on a student's achievement

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everyone's responsibility. It is not only the responsibility of families but has the support of all academy staff. To help us all to focus on this we will:

- give details of whole academy attendance in our messages to families and the community.
- report to parents/carers on their child's performance at the academy, giving their attendance percentage and punctuality details, and how this relates to their attainment.
- celebrate good attendance by displaying individual and group achievements.
- reward good or improving attendance through TEMA 10 points and competitions.
- work with families and appropriate agencies to both challenge and provide advice and support to families where attendance is a concern.

3.2. Understanding types of absence

Every half-day absence has to be classified by the academy (not by parents/carers), as either **authorised or unauthorised**.

3.2.1. Authorised absences

Authorised absences include mornings or afternoons absent for a valid reason such as illness, urgent medical/dental appointments or other emergencies. All non-urgent medical or routine dental appointments should be arranged outside of the academy day or during the holiday periods. Where this is not possible, **students should attend the academy before and after the appointment**. Parents/carers should show the appointment letter, prescription or medication to the attendance team to enable the absence to be authorised. If students are required to leave early or be absent from lessons for an urgent appointment, parents should telephone or email with this information.

If a student is absent for 5 days consecutive days due to illness, contact will always be made with families and medical evidence may be required in order to authorise the absence.

Students who have permission to leave during the day must sign out at reception. Students must report to the Attendance Team to obtain an official out of school pass to produce in the event of being questioned.

3.2.2. Other authorised circumstances – C code

The C code will be used where there is an unavoidable cause for absence due to exceptional circumstances, for example family bereavement or where a short term, part time timetable is agreed as part of a reintegration package. The East Manchester Academy will record the reasons for all C codes used.

3.2.3. Religious Observance

The academy acknowledges the multi-faith nature of British society and recognises that on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside holiday periods or weekends. The authorisation of absence, or special leave for religious observance, will be considered in these instances, but parents/carers are requested to give advance notice if they intend for their child to be absent. The East Manchester Academy feels that it is reasonable that no more than one day be designated for

any individual occasion of religious observance or festival and no more than three days in total in any academic year. Any further absence will be categorised as unauthorised.

3.2.4. Traveller Absence

The aim for the attendance of children within travelling families, in common with all other children, is to attend school as regularly and as frequently as possible. To protect traveller parents from unreasonable prosecution for non-attendance, the Education Act 1944, section 86, states that a traveller parent is safe from prosecution if their child accrues 200 attendances (i.e. 200 half days) in a year. This is only when the family are engaged in a trade or business that requires them to travel and when the child is attending school as regularly as that trade permits.

Traveller children will be recorded as attending an approved educational activity when:

- The child is on roll and attending another visited school.
- The child is undertaking supervised educational activity under the jurisdiction of another Local Authority's Traveller Education Service.
- The child is undertaking computer-based distance learning that is time evidenced.

3.2.5. Unauthorised absences

Unauthorised absences are those which the academy does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave of absence' has been approved. This type of absence may be subject to penalty notices or legal proceedings issued by the Local Authority.

Unauthorised absences include:

- truancy during the school day.
- absences which have no proper explanation.
- persistent absence due to illness that has no supporting medical evidence.
- students who arrive late to the academy after the registers have closed.
- absence for the purposes of shopping, to look after other children or celebrate birthdays.
- parents/carers keeping children away from the academy unnecessarily.
- day trips or holidays taken during term time.
- excessive absence due to medical/dental appointments without good reason or evidence.

Parents/carers will be asked to provide medical evidence where there are repeated absences due to reported illness. Parents/carers may also be asked to provide medical evidence where their child is absent for 5 consecutive days or more, or when attendance falls below 94%. The Student Services Team will follow interventions detailed in Transforming Attendance at TEMA to offer support and challenge to parents.

Whilst a student may be absent because they are unwell, they may also sometimes be reluctant to attend for a variety of other reasons. If parents/carers have any concerns, we would encourage contact with the Year Team who will work closely with families to offer support and try to resolve any issues.

3.2.6. Persistent Absence

A student becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the academic year, for whatever reason. Students are, therefore, classed as persistently absent irrespective of whether absence is authorised or unauthorised.

