



Ark All Saints Academy

Attendance Policy

1 INTRODUCTION

ARK ALL SAINTS ACADEMY is an academy with the highest expectations of its scholars, staff and parents. Our vision is for all members of our All Saints family to be confident, responsible, and successful and to live with integrity. This will enable our scholars to be well prepared for the next phase of their journey whether that is to university or in pursuing the career of their choice.

We welcome scholars of all faiths and none to our Church of England academy where our guiding principles are based on Christian values.

We treat every scholar as an individual and we work with them and their families to develop and nurture their talents.

2 AIMS OF THE POLICY

- To maintain a high percentage of scholar attendance and punctuality at Ark All Saints Academy.
- To provide support, advice and guidance to parents and scholars.
- To outline a systematic approach to gathering and analysing attendance-related data to promote timely and effective intervention at all levels within the Academy.
- To maintain positive and consistent communication between home and the Academy.
- To recognise and take into account the needs of individual scholars when planning reintegration following significant periods of absence.

3 REGULAR ATTENDANCE

3.1 The importance of regular attendance

There is clear evidence that academic success is linked to attendance; the greater the attendance the greater the likelihood of academic success. Put simply – you have to be in it to win it!

Any absence affects the pattern of a child's education and regular absence will have a serious detrimental effect on their learning, rate of progress and overall attainment.

3.2 Promoting Regular Attendance

Scholars are expected to attend Ark All Saints Academy every day and on time.

Ensuring regular attendance at Ark All Saints Academy is the legal responsibility of parents in the first instance and condoning absence on the part of parents from the Academy without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in legal action.

In order to promote regular attendance the academy will:

- Record scholars' attendance of every session and every lesson.
- Report to parents on their child's rate of attendance, their punctuality and how this relates to their attainment.
- Reward outstanding or significantly improving levels of attendance.

4 ABSENCE

Every incidence of absence (of at least one half-day) from the academy has to be classified by the academy, as either 'authorised absence' or 'unauthorised absence'. As a result information about the cause of any absence is always required, preferably in writing. Parents and scholars are not able to classify instances of absence.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from the academy for a good reason such as illness, medical/dental appointments (which unavoidably take place during the academy day), emergencies or other unavoidable causes. Absence may only be classed as 'authorised' if the academy has either given approval in advance for a scholar to be away, or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for absence.

Unauthorised absence relates to instances of absence where the academy is not satisfied with the reasons given for the absence. This type of absence can lead to the imposing of sanctions and may lead to legal proceedings.

Examples of 'unauthorised absence' include:

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Children who arrive at school too late to be registered as present for the session in question
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Day trips and holidays in term time
- Excessive illness without medical evidence
- Children acting as carers

The Academy will follow up all instances of absence in order to:

- Ascertain the reason for absence
- Ensure that the proper safeguarding action is taken
- Categorise the absences as 'authorised absence' or 'unauthorised absence'

In order to minimise the level of absence the Academy will undertake the following measures:

- The academy will call home if a child has not arrived at the academy by 9.00am
- If a parent is unsure whether their child is well enough to come to the academy they should feel reassured that the academy would always contact parents and, if necessary and with agreement, send their child home should they become unwell

4.1 Persistent Absence

A scholar becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 15% or more schooling across the academic year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and the academy expects the full support and co-operation of parents in order to prevent persistent absence. It is the duty of the Academy to inform the Attendance Team at Southwark of any scholar who is a persistent absentee, or any scholar whose attendance is a cause for concern and showing no signs of improvement.

In order to minimise the level of persistent absence the academy will undertake the following measures:

- Monitor all absence rigorously and investigate all instances of absence thoroughly to contribute to promoting the safeguarding of children
- Should cases of absence reach the threshold of persistent absence or be at risk of moving towards that threshold, the academy will ensure that the monitoring and investigation of such cases be given priority and parents will be informed of this prioritisation immediately
- Should cases of absence reach the threshold of persistent absence the academy expects that, through the full support and co-operation of parents, attendance rates swiftly and significantly improve.
- Should cases of absence reach the threshold of persistent absence and, although the academy is able to make contact with parents, there is no swift and significant improvement in attendance rates, the academy will employ the use of outside agencies such as educational welfare and may support prosecution.
- Should cases of absence reach the threshold of persistent absence and the academy is unable to make suitable contact with parents the academy may employ the assistance of police or social services.

