



# Attendance and Punctuality Policy

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## 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.

Date of last review:	September 2020	Author:	Education Directors
Date of next review:	September 2021	Owner:	Education Directors
Type of policy:	<input type="checkbox"/> Network-wide <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tailored by school	Approval:	Management Team
School:	Ark Tindal Primary Academy	Key Contact Name:	Governance Team
Key Contact Email:	governance.team@arkonline.org	Key Contact Phone:	0203 116 6333

## 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 type="checkbox"/> Culture, Ethos & Wellbeing <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pathways & Enrichment <input type="checkbox"/> Parents & Community <input type="checkbox"/> Finance, IT & Estates <input type="checkbox"/> Our People <input type="checkbox"/>	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 Tindal Academy 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, recognised religious holidays (1 day per holiday only) and funerals. 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

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.

### 3.5 Only the Principal 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 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 home visit will take place..

## 5. What happens if Attendance is unacceptable

5.1 The Attendance Lead reviews the attendance of all pupils monthly. If the attendance of a pupil falls below 95% the reasons for the absence are investigated.

5.2 The reasons for absence are discussed. If there are no extenuating circumstances the following procedure is instigated:

- a) The Headteacher will write to the parent or carer. The situation is reviewed at the next month's check.
- b) If no improvement is seen the Headteacher will request an appointment with the parent or carer. The situation is reviewed at the next month's check.
- c) If no improvement is seen the Headteacher will write again requesting an appointment and ask for medical certificates to be provided for each subsequent absence to be authorised.
- d) If the attendance does not significantly improve, a referral to the city council will be made with a recommendation for fining through the Fast-track programme.

5.3 If your child's attendance is unsatisfactory (below 95%) you 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 Council will not accept a referral. In this instance the Headteacher will pursue the situation. In extreme cases a nursery place could be withdrawn.

## 6. Lateness

6.1 The academy day starts at 8.40 and ends at 3.15

6.2 Pupils who arrive after this time must enter the academy, with an adult, through the main entrance. They must then be signed into the late book.

6.3 Registers will close at 8.55 Children who arrive after this time will be marked as 'U' (unauthorised absence). Any child receiving 5 U's in any half term may be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice.

6.4 The procedure for consistent lateness is the same as for absence – i.e. at 10% lateness the Headteacher is informed by the Attendance Lead.

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

#### 8. How will this information be collated?

A register of absence and punctuality referral is kept. The Attendance Lead and the Headteacher 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 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. 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.

#### 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.

Sanctions in the form of detentions may be applied for persistent lateness.

#### APPENDIX 1 : PROCEDURE FOR THE ISSUE OF PENALTY NOTICES:

1. Academies will notify the Fast-track programme 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.
2. The LA will produce an information letter for distribution to all parents/carers whose children have been identified as falling below 95% 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.
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.
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.
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.

#### Withdrawal of Penalty Notices:

6. The LA will withdraw any Notices issued if:
  - a) It can be established that the Penalty Notice was issued to the wrong person.
  - b) The use of the Penalty Notice does not conform to the terms of the Protocol.
7. 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.
10. 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:

11. Arrangements for payment will be detailed on the Penalty Notice.
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.
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. 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.