

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

PURPOSE

The aims of the Attendance Policy are to raise the importance of good attendance in line with Ofsted requirements, ensure that attendance is monitored effectively and reasons for absences are recorded promptly and consistently, to improve punctuality, promote opportunities to celebrate and reward children for attendance and punctuality achievements.

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POSITIONING WITHIN ARK OPERATIONAL MODEL

| Component | Element |
|--|-----------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strategic Leadership & Planning <input type="checkbox"/> Monitoring, Reporting & Data <input type="checkbox"/> Governance & Accountabilities <input type="checkbox"/> Teaching & Learning <input type="checkbox"/> Curriculum & Assessment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Culture, Ethos & Wellbeing <input type="checkbox"/> Pathways & Enrichment <input type="checkbox"/> Parents & Community <input type="checkbox"/> Finance, IT & Estates <input type="checkbox"/> Our People | Behaviour Model |

1. Introduction

All children of school age have the right to an efficient full-time education, regardless of age, aptitude, ability or any special need they may have. Regular academy attendance is essential if a child is to make the most of the educational opportunity available to them. Ark Greenwich Free School takes the responsibility to monitor and promote the regular attendance of all its pupils very seriously. It acknowledges that irregular attendance can disrupt continuity of learning, undermines educational progress, can lead to underachievement/low attainment and impedes the child's ability to develop friendship groups within the academy.

We feel the whole academy community should take responsibility for attendance. Therefore, this policy seeks to ensure that all parties involved in the practicalities of academy attendance are aware and informed.

2. Aims

The aims of the Attendance Policy are:

- a) To raise the importance of good attendance in line with Ofsted requirements.
- b) Ensure that attendance is monitored effectively and reasons for absences are recorded promptly and consistently.
- c) To improve punctuality.
- d) Promote opportunities to celebrate and reward children for attendance and punctuality achievements.

3. Guidelines

3.1 Reasons for absence

Parents and carers are asked to contact the academy office by phone or in person if their child needs to be absent from the academy.

3.2 Authorised absences

Acceptable reasons include sickness, hospital appointments, dentist appointments, recognised religious holidays (1 day per holiday only) and funerals. Medical appointments should be arranged outside of the academy day (including detention hours), if possible. Where this is not possible, we would expect pupils to miss only part of the day.

3.3 Unauthorised absences

Unacceptable reasons include shopping, going to an appointment, visiting relatives, buying shoes, going for a haircut, parent/carer unwell and taking holiday, for example by acquiring cheaper flights outside of academy holidays.

3.4 Holidays/Trips

The academy supports the view that every lesson counts and discourages parents/carers from taking holidays during term time. Holidays in term time are not permitted by the academy. The absence will be marked unauthorised and referred to the Education Welfare Service, who may deem it appropriate to request a Penalty notice or prosecution in line with DFE guidance and the law.

3.5 Only the Principal can authorise absence. Authorisation can only be granted in exceptional circumstances under DFE guidance. Any request for leave for exceptional circumstances must be made in writing to the Principal.

4. Action taken when pupils are absent

4.1 There are occasions when absence is unavoidable. These include:

- a) Illness.
- b) Medical or education appointments.

4.2 If a parent knows in advance of absence due to an appointment, the academy office should be informed at info@arkgreenwich.org a minimum of 24 hours in advance and the appointment card shown as evidence.

4.3 If a child is ill, the parent or carer should ring the academy to inform us and on return present a written note explaining the absence. If your child is absent and has been prescribed medicine by the doctor please can you bring the medicine or prescription into the academy so we can photocopy it.

4.4 The parent or carer will be phoned and if there is no answer or no information has been received, and reasons noted, a text message will be sent on the first day of absence.

4.5 Letters will be sent to the parent or carers requesting an explanation of the absence. If no reply is received; the absence is counted as unauthorised. Two academy weeks are allowed for responses after the letter is sent.

5. What happens if Attendance is unacceptable

5.1 The Principal/Attendance Officer reviews the attendance of all pupils weekly. If the attendance of a pupil falls below 95% the reasons for the absence are investigated.

