

Unity Academy

Attendance Procedures

Attendance Matters:

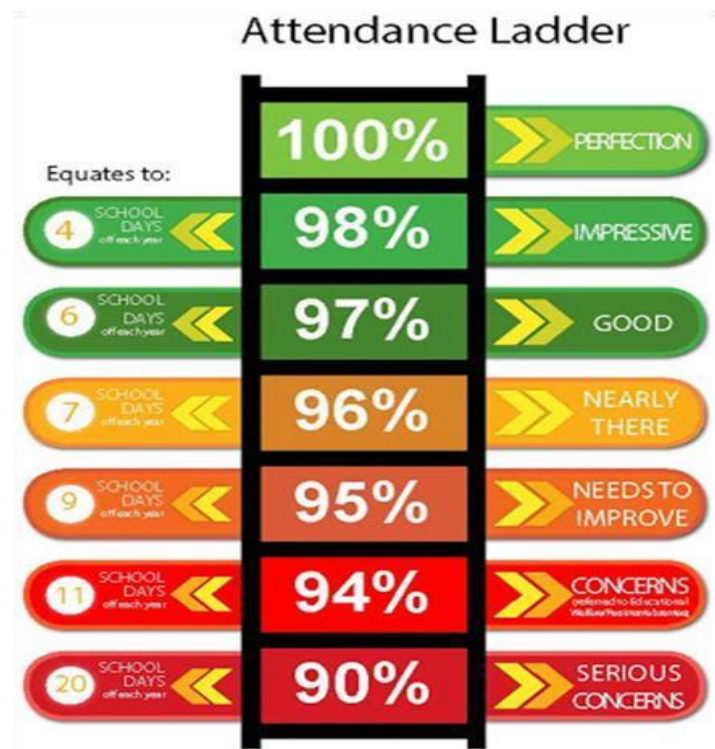
At Unity Academy we believe that good attendance is vital for all children to be confident, happy and independent learners. Good attendance is 97% or above, no more than 6 days off school in a year.

Our aim is to give a clear and consistent message to parents/carers and children in our school, which we will constantly reinforce in our day-to-day work.

Good attendance is a priority at Unity Academy and our target is to achieve **97% or above** by the end of this academic year.

Excellent attendance is crucial in ensuring that children are settled in school and have the best opportunity to receive a complete education.

All children are expected to attend school every day.



What is Expected of Parents and Carers at Unity Academy:

- **Good Attendance** – Parents/Carers have a legal duty to ensure their child/children are in school every day as it is vital for learning and promoting essential life skills
- **Good Punctuality** – Parents/Carers have a responsibility to ensure that their child/children arrive on time each day in school (9.00am) and are prepared for the day ahead
- **Hospital appointments** - Where possible, these should be taken outside of school hours or in holiday periods. Appointment letters/notifications must be provided to the school office.
- **Doctor Appointments and Dental appointments** – These should always be taken outside of school hours or in holiday periods unless in an emergency situation. Appointment letters/notifications must be provided to the school office.
- **Absences** – Parents/Carers have a duty to notify school if their child/children are absent for any reason and this needs to be done by 9:00am. School will contact parents/carers if notification is not received by this time.
- **Holidays** – Holidays **are not** permitted in school term time. All holidays are unauthorised except in exceptional circumstances.

Persistent Absence

The Department for Education (DfE) states that persistent absence (PA) is a child who misses 10% or more of the school year, equivalent to 20 plus school days. Children without a valid medical reason for being absent from school will be put onto an attendance support plan and will be monitored by the Head Teacher. If attendance does not improve a referral to the Local Authority Education Welfare Service will be completed and a fixed penalty notice fine (£60) will be issued.

Leave of Absence (Holidays)

The Department for Education (DfE) states that the Head Teacher may not grant any leave of absence during school term time, unless there are exceptional circumstances. We strongly discourage parents/carers taking their children out of school for any leave as it has a negative impact on children's learning. Please support us with your child's education by ensuring they are in school every day.

If parents/carers still want to request a leave of absence from school, it must be in writing and must be submitted to school 4 weeks in advance. Where the leave of absence is over 6 days (even if not consecutive) each parent/carer will be liable to receive the fixed penalty notice of (£60). If not paid within 21 days this increases to £120.

What can you expect from Unity Academy:

- School day starts promptly at 9.00am
- School will contact parents/carers if no contact has been made when a child is absent
- Home visits will be carried out if we are unable to make contact by phone/email
- Good and improving attendance will be rewarded by the Head Teacher
- Work in partnership with the Trust Attendance Officer and the local authority education welfare service
- Children and their families with poor attendance will be supported in school to ensure attendance improves through attendance support plans and meetings
- We will offer additional support when exceptional circumstances affect a child's attendance

We are committed to working towards the goal of 100% attendance for all children at Unity Academy

Forward Planning

We always ensure that our school website is kept up to date with all the term dates for at least 12 months in advance therefore there should be no reason why holidays are accidentally booked in term time.

In total there are 13 weeks in the year when school is closed, giving plenty of opportunity for family holidays. In addition, we do try to add our training days (TEDs) onto half terms to enable families to go away a day before the official holidays start. We fully appreciate and understand that there are financial implications for families but please don't underestimate the huge learning implications that time off school has on your child.

Attendance Policy

A copy of our latest policy is on the school website for you to view. The updated policy outlines the responsibilities of school, parents/carers and children in relation to attendance and punctuality. This includes information about how we as a school monitor attendance, the different types of absence, persistent absence, lateness and fixed penalty notices for irregular attendance and leave of absence.

Impact of Absence on a child's attendance (by the end of each academic year)

Number of Days Absent	% Attendance	Attendance Rating
0 days	100%	Outstanding
1 days	99.5%	Outstanding
2 days	99%	Outstanding
3 days	98.5%	Outstanding
4 days	98%	Outstanding
5 days = (1 week)	97.5%	Good
10 days = (2 weeks)	94.5%	Poor (Possible Fine/legal action)
15 days = (3 weeks)	92.5%	Poor (Possible Fine/legal action)
20 days = (4 weeks)	90%	Persistent Absenteeism (Fine/legal action)
25 days = (5 weeks)	87.5%	Persistent Absenteeism (Fine/legal action)
30 days = (6 weeks)	85%	Persistent Absenteeism (Fine/legal action)
35 days = (7 weeks)	82.5%	Persistent Absenteeism (Fine/legal action)



Punctuality:

As with absences, a child who is late for school will lose opportunities to learn. At Unity Academy school starts promptly at 9.00am and as soon as the children are in their classrooms their learning begins. A few minutes each day quickly adds up to significant amounts of time and learning lost.

Lost Minutes = Lost learning

Minutes late per day	Equivalent amount of school days lost per year
5 minutes late	3 days
10 minutes late	6 days
15 minutes late	10 days (2 weeks)
30 minutes late	19 days (almost 4 weeks)

Please help us to ensure that your child receives the very best possible education they can by ensuring they are in school every day and that they are on time.