

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

| | | | |
|-----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| Date of last review: | November 2022 | Author: | Dan Gallanders |
| Date of next review: | November 2023 | Owner: | Dan Gallanders |
| Type of policy: | <input type="checkbox"/> Network-wide <input type="checkbox"/> Set for school <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tailored by school | Approval: | Management Team |
| School: | Ark St Alban's Academy | Key Contact Name: | Governance Team |
| Key Contact Email: | governance.team@arkonline.org | Key Contact Phone: | 0203 116 6333 |
| School Attendance Liaison Person (SALP) | Natasha Tranter (Head of Pastoral Care and DDSL) | | |

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 |

This policy has been updated in November 2022 in line with the Working together to improve school attendance (2022) guidance

This policy covers our academy's approach to promoting and monitoring attendance. It is published on our school website and is sent to parents when a pupil joins at the beginning of each school year.

Contents:

1. Introduction and aims
2. Attendance and punctuality expectations including daily routines
3. Data and monitoring
4. Escalation of procedures
5. Promoting and rewarding attendance

1. Introduction and Aims

Our mission is to provide every pupil with a transformational education and the character needed to flourish in all that they do. Excellent attendance is key to achieving this.

All children of school age have the right to an excellent 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 St Alban's academy takes the responsibility to monitor and promote the attendance of all its pupils very seriously as we know that good attendance promotes safe, healthy, and successful children.

Our policy outlines the impact of irregular attendance including: disruption to sequences of learning, undermining educational progress and impeding the child's ability to develop friendship groups within the academy.

Improving attendance is in everyone's interests and it's everyone's business. As a result, this policy seeks to ensure that all parties involved in the practicalities of academy attendance are well informed, with a particular emphasis on the need to work effectively together. We always consider the wider context of absence in relation to our [safeguarding policy](#), and where necessary we work with other agencies to promote the safety and wellbeing of our pupils.

The aims of our Attendance Policy are:

- a) To promote the importance of good attendance in line with the *Working together to improve school attendance* (2022) government guidance
- b) Ensure that attendance is monitored effectively and reasons for absences are recorded promptly and consistently
- c) To improve punctuality to the academy
- d) Promote opportunities to celebrate and reward children for attendance and punctuality achievements

2. Attendance and punctuality expectations including daily routines

Pupils are welcomed by senior leaders at the academy main doors from 08:10 so they can be in form time by 08:20. During form time, pupils are welcomed by their tutor, and they set up their desk and organise themselves for the day ahead in their Home room.

Our main academy doors close at 08:20. Pupils arriving after this time but before the end of form time (08:45) will be marked as Late (L).

Pupils who arrive after this time must enter the academy through the main entrance, where their attendance is recorded by the attendance team.

The register opens at 08:20 and closes at 08:45. Pupils arriving late, after registers close, will receive a U code. A U code is an unauthorised absence and significantly impacts overall attendance. Our processes for consistent lateness is the same as for attendance, as outlined in *Table 3*.

There are occasions when absence is unavoidable. These include illness, medical appointments, or education appointments. If a parent knows in advance of absence due to an appointment, the academy office should be informed, and the appointment card shown.

If a child is ill, the parent or carer should ring the academy to inform us on 01214461300.

If parents or carers require additional support regarding attendance they can contact the child's [Head of Year](#). Parents or carers should continue to update the attendance officer by phone for every further day of absence.

If we do not receive communication about absence, the parent or carer will be called, and a text message will be sent home. If no suitable explanation is provided, the absence will be classed as an unauthorised absence.

Authorised absences

Acceptable reasons include sickness, hospital appointments, dentist appointments, recognised religious holidays (1 day per holiday only), a graduation ceremony of a parent/carer or sibling and funerals. Medical appointments (including orthodontist, dentist, opticians, GP, hospital appointments) should be arranged outside of the academy day, where possible. Where this is not possible, we expect pupils to miss only part of the day.

Unauthorised absences

Unacceptable reasons include: shopping, going to a non-medical appointment, visiting relatives, buying shoes, going for a haircut, parent or carer being unwell and taking holiday, for example by acquiring cheaper flights outside of academy holidays. This list is not an exhaustive list.

If parents or carers need to remove their child from the academy for any reason, they must complete a Term Time Absence Request form during a meeting with the School Attendance Liaison Person (SALP). No absences for holidays will be authorised, unless in extreme or exceptional circumstances. If the absence is not authorised, the parent or carer may be liable to a [Fixed Penalty Notice](#). Only the Principal can authorise absence.

3. Data and monitoring

We rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance at an individual and cohort level as soon as possible so all parties can work together to resolve issues before they become entrenched. *Table 1* outlines the data we use, who analyses it and how frequently it is monitored.

Table 1:

| What data? | Who monitors the data? | How frequently is it monitored? |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| Whole academy daily absence report | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance Officer • Heads of Year • Assistance Heads of Year | Daily |
| Pupils at risk of becoming or are SA (severely absent – missing nearly 50% or more of all school days) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance Officer • Safeguarding Team (including the SALP) | Daily |
| Individual pupil attendance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Form tutor • Pupil | Every week during dedicated form time activity |
| Tutor group attendance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Form tutor • Heads of Year | Every week during Year Team meetings |
| Year Group Attendance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heads of Year • SLT Key Stage Leads | Every week |
| Pupils at risk of becoming or are PA (persistently absent – missing nearly 10% of all school days) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance Officer • Heads of Year • SALP | Every week |
| Pupils with EHCPs and SEND | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heads of Year • SENDCO • Associate SENDCO. | Half Termly |
| Cohort analysis (year groups, pupil premium, SEND) compared with Ark Network and National trends. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance Officer • SALP • Vice Principal | Half Termly Yearly |

We also regularly communicate with parents and carers about their child’s attendance. Year-to-date attendance scores are shared every term as part of progress report and discussed with tutors. Where attendance is a concern parents will be invited to an Early Help meeting to discuss patterns in attendance, the needs of the child and family, and what support can be offered. Where attendance is consistently high or where there has been sustained improvement in attendance, parents will be informed through our approach to rewards and recognition.