We monitor all absence thoroughly. Any student who reaches the persistent absence percentage or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority. Parents are informed by Student Services.

All our persistently absent students are subject to weekly review and actions are agreed in accordance with Transforming Attendance at TEMA. In school mentoring is offered and support for learning where absence affects attainment. This may include support from partner agencies such as the Early Help Team or School Health in addition to enforcement where interventions do not improve attendance.

3.2.7. Long-term Absence due to Medical Conditions

Where a student is absent from the academy due to a long-term medical condition, a care plan will be developed in accordance with the academy's Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions policy. Where possible, the academy will support the student to continue his or her access to education by providing specialised provision such as Academy 21 or by engaging the Home/School Teaching Service. A reintegration plan would be agreed with parents/carers to enable a successful return to the academy.

3.2.8. Students Educated Off Site

The attendance of students educated off-site is monitored daily by the Attendance and Safeguarding Team. There is daily communication with all Alternative Providers and engagement with lessons in Academy 21 is monitored. Registration codes are manually input into SIMS on a daily basis. Home visits are made to the families of all students who are educated off-site to offer any help and support that may be needed and where attendance or engagement is a concern, transforming Attendance at TEMA procedures will be followed in partnership with the Alternative Provider.

4. ABSENCE PROCEDURES

The East Manchester Academy is committed to promoting the safety, health and welfare of all students and endeavours to manage absences fairly and consistently, with the aim of supporting students and their families.

If a student is absent from school, parents/carers should:

- contact the academy by 8.20am on the first day of absence by telephone on 0161 230 8039 or by email to attendance@temac.co.uk and send any supporting medical evidence to the Attendance Team if the absence is likely to continue.
- maintain contact with the academy every day for safeguarding reasons, ensuring that staff are aware of the absence and the likely date of return.

It is a parent/carer's responsibility to contact the academy to advise staff of absence to support the safeguarding and welfare of all students.

Absent students are recorded with code N in the register. All registers are taken within 10 minutes of the start of form time or a lesson. Once all students are registered for the morning session, the Attendance Team will send an email to the Year Teams enquiring if any absent students been seen in school. Further checks will be made against Period 1 registration.

If a student is still not registered we will:

- Text or email parents/carers.
- Make phone calls to contact numbers on SIMS.
- Where students are vulnerable, make home visits and contact Social Workers or Early Help support workers.
- Send a letter during the same week advising of the absence and requesting the reason.

Any missing registration marks will be identified within the academy day.

Once all absence letters have been sent, N codes in the register will be changed to the appropriate authorised code or converted to code O. All N codes are removed by the end of the week.

Where absence becomes a concern or no contact is made with parents/carers, interventions will follow Transforming Attendance at TEMA and will include:

- Inviting parents/carers into the academy for a meeting with Student Services.
- Notifying parents by letter when their child's attendance falls below certain parameters.
- Working closely with families and where consent is given, completing an Early Help assessment to identify areas for support.
- Where necessary making a referral to Manchester City Council for enforcement.

5. CONTACT DETAILS

To comply with Health and Safety guidelines and Keeping Children Safe in Education it is important that we have more than one up to date contact details for all students. There are a variety of reasons that staff from the academy may need to contact parents or carers, including ill health when at school, school emergencies, to discuss unexplained absences and to ensure students are safe. To confirm the reason for a student's absence with parents/carers, the academy will generally telephone the first contact number listed on the student's record. If contact information changes, please telephone or email the academy.

6. MONITORING OF ATTENDANCE

The academy monitors attendance to all lessons. If a student does not arrive at a lesson and was marked present in their previous lesson, a log is recorded in accordance with Co-operation for Learning and for Life, informing staff on Learning and Engagement Academy Response. They will then try to identify the whereabouts of the student. Parents/carers will be informed after 15 minutes if there is concern that the student is missing and if no contact is possible with parents/carers, the police will be notified.

As a matter of course, Form Tutors and the Student Services Team will speak to students collectively and individually to discuss the value of regular attendance at school and remain in contact with parents/carers. Form tutors are notified weekly of the attendance of students in their form and whether there have been any absences. This is done through the Transforming Attendance Tracker based on SOL.

