



Ark Byron
Primary Academy

ATTENDANCE AND
PUNCTUALITY POLICY

POLICY INFORMATION

Named personnel with designated responsibility.

Academic year	Designated Senior person	Deputy Designated Senior person	Nominated Governor	Chair of Governors
2015-2016	Fiona Kaplan			Joshua Perry
2016-2017	Fiona Kaplan			Claire Dacam

Policy review dates (frequency of review: biennial)

Review Date	Changes made	By whom
June 2015	Policy created	Fiona Kaplan
Jan 2017	Details of letters to parents	Fiona Kaplan

Ratification by Governing Body

Academic year	Date of ratification	Chair of Governors
2015-2016		Joshua Perry
2016-2017		Claire Dacam

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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 Byron takes the responsibility to monitor and promote the regular attendance of all its pupils very seriously. 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. The **minimum level of attendance** for this school is **96%** and we will keep you updated regularly about the progress to this level and how your child's attendance compares.

Our aim is to achieve better than this because we know that good attendance is the key to successful schooling.

Through the school year we monitor absences and punctuality to show us where improvements need to be made. Information on any projects or initiatives that will focus on these areas will be provided in our regular newsletter and we would ask for your full support.

Attendance and Punctuality are monitored by the Head of School.

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 promote punctuality.
- d Promote opportunities to celebrate and reward children for attendance and punctuality achievements.

3 GUIDELINES

3.1 Reasons for absence

- a 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

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

3.3 Unauthorised absences

- a Unacceptable reasons include shopping, going to an appointment (except hospital or dentist appointments), 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

- a The academy supports the view that every lesson counts and discourages parents/carers from taking holidays during term time.

3.5 Only the Head of School can authorise absence.

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 and the appointment card shown.

- 4.3 If a child is ill, the parent or carer should ring the academy to inform us and, if requested, on return present a written note explaining the absence.

- 4.4 If no information has been received, the parent or carer will be phoned and, if there is no answer or no information has been received, the absence will be marked as unauthorised.

- 4.5 If no reply is received on subsequent days, a letter 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. One academy week is allowed for responses after the letter is sent.

5 WHAT HAPPENS IF ATTENDANCE IS UNACCEPTABLE?

- 5.1 The Head of School reviews the attendance of all pupils six weekly. If the attendance of a pupil falls below **90%** the pupil is deemed to be a “persistent absentee” and reasons for the absence are investigated.
- 5.2 The reasons for absence are reviewed. If there are no extenuating circumstances the following procedure is instigated:
1. The Head of School will write to the parent or carer. The situation will be reviewed after a month.
 2. If no improvement is seen the Head of School will request an appointment with the parent or carer. The situation will be reviewed after two weeks.
 3. If no improvement is seen the Head of School will write again requesting an appointment and ask for medical certificates to be provided for each subsequent absence to be authorised.
 4. If the attendance does not significantly improve, a referral to the Ealing School Attendance Office will be made. In non- improving situations a penalty notice may be served
- See Appendix 1
- 5.3 If a child’s attendance is unsatisfactory (below 90%) parents/carers are at risk of a referral to the Ealing School Attendance Office and may be liable for fast track court prosecution, prosecution and/or a fixed penalty notice under section 444 of the Education Act 1996.
- 5.4 If the child is below 5 years of age, the Education Welfare Officer will not accept a referral. In this instance the Head of School will pursue the situation.

6 LATENESS

- 6.1 Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If your child misses the start of every day they can miss work and the opportunity of hearing vital information and news, and sharing class time with their friends. Late arriving pupils also disrupt lessons. Your child may also be embarrassed by arriving late and may fall into absenteeism in order to avoid the ordeal.
- 6.2 The academy day starts at 8.45am and all academy doors are closed at 8.50am
- 6.3 Pupils who arrive after this time must enter the academy through the main entrance. They must then be signed into the late book.
- 6.4 Registers will close at 8.50am Children who arrive after this time will be marked as unauthorised late unless there is a valid reason for the lateness. Any child whose punctuality is consistently late in any half term may be referred to the Ealing School Attendance Office and issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice.
- 6.5 The procedure for consistent lateness is similar as for absence. If the pupil is late more than three times in a two week period and/or if the child accumulates more than 30 minutes lateness in any six week period.
1. The Attendance Officer/Inclusion Lead/Head of School will notify the parents/carers that punctuality is not satisfactory. The situation will be reviewed after two weeks.
 2. If punctuality does not improve the Head of School will write to the parent or carer. The situation will be reviewed after two weeks.
 3. If no improvement is seen the Head of School will request an appointment with the parent or carer. The situation will then be reviewed after two weeks.
 4. If punctuality does not significantly improve, a referral to the Ealing School Attendance Office will be made. In non-improving situations a penalty notice may be served

7 PUNCTUALITY MONITORING

The Attendance Officer/Assistant Head/Head of School monitor punctuality daily at the academy gate and door. Parents/carers of children arriving after the school gates have closed must sign their children in at the school office.

