



Ark Blake Academy

‘Empowering our pupils to take responsibility and seize their greatness.’

Ark Blake Academy

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

2021 - 2022

Date of last review:	September 2021	Author:	Education Directors / Principal
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Type of policy:	<input type="checkbox"/> Network-wide <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tailored by school	Approval:	Management Team
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POSITIONING WITHIN ARK OPERATIONAL MODEL

Component	Element
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- Strategic Leadership & Planning
- Monitoring, Reporting & Data
- Governance & Accountabilities
- Teaching & Learning
- Curriculum & Assessment
- Culture, Ethos & Wellbeing
- Pathways & Enrichment
- Parents & Community
- Finance, IT & Estates
- Our People

Behaviour Model

Purpose

Excellent Attendance and Punctuality and reliable and robust systems for its monitoring and improvement are vital for pupils to achieve academic success and for their effective safeguarding.

The aims of Ark Blake Academy's Attendance and Punctuality Policy are to highlight the importance of good Attendance and Punctuality and to set out the systems and expectations for achieving excellent outcomes for pupils in this area.

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 Blake Academy takes the responsibility to monitor and promote the regular attendance of all its students 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 believe that the whole academy community should take responsibility for attendance. Therefore, this policy seeks to ensure that all parties involved in the practicalities of school 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 attendance officer, at the earliest opportunity (and before 9 am if on the day of absence), by phone, e-mail or in person if their child needs to be absent from the school.

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, if possible. Where this is not possible, we would expect students to miss only part of the day.

3.3 Unauthorised absences

Unacceptable reasons for absence include shopping, birthdays, 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. The Principal will not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances as the September 2013 amendments to registration regulations stipulate.

4. Action taken when students 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, e-mail, letter or text message should be shown.

4.3 If a child is ill, the parent or carer should notify the school by phone, email or in person to inform us and on return present a written note explaining the absence. If a child is absent and has been prescribed medicine by the doctor, the parent / carer should bring the medicine or prescription into the academy to be photocopied.

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. Absence procedure

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 Assistant Principal/Attendance Officer reviews the attendance of all students fortnightly. 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 Form tutor will phone home to talk to the parent or carer to raise concerns
- b) If attendance doesn't improve the Attendance Officer will write to the parent or carer. The situation is reviewed at the next month's check.
- c) If no improvement is seen the Attendance officer and / or Head of Year or Assistant Principal will request an appointment with the parent or carer. Medical certificates will be requested to provide a reason for each subsequent absence to be authorised.
- d) If attendance still does not meet our requirements an appointment will be made where an attendance contract will be created in conjunction with Assistant Principal, parent/ carer and student.
- e) If the attendance does not significantly improve, a referral to the Educational Welfare Service will be made. In non-improving situations a penalty notice may be served

Ø See Appendix 1

5.3 If a child's attendance is unsatisfactory (below 95%) parents are at risk of a referral to the Education Welfare Officer / Early Help Team and may be liable for fast track court prosecution, prosecution and/or a fixed penalty notice under section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

6. Lateness

6.1 The academy day starts at 08:25 and all academy doors are closed at 17:30

6.2 Students who arrive after 08:25 must enter the academy through the main entrance. They must then be signed in where they will receive a late stamp in their planner.

6.3 Any student who arrives after registers close 09:30 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 Assistant Principal is informed by the Attendance Officer.

- a) Form Tutor phones home to discuss the issue with parents/ carers. Student placed on punctuality report
- b) If no improvement is seen the Assistant Principal will invite parents/ carers in for a meeting to discuss and agree strategies to reduce the frequency of lateness.
- c) If there are unacceptable improvements after a month, a referral to the Education Welfare Officer is made.
- d) A referral to the Early-Help Team will be made to support the family in conjunction with the EWO

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

7. How will absence and punctuality be monitored

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

8. Exceptional Leave

Taking holidays (exceptional leave) in term time is illegal and will significantly affect a child's schooling and progress. The Principal will not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances as the September 2013 amendments to registration regulations stipulate.

Under no circumstances will requests for holiday in term time be granted. It is, however, acknowledged that there may be special circumstances where a parent feels that their child needs to be taken out of school. In these circumstances, parents should complete the online exceptional leave of absence form at least 2 weeks prior to the requested date. The Principal will then consider the circumstances and write in response with reference to national recommendations.

Exceptional Leave will always be refused in the following circumstances:

- Where the academy is aware of any truancy
- Where there are trends to requests
- Where the student's attendance is of concern

Reasons for Exceptional Leave will be logged on the student's record and shared as part of the transfer / transition process.

Where the decision is taken to refuse permission for an exceptional leave of absence, the absence will remain unauthorised should the parent ignore this. In addition, the Academy will issue a Penalty Charge Notice to the parents and may also refer the matter to Early Help.

9. 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 will be marked as such, even if the register has not been taken yet.

10. Rewards and Sanctions

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

Children with 100% attendance are presented with a certificate at the end of each half term. Children also receive house points for their respective houses for achieving 100% attendance. Certificates are also awarded for 100% punctuality. Further prizes and awards may be presented for attendance.