Weekly meetings are held within the Student Services Team to ensure that individual students' attendance is monitored. A colour coded attendance banding system is used throughout our monitoring process so any change in a student's attendance may be easily identified. This is known as the Transforming Attendance Triangle. Families receive regular banding letters to update them in relation to their child's attendance. We have clear and consistent interventions for students in each band and all communication is recorded on the academy's Information Management System.

Whole academy attendance, persistent absence and punctuality is monitored by the Deputy Headteacher and Attendance Team. Data is analysed weekly, including information relating to specific groups of students e.g. gender, year group, Pupil Premium (PP) and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). This is reported to the Interim Management Board, the Senior Leadership Team and to the Trust. These findings inform strategies and action to be taken by Student Services to improve attendance and punctuality in accordance with Transforming Attendance at TEMA.

6.1. Responsibilities

All staff, parents and carers and members of the Interim Management Board have a responsibility to make attendance a high priority and to convey the importance of good attendance to students. There is a named member of the Interim Management Board with responsibility for attendance.

7. REWARDS

Attendance at school automatically means that a student is eligible for TEMA 10 points. Where a student has much improved attendance, this will be recognised by individual postcards sent home. House, year group and form attendance and punctuality rates are acknowledged each week in staff briefings and assemblies.

8. PUNCTUALITY

How we manage late arrival to the academy:

The day begins at **8.30am** and we expect students to be in the academy by 8.20am to arrive in form on time. All registers will be completed by form tutors by **8.30am**. At 9.30am each morning the registers will be closed. The academy is only permitted to keep the registers open due to extreme local transport issues or severe weather conditions. In accordance with regulations, students arriving after that time will receive a mark that shows them to be on the school premises, but this will **not** count as a present mark and will be recorded as an unauthorised absence. This may mean that parents could face the possibility of a penalty notice if late arrival persists.

If students arrive after 8.30am, they are required to register at reception in order to confirm their presence in the event of a fire or other emergency and for safeguarding purposes.

Please note that sanctions may be imposed if a student fails to sign in as this contravenes the academy's Health and Safety Policy.

A text message will be sent to the parents of any student who arrives late. If a student arrives late on two occasions in a week, a recall will be issued for the same day. Where punctuality becomes a concern, Student Services will contact parents in accordance with Transforming Attendance at TEMA procedures. A Minutes Late report will be shared with parent or carer.

Parents/Carers may contact Student Services at any time if students are struggling to arrive to the academy on time.

9. LEAVE OF ABSENCE DURING TERM TIME

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 removed all references to holidays and extended leave and made it clear that headteachers cannot grant any leave in term-time unless exceptional circumstances prevail, therefore, there is no automatic entitlement in law to time off school to go on holiday.

At The East Manchester Academy we believe that leave in term time is undesirable because of the impact on our students' education and we encourage parents always to take family holidays when the academy is closed.

Research has shown that there is a clear link between levels of attendance and achievement. Taking leave in term time has a disruptive effect upon students' learning and progress and it is often difficult for students to catch up with work that has been missed. It may also suggest to some students that their education is not a priority.

The Academy's procedure is as follows:

- If parents/carers wish to request permission for leave of absence during term time we ask that a request form is completed and returned to the academy at least four weeks before the start date of the proposed leave of absence.
- Any request will be considered in the light of exceptional circumstances.
- A request is likely to be refused, regardless of the circumstances, if attendance including the proposed period of absence, is below 96%.
- If approval is given for a period of absence, no further requests will be granted for the remainder of the academic year.
- Leave of absence taken without permission will be categorised as unauthorised and will result in a request to Manchester City Council for a penalty notice to be issued.

Approval for leave of absence cannot be given retrospectively and any absence taken will always remain as unauthorised.

10. ENFORCING ATTENDANCE

10.1. Penalty Notices

A penalty notice is a fine which can be issued to each person with parental responsibility for every school-aged child or young person with irregular attendance. The penalty is £120, reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days. Penalty notice fines are issued by Manchester City Council in accordance with their Penalty notice Protocol. Failure to pay the penalty in full by the end of the 28 day period may result in prosecution by the Local Authority for failure to ensure regular attendance, according to s444, Education Act 1996.