5.2 If there are no extenuating circumstances the following procedure is instigated:

- a) The Principal will write to the parent or carer. The situation is reviewed and monitored. If no improvement is seen the Principal will request an appointment with the parent or carer. The situation is constantly reviewed on a weekly basis with the Education Welfare Officer.
- b) If no improvement is seen the Principal will write again requesting an appointment in school which may be attended by the Education Welfare Officer and inform that medical certificates must be provided for each subsequent absence to be authorised. At this point the Education Welfare Service may issue a cause for concern letter as part of their pre referral process.
- c) If the attendance does not significantly improve from then, a formal referral will be made to the Education Welfare Service. Further unauthorised absence from this point may result in referral for legal action or a Penalty Notice in accordance with the Education Act 1996.

6. Lateness

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If your child misses the start of the day they will miss vital information given at the start of the school day. Late arriving students also disrupt lessons and the learning of others.

The academy day starts at **08.05am**. If your child arrives after this time they must enter the Academy through the main entrance and be signed into the late book.

The registers close at **08.20**. If your child arrives significantly after that time they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site, but this will not count as a present mark and will mean they are showing unauthorised absence for that time. This may mean that you could face the possibility of a Penalty Notice being issued or legal action against you for persistent lateness.

6.1 All Academy doors are closed at 15:10 Mondays through Fridays.

6.3 The procedure for consistent lateness is the same as for absence – i.e. at 10% lateness the Principal is informed by the Attendance Officer.

- a) Appointment made to see Education Welfare Officer – one month is given for improvement.
- b) If no improvement is seen the Education Welfare Officer will request another appointment.
- c) If there are unacceptable improvements after a month, a referral to the Education Welfare Officer is made.

6.5 'Cause for Concern' registers for absence and punctuality are kept.

7. Punctuality Inspection

We also do sporadic punctuality inspections at the academy gate. Our Education Welfare Officer is sometimes involved in these.

8. How will this information be collated?

A register of absence and punctuality referral is kept. The Attendance Officer and the Principal manage this register and meet regularly to decide necessary action.

9. Pupil absence and extenuating family circumstance

If parents or carers need to remove their child from the academy for any reason, they must complete a Term Time Absence Request form. No absences for holidays will be authorised. In accordance with DFE guidance permission for absence will only be given if there are extenuating circumstances. If the absence is not authorised, the parent or carer may be liable to a Fixed Penalty Notice as previously outlined in 3.4 above.

10. Registers

These are important legal documents which must be completed accurately, carefully and promptly at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session. This is a basic safeguarding requirement.

Children entering the classroom via the academy office are late and should be marked accordingly as section 6 above.

11. Rewards and Sanctions

The class with the best attendance for the previous week is recognised and rewarded and presented with a cup in the whole academy assembly.

Children with 100% attendance are presented with a certificate at the end of each term/half term. Further prizes and awards may be presented for attendance.

Any student who arrives to school or is late to lesson during the day will automatically receive a 1 hour afterschool detention.

Responsibilities of Students

12. Students are expected to:

- attend the Academy every day it is in session to meet their target of 100% attendance
- arrive to school on time, arriving no later than 8.20am each day
- arrive punctually to lessons
- remain on site throughout the Academy day

Responsibilities of Parents/Carers:

13. Parents/Carers are expected to:

- ensure that their child attends the academy every day and support them in meeting their target of 100% attendance
- limit their child's absences to cases of genuine illness
- book holidays outside of term time.
- make appointments for medical appointments outside of Academy hours
- contact the school by telephone, by 8.05 a.m. on each and every day of absence
- contact the school by email at info@arkgreenwich.org 24 hours in advance if your child has an appointment and provide evidence or prescription for an absence relating to an illness (this includes within detention hours)
- attend a return to school meeting after an absence of 5 days.

Responsibilities of Form Tutors

14. Form tutors are expected to:

- take the register during the first ten minutes of morning and afternoon registration
- maintain an accurate register- void of N codes
- monitor the attendance and punctuality of their form class constantly and carefully
- contact parents/carers whenever there is any doubt about or concern regarding a student's absence and inform the Pastoral Leader of any concerns
- mark the correct code for absence against the student's name

Responsibilities of Subject Teachers

15. Subject teachers are expected to:

- take the register within the first five minutes of each lesson
- follow up with appropriate consequences any late arrivals to lessons
- support students in getting up to date with learning missed due to absence
- provide appropriate independent learning for any student who has authorised long term absence, coordinated by the Pastoral leader