4.2 Lateness

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If scholars miss the start of the day they can miss out on valuable learning time and this can have a detrimental effect on their learning, rate of progress and overall attainment. On-going poor punctuality can encourage absenteeism.

In order to minimise the level of lateness the Academy will undertake the following measures:

- The Academy will call home if a child has not arrived at the Academy by 9.00am
- Scholars are required to 'sign in' should they arrive late to the Academy

- The Academy will regularly encourage parents to contact the academy at any time, should they be having problems getting their child to the academy on time
- Lateness without a valid reason, agreed by the academy, will result in sanctions (such as detentions)
- If a scholar has a persistent late record, parents will be required to meet with the relevant academy staff in an attempt to resolve the problem

4.3 Exceptional Leave

Taking holidays (exceptional leave) in term time will affect a child's schooling as much as any other absence and the academy expects the full support and co-operation of parents in not taking children away from the academy, for any period, during term time.

Ark All Saints Academy will not sanction any holidays taken during term time.

5 APPENDIX

5.1 Appendix A - Examples of stakeholder responsibilities relating to attendance

The following lists contain examples of key responsibilities, to be undertaken by the listed stakeholders, in order to facilitate the implementation of the Ark All Saints Academy Attendance Policy. These lists of responsibilities are not exhaustive and should serve to inform aspects of other documentation relating to attendance, such as a 'home-academy agreement'.

5.1.1 Teaching staff responsibilities relating to attendance

When the scholar returns from an instance of absence the 'pastoral tutor' should:

- ✓ Have a conversation with the scholar related to the reason for absence
- ✓ Request that a note is produced, written by the parent, explaining the reason for absence
- ✓ Contact the parent if there are concerns relating to the reason for absence or the level of attendance overall

When the scholar returns from an instance of absence the 'teacher' should:

- ✓ Be aware of the instance of absence
- ✓ Welcome the scholar back to the lesson
- ✓ Provide the scholar with additional work to enable them to catch up on the learning time that they have missed

5.1.2 Parental responsibilities relating to attendance

- ✓ Ensure that their child attends Ark All Saints Academy every day and on time, unless they are too ill to come to the academy or there are exceptional circumstances
- ✓ Never take scholars out of the academy for any appointments during term time that they have control over

- ✓ Never take scholars out of the academy for day trips or holidays during term
- ✓ Contact the academy as soon as possible on the first day of absence, explaining the reason and likely length of absence and expected date of return
- ✓ Contact the academy should circumstances related to absence change (such as an illness leading to prolonged absence) **before 8.30am on each day of absence**
- ✓ Send a note addressed to their 'pastoral tutor' on the first day they return with an explanation of the reasons for absence, even if an initial explanation has been given by telephone

5.1.3 Scholar responsibilities relating to attendance

- ✓ Attend Ark All Saints Academy 100% of the time
- ✓ Go directly to the academy in the morning and be ready to learn by 8.20am every day
- ✓ If they are late in the morning they must sign in
- ✓ If they are late in the morning without a valid reason they must expect and attend a detention
- ✓ If you are later than the late bell to lessons more than twice you will have an SLT detention on Friday evening
- ✓ If they are late in the morning (without a note from home that has a valid reason) more than 5 times they understand that they may be sent home until a parent can come into the academy attend punctuality review meeting
- ✓ If they are absent from the academy for any reason they must bring a note which explains the reasons for absence and hand it to their 'pastoral tutor' upon their return

5.1.4 Practical measures taken by the academy

- ✓ The pastoral team will meet with the families of scholars whose attendance falls under the acceptable threshold
- ✓ Scholars will be placed on attendance watch
- ✓ Educational welfare will be used in cases in which attendance fails to improve

POLICY INFORMATION

Named personnel with designated responsibility for Attendance Policy

| Academic year | Designated Senior person | Deputy Designated Senior person | Nominated Governor | Chair of Governors |
|---------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| 2013-2014 | Lucy Frame | | | Peter Martin |

Policy review dates (frequency of review: every year)

| Review Date | Changes made | By whom |
|-------------|-----------------------|------------|
| July 2013 | Policy created | Lucy Frame |
| July 2015 | Reviewed – No changes | Lucy Frame |

Ratification by Governing Body

| Academic year | Date of ratification | Chair of Governors |
|---------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| 2013-2014 | July 2013 | Peter Martin |

Dates of staff training for this academic year

| Dates | Course Title | Staff |
|-------|--------------|-------|
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