With the exception of unauthorised holidays taken in term time, parents will be sent a formal warning of their liability to receive such a notice before it is issued.

Penalty notices will be considered when:

- A pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday in term time and the absence has not been authorised.
- A pupil has accumulated at least five sessions of unauthorised absence and further unauthorised absence has occurred following written warning to improve.

10.2. Legal proceedings for failing to ensure regular attendance

Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 states that if a child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at a school fails to attend regularly at the school, his parent is guilty of an offence. Failing to ensure regular school attendance is an offence punishable in the Magistrates' Court with a fine of up to £1000 or in the case of 'aggravated' offences up to £2500 or a term of imprisonment of up to 3 months. The academy will work with Manchester City Council to consider enforcing attendance in accordance with the law.

11. CHILDREN MISSING EDUCATION

All possible contact will be made via email, text and home visits to establish the whereabouts of a student if they are absent from the academy. If a student has 10 days unauthorised absence notification will be sent to Manchester City Council in accordance with their CME Protocol. Students are only removed from the academy roll with notification to Manchester City Council and in accordance with legislation. A record of all students removed from roll is kept by the academy including destinations where known.

12. SUMMARY

The academy has a legal duty to regularly publish annual absence figures and to promote excellent attendance. Equally, parents and carers have a duty to ensure that their child attends regularly. The East Manchester Academy is wholly committed to working with families to ensure the highest possible levels of attendance are achieved and to offer help and support to students and their families in order for them to achieve the best possible outcomes from their education.



The East Manchester Academy

Transforming Attendance

AT TEMA

A parent and carer's guide to attendance and punctuality



What do I do if my child is going to be absent?

If your child is unable to attend the academy you must ring before 8.20am to inform us of the reason why. It is important that you phone on every day of absence so that we know your child will not be attending and you do not receive a text message asking about his or her whereabouts.

Text messages are sent for safeguarding reasons. This ensures that you know your child has not registered at the academy. If you receive a text message please respond so that we know your child is safe.

The East Manchester Academy's telephone number is 0161 230 8039. Press option 1.

TRANSFORMING ATTENDANCE At TEMA



Form tutors

- Will congratulate students for having attendance within this band.

Form tutors

- Will discuss attendance with your child ensuring that he or she is welcomed back and is aware that the absence has been noted.
- Will set an attendance target.

Directors of Year

- Will ensure Attendance Concern Letter 1 is sent where attendance remains a concern.

Directors of Year

- Will ensure Attendance Concern Letter 2 is sent advising you that medical evidence is needed in order to authorise future absences.
- Will work with you to ensure that you understand the link between attendance, progress and attainment.
- Will set an attendance target.

Student Services

- Will coordinate home visits and attendance panels to ensure we can discuss attendance concerns with you.
- Will arrange a meeting to offer a Parenting Contract.
- Can support you through an offer of Early Help.
- Will complete a referral for legal action as appropriate.

Directors of Year

- Will ensure Attendance Concern Letter 3 is sent advising you of the serious concern about attendance and that legal action may follow.
- Will continue to discuss the impact that absence is having on academic progress.
- Will set an attendance target.

Student Services

- Will monitor attendance and safeguarding.
- Will coordinate home visits and attendance panels to ensure we can discuss attendance concerns with you and create a plan for improvement.
- Will work closely with other agencies to fully support you and your son or daughter and offer a personalised intervention package.
- Can support you through an offer of Early Help.
- Will complete a referral for either a penalty notice or a prosecution if attendance does not improve.

100 - 98% ATTENDANCE

Congratulations. Your child's attendance is excellent. Students in this band are eligible for a range of awards.

97 - 95% ATTENDANCE

Your child's attendance is below TEMA's expected percentage. Your child may have been ill. This is understandable but not without cost. It is important to catch up on work and maintain good attendance over the coming weeks. Attendance can be improved by being on time every day and ensuring all appointments are made outside of academy hours. A student in this band will probably continue to make progress but will need to work hard to maintain this.