The table below outlines the number of days, weeks and number of lessons missed for the 95%, 90% and 85% attendance across the school year. All families, children and staff should know that poor attendance translates into many missed lessons and days in school, resulting in fewer opportunities to learn and develop their character. The data in *Table 2* is shared with parents at the beginning of every academic year and is regularly revisited with pupils:

Table 2:

| Attendance during one school year | Equals this number of days absent | Which is approximately this many weeks absent | Which means this number of lessons missed |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| 95% | 9 days | 2 weeks | 60 lessons |
| 90% | 19 days | 4 weeks | 120 lessons |
| 85% | 29 days | 6 weeks | 180 lessons |

4. Escalation of procedures

Table 3 below outlines how we work together with families to promote excellent attendance and highlights who is responsible for monitoring and improving it at each trigger point.

Table 3:

| Attendance | Who monitors and supports? | Actions likely to be taken |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 97%-100% | Form tutor | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Form tutor informs pupils every week of their attendance score After the first day of absence, tutors ask 'what was the reason for your absence yesterday?' Families notify the academy on the first day of absence and every other day of absence |
| 95%-97% | Form Tutor and Attendance Officer | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pupil 1:1 conversation with the Attendance Officer Form tutor completes actions above Families complete the actions above |
| 95%-90% | Head of Year/Assistant Head of Year and (SALP) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Families are invited to meet with the Head of Year or Assistant Head of Year for an Early Help Meeting The voice of the child is heard to help identify any previously unknown barriers The academy works with the school to help support sustained improvements in attendance through formalised support Specific details of support offered are outlined below |
| Less than 90% (those who are persistently absent and those at risk of becoming severely absent) | School Attendance Liaison Person (SALP) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Families are invited to a formal school attendance review meeting (SARM) with the SALP Depending on the pattern of absence, a SARM could be initiated before attendance drops below 90% If no improvements in attendance are seen, a Formal Warning Notice may be sent and/or a referral to the Education Legal Intervention Team, who may choose to issue a fixed penalty notice or prosecution |

If attendance falls below an unacceptable level (below 95%) including a combination of authorised and/or unauthorised absence, the Attendance Officer initiates Birmingham City Council's Fast Track to Attendance process:

- The parents or carer of the child invited to an Early Help meeting with a pastoral leader, where any barriers preventing good attendance are discussed and actions are agreed. The pastoral leaders leading the Early Help process will listen and offer support to families. The outcome of this meeting could be the creation of a school action plan including targets set, advice to parents on applying for travel assistance if the child lives more than 3 miles away, a referral to the school nurse or initiation of a multiagency Early Help Assessment (EHA).
- If there is no evidence of a medical condition, but there is a significant illness absence, the school will ask for medical evidence to authorise further illness absence following a referral to the school nurse. If parents do not attend an Early Help meeting or do not respond to phone calls/letters, the academy will conduct a home visit.
- If attendance doesn't improve following the early help intervention, or if parents refuse to engage, Step Two of the Fast-track process will be initiated. At this point, parents will be invited by the School Attendance Liaison Person (SALP) for arrange a formal 'School Attendance Review Meeting' (SARM) with at least 7 days' notice. This will include meeting with pupils and parents at risk of persistent or severe absence to help further understand the barriers to being in school and agreeing actions or interventions to address them, including another offer of Early Help. The School Attendance Review Meeting may include referrals to services and organisations that can provide support such as Hall Green Families or Birmingham Children's Partnership. Where information raised in the SARM indicates wider safeguarding concerns a referral will be made to the Children's Advice and Support Service (CASS).
- If there is a further unauthorised absence after the SARM, within a 10-week period, the academy will move to Step 3 – The Formal Warning Notice. This notice will be sent to parents in the post and will warn that the Local Authority may consider issue a penalty notice.
- If there are a further 10 sessions (5 days) of unauthorised absence since the formal warning notice was issues, the academy will refer the case to Birmingham City Council's Education Legal Intervention Team, who may serve a fixed penalty notice and/or prosecution under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

If parents or carers are engaging with the school, but the child appears reluctant to attend, we will continue to offer the family support through an Early Help Assessment and referrals to other services where needed. Resources from the #you'vebeenmissed campaign will be shared with the parents or carers.

For young people aged 11 to 25 there are also forums, guides and counselling available free of charge at Kooth: [Home – Kooth](#).

Parents can also find help and support with their child's mental health and other issues affecting the family through ['From Birmingham With Love': From Birmingham With Love'](#)

5. Promoting and rewarding attendance

The importance of excellent attendance is promoted at parent events which are held every term and reiterated at progress days.

At the start of each term pupils are reminded of the link between attendance and attainment. Pupils will qualify for attendance rewards at the end of each term, even if they had a period of absence in previous months or years. In this way, the academy seeks to positively reinforce where pupils have improved attendance.

In every Home room, one of the whiteboards is dedicated to a form group display. Here there is information on the importance of good attendance including the data in *Table 2*. Pupils with excellent attendance and improved attendance are celebrated with their names posted on the form board.