Sanctions in the form of detentions will be applied for persistent lateness, please see the table below.

1st Late	Student must sit a 20 minute late detention at lunch
2nd Late	Student must sit a 20 minute late detention at lunch and a 60-minute detention
3rd Late	Student must sit a 20 minute late detention at lunch and an 90-minute detention

The following escalating sanctions will be applied by the pastoral team each half term:

5 Lates	Form Tutor phone call home and a 90 minute detention
10 Lates	Form Tutor meeting, placed on punctuality report and 90 minute detention
15 Lates	Assistant Principal meeting and placed on Saturday detention list

APPENDIX 1: PROCEDURE FOR THE ISSUE OF PENALTY NOTICES:

Failure to ensure a child's regular attendance at school is a criminal offence and if, with support from the academy your child's attendance fails to improve, the academy will work with the local authority to consider one of two courses of action:

1. Penalty fine of £60 (if paid within 21 days), rising to £120 (if paid after 21 days but before 28 days have elapsed). Failing to pay the fine will result in prosecution and being summoned to appear at the Magistrates Court.
2. Start a criminal investigation which could lead to you being prosecuted in the Magistrates' Court.

A Penalty Notice can be issued if:

- a child has poor attendance (eight sessions (half days) or more of unauthorised absence in the last six weeks)
- 10 sessions/5 days or more of absence due to an unauthorised leave of absence during term time
- A child who has been excluded from school is seen in a public place in the first five days of an exclusion.

It is the responsibility of each parent to ensure regular school attendance and failure to do so will result in each parent being charged with the offence. If convicted, both parents will be punished by the courts, resulting in a fine of up to £2,500 for each parent and / or up to three months' custodial sentence.

If a child lives with a family friend or relative for a period of time who has day to day care of the child, each responsible adult is considered as a 'Parent' under the Education Act and can equally be charged with the same offence and prosecuted.

APPENDIX 2: PROCEDURE FOR THE REMOVAL OF A PUPIL FROM THE SCHOOL ROLL

Ark Blake Academy values all its pupils and works to educate all pupils at school. The school will follow the law and guidance from the DFE in all actions. Regulation 8 of The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 sets out the grounds for removing a pupil at a maintained school from roll.

In addition, as of 1 September 2016 all schools in England must inform their LA when a pupil is removed from the roll. These requirements are set out in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016.

Section 5 of the amendments says:

Where the name of the pupil is to be deleted from the admission register, the proprietor must make a return to the local authority ... as soon as the ground for deletion under regulation 8 [of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006] is met ... and in any event no later than the time at which the pupil's name is deleted from the register.

As part of this return, the school must tell the LA:

- The pupil's full name
- The full name and address of any parent with whom the pupil normally resides
- An emergency contact telephone number for any parent with whom the pupil normally resides

- If the pupil is due to change his/her address, the name of the parent with whom he/she will be residing, the address, and the date from which the pupil will live at that address
- The name of any other school at which the pupil is registered, or is due to be registered, and the date on which the pupil first attended or will attend
- The ground under regulation 8 under which the pupil's name is being deleted from the register

Ark Blake Academy will adhere to this guidance.

APPENDIX 3: School Absence Procedures.

Safeguarding your children is our first priority. This includes knowing where the children are if they are not in school and the reasons for this. We have robust procedures in place to ensure we know why children are absent from school and that they are safe.

Day 1 – If there is no parental / carer contact to the school by 9 am

1. Phone call from staff a member trained to do so. Staff member telephones the child's home to seek reasons for the absence and reassurance from a parent or carer that the child is safe at home.
2. Where there is no answer at the home or on mobile numbers we Call back. Risk assess after 2 hours of no contact.
3. Where the parent/carer answers the call, and the child is safe with them, we ask for reason for absence and record on our school's attendance management system The person answering is not the parent/carer and the school is not reassured that the child is at home or safe. The school's designated lead for child protection should be consulted on a risk assessment and the degree of vulnerability of the child. The parent/carer answered the call, the child is not with them or safe and the parent is concerned School to advise the parent to:
 - Contact the local police station to inform them that the child is missing
 - Contact all people and places the child is known to talk to and visit to tell them that the child is missing and ask if they can help to find the child, by providing information which may shed light on the child's whereabouts or actively searing for the child
 - Contact the family GP and Accident and Emergency Centres near where the child lives and goes to school, in case he/she has sustained an injury and been taken in for medical treatment
 - Report back to school if the child is found or remains missing
3. Day 2 - Follow up phone call A subsequent telephone call must be made either from the school landline or preferably a mobile phone. A further email and text home will be sent. The school will consider a home visit and contact Croydon Education Welfare Service.
4. Day 3 –The school will write/email parents in plain English, asking for contact to be made with the school immediately. The school will give parents/carers 3 working days to make contact. Where the school is aware that English may not be the parent's first language, the school will attempt to copy the letter into a language that may be more accessible. The school will arrange a further visit to the home address ensuring that risk assessments are in place Once you have completed these checks (or within 10 days, whichever is earlier) If the child has not been seen and the parents/carers have not made contact, the school will report the child as missing from education.