94 - 91% ATTENDANCE

Your child's attendance is a cause for concern and is significantly below TEMA's expected percentage. Lost learning will make progress difficult and there is a significant risk of underachievement. Your child must speak to teachers to catch up with work and you must now meet with Student Services to discuss everything that is affecting your child's attendance. You may be asked to come to an attendance panel and enter into a parent contract to improve attendance.

BELOW 91%

Your child's attendance is a serious cause for concern and there is a serious risk of underachievement. You may be issued with a persistent absence notice unless measures need to be taken to ensure that there is an improvement or your child will not reach 91% or higher. We will give lower qualifications and will be less likely to gain entry to further education, training or employment. There are genuine records (parenting your child) from attending school. Legal action will be taken.



PUNCTUALITY

Ensure that your child is up sufficiently early in the morning to get to the academy without being late. Help your child organise themselves the night before by ensuring that their school bag is packed and ready to go.

Ensure that your child is well rested by getting them to bed at an appropriate time. All students are expected to be at the academy by 8.20am and breakfast is available from 7.30am. Students who arrive after 8.30am will be late to registration and will be issued with an L mark in the register. Any student arriving after 9.30am will receive a U mark in the register which counts as an unauthorised absence.

Two or more late arrivals in a week will result in an R3 Late Recall.

ILLNESS

Sometimes students are absent for frequent minor illnesses. Consequently, attendance becomes a concern and it is necessary to ask for evidence of ill health such as copy of your child's prescription or a medical appointment card. A parent whose child is genuinely ill should not be concerned as medical advice will have been taken and evidence can be presented to The East Manchester Academy. **If your child is feeling 'under the weather' but not sick enough to see the doctor, he or she should be encouraged to come to the academy. Attendance at one lesson is far better than attendance at none at all. Naturally, students who are genuinely ill will be sent home following consultation with yourself.**

A letter will be sent advising you that medical evidence is required for every absence. It is important that you know that it is The East Manchester Academy that authorises absence for illness not parents or carers.

MEDICAL AND DENTAL APPOINTMENTS

Appointments rarely last more than one hour but many parents allow their child to be absent for the whole session or day. This is unacceptable. Medical appointments should be taken out of academy hours where possible and appointments out of the country should be arranged for academy holidays. Where appointments are unavoidable during the day, students should attend before and after the appointment. Parents should show the appointment card to the academy in order for their child to leave at a particular time. The loss of a single day will reduce your child's attendance in any single week by 20%.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

The academy will not authorise holidays in term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. All family holidays, even those for special occasions, should be booked outside of the academy term. If you feel your circumstances are exceptional, you must complete a request form outlining this information and submit it before any travel plans are made.