8 HOW WILL THIS INFORMATION BE COLLATED?

Absence and punctuality records are kept. The Head of School and Assistant Head/Attendance Officer manage this register and meet regularly to decide necessary action.

9 PUPILS ABSENCE AND EXTENUATING FAMILY CIRCUMSTANCES

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 should be authorised**, unless in extreme or exceptional circumstances. 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.

10 COLLECTION AFTER SCHOOL

- 10.1 School finishes at 3.45pm (Fridays at 2.45pm).
- 10.2 Teachers will keep the children with them until 3.50pm. After this time children are entered into the "Late Collection Book" with the school office.
- 10.3 The trigger to action is set at **10%** i.e. 3 times within a six week block. Action will be taken as follows:
 1. The Head of School will write to the parent/carer.
 2. The Head of School will request an appointment with the parent/carer.
 3. The Head of School will again request appointment with parent/carer.
 4. Governors may request an appointment with the parent/carer.
 5. Fines may be imposed at the discretion of the Head of School.

10.4 As with punctuality and attendance, progress is reviewed.

11 REGISTERS

These are important legal documents which must be completed carefully and promptly at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session.

Children entering the classroom via the academy office are late and should be marked as such, even if the register has not been taken yet.

12 REWARDS

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 the school year and awards may be presented for attendance.

13 EQUALITY IMPACT STATEMENT

We will do all we can to ensure that this policy does not discriminate, directly or indirectly. We shall do this through regular monitoring and evaluation of our policies. On review we shall assess and consult relevant stakeholders on the likely impact of our policies on the promotion of all aspects of equality, as laid down in the Equality Act (2010). This will include, but not necessarily be limited to: race; gender; sexual orientation; disability; ethnicity; religion; cultural beliefs and pregnancy/maternity. We will use an appropriate Equality Impact Assessment to monitor the impact of all our policies and the policy may be amended as a result of this assessment.

14 APPENDIX 1 - PROCEDURE FOR THE ISSUE OF PENALTY NOTICES:

- 14.1 Academies will notify the EWS of all cases where attendance has fallen below 90% in the preceding 6 week period and no valid reason for the absence has been provided by the parent/carer, along with evidence of what measures they have taken to bring this matter to the parent's/carer's attention.
- 14.2 The LA will produce an information letter for distribution to all parents/carers whose children have been identified as falling below 90% attendance at their respective academies. This will set out clearly the circumstances whereby a Penalty Notice can be issued and the consequences for failure to pay within the required time scale.
- 14.3 Each pupil's attendance will be monitored for 15 academy days following the issue of the letter to see if the desired improvement has taken place. An acceptable improvement is an increase in attendance above 90% for the 15-day period.
- 14.4 Should the required improvement not take place and no valid reason for the absence is provided, the Court Officer will decide whether to issue the Penalty Notice or to proceed with a prosecution under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.
- 14.5 Where a Penalty Notice is issued, it will be sent by the Court Officer through the post using **First Class** post to the parent's last known address.
- 14.6 Following a change to advice issued by the DfES in recent months, Penalty Notices may now be issued to the parents/carers of **all** pupils registered at Ealing schools, irrespective of their actual home address. This also means that follow-up prosecutions where parents/carers fail to pay the Notice or to improve their children's attendance will extend to families resident outside the area.

Withdrawal of Penalty Notices:

- 14.7 The LA will withdraw any Notices issued if:
- a It can be established that the Penalty Notice was issued to the wrong person.
 - or**
 - b The use of the Penalty Notice does not conform to the terms of the Protocol.

- 14.8 Where either of the above occurs, written notice of the withdrawal shall be given to the recipient and any monies paid over shall be fully refunded.
- 14.9 Also, no proceedings under Section 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996 shall be instituted against the recipient in respect of the period covered by the withdrawn Notice.

Payment:

- 14.10 Arrangements for payment will be detailed on the Penalty Notice.
- 14.11 A Penalty Notice shall be for the sum of **£50** if paid within 28 days rising to **£100** thereafter until the final deadline of 42 days.
- 14.12 Payment in full of the Penalty Notice discharges the parent's legal responsibility for the period of unauthorised absence outlined in the Notice and the parent cannot be subsequently prosecuted under any other enforcement powers for the period.
- 14.13 Any revenue arising from the issue of Penalty Notices will be retained by the LA to defray the costs involved in their issue or any subsequent prosecutions arising from non-payment.

Non Payment:

- 14.14 Non- payment of Penalty Notices within the prescribed time limits will result in a prosecution under Section (1) or (1A) of the Education Act 1996 for the original offence of failing to ensure the regular attendance of the child/ren at school.