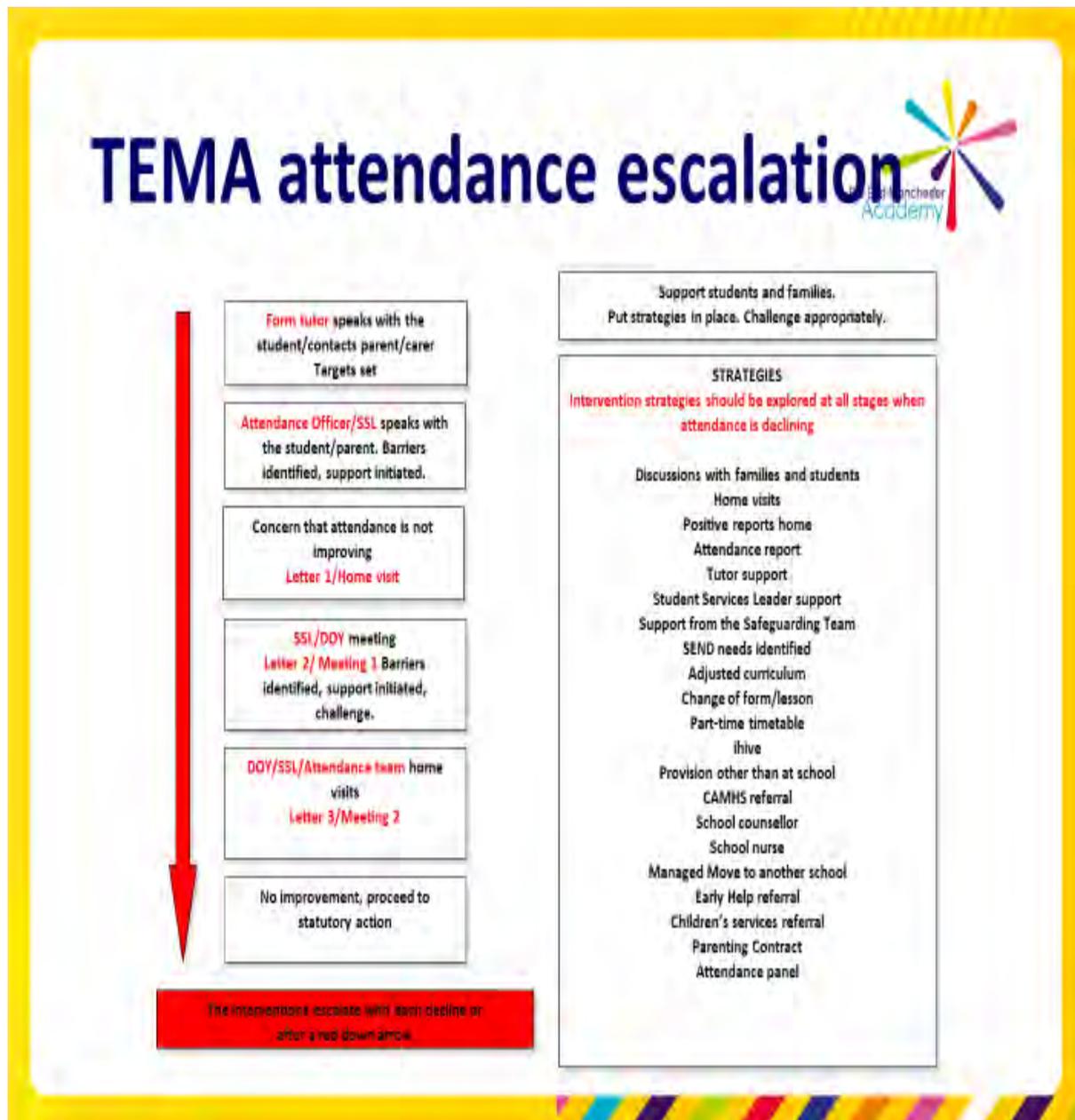
If leave is taken without permission, the academy will request a penalty notice which may result in a fine of £120. This will reduce to £60 if it is paid within 21 days. This is for every parent and every child. Taking days off before or after academy holidays is not acceptable and a request will be made for a penalty notice.

PROLONGED ABSENCE

The Education Act 1996 states that if a child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at a school fails to attend regularly, the parent or carer is guilty of an offence. If your child is absent from the academy regularly, we will offer help and support to improve this. We work closely with Manchester City Council and will request that they issue a penalty notice or take legal proceedings in the Magistrates' Court if attendance does not improve.

SUPPORT

Support is always available from Student Services. If you wish to discuss anything that is affecting your child's attendance, please do not hesitate to contact us on 0161 230 8039. If we have a concern, the team in Student Services will make telephone calls, home visits and send text messages and letters alerting you to this and will work with you to resolve any issues.



APPENDIX 3 – LEAVE OF ABSENCE REQUEST FORM

Please be aware that leave of absence for holidays taken during term time will NOT be authorised unless the academy considers there to be exceptional circumstances supporting the application. This form should be completed and submitted to the Attendance Team within four weeks of the start of the proposed leave of absence. Separate forms should be completed for each student if there is more than one request. Parents and carers are reminded that term time holidays taken without permission will result in unauthorised absence and may lead to a Penalty Notice being issued by the Local Authority. This is a fine of £60 which rises to £120 if it is not paid within 21 days. These are issued to each parent for each child.

Name of Student:	
Form:	
Name of parent/carer:	
Address:	
Telephone number:	
Start date of proposed leave of absence:	
End date of proposed leave of absence:	
Exceptional circumstances:	

Signed Date

For TEMA use only

% Attendance	No of previous holidays	No of days authorised and dates	No of days unauthorised and dates	Reasons for decision