



Striving for Excellence

Ark Oval Primary Academy

Attendance and Punctuality Policy 2019

Responsibilities:

Monitoring:	Headteacher and Attendance Officer
Initial Action:	Headteacher
Accurate Register Completion:	Class Based Staff
Further Action:	Governors & Education Welfare Service

STATEMENT OF EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY

- I.1 Ark Oval Primary Academy belongs to its pupils, their families, staff and the whole community. We aim to make the school a place in which all those within it and the community it serves can be proud and a place where everyone is valued.

Together we are Striving for Excellence

- I.2 Ark Oval Primary Academy community is drawn from a diverse and multicultural community. We have a range of socio-economic groups, many different family structures and practices and a wide variety of languages, beliefs, religions, and political and social ideals. Our community has members who have made different sexual choices for themselves and those who are differently abled.
- I.3 At Ark Oval Primary Academy we are very proud of this diversity which we believe enhances all of our lives and the education process. We believe that each individual has the right to equality of access to, and achievement in, an educational setting that will facilitate them to fulfil their potential. The schools believe that this is best achieved in an environment where each individual understands their right to respect and courtesy and where they are valued as an individual.
- I.4 Ark Oval Primary Academy are opposed to any form of discrimination and are committed to developing caring, responsible and independent citizens who are motivated towards learning and who value themselves and others. This commitment will inform all aspects of school life. Such a commitment is an essential part of the provision of high quality education for all members of our school's community and empowers all those within it.
- I.5 We have taken on board our statutory obligations from the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and 2005 and will therefore act to:
- Eliminate unlawful racial and disability discrimination and/or harassment.
 - Promote equality of opportunity for all by the promotion of positive attitudes towards and between all and by actively encouraging the participation in school, and public, life of a wide variety of different people.
 - Promote good relations between people of different racial groups and those who are both able and disabled.
 - Take steps to meet disabled peoples needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment.
- I.6 We recognise that discrimination exists in the wider society and we are working hard to address the findings of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report with regard to institutional racism and the content of the recently published document "The Duty to Promote Disability Equality: Statutory Code of Practice".
- I.7 Ark Oval Primary Academy is committed to equal opportunities for all members of the wide communities including their employees regardless of whether or not they have a physical, mental or sensory impairment. The schools have disability audits which outline steps to make them more accessible and Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) compliant

- I.8 The Disability Discrimination Act imposes duties on employers. DfES Circular 20/99 gives guidance on what the DDA means for schools and LEAs.

Please read in conjunction with:

- Child Protection Policy

Action taken when pupils are absent

There are occasions when absence is unavoidable. These include:

- Illness.
- Medical or education appointments.

If a parent knows in advance of absence due to an appointment, the school office should be informed and the appointment card shown.

If a child is ill, the parent or carer should ring the school 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 school so we can photocopy it.

Only the Headteacher can authorise absence.

The parent or carer will be phoned and if no answer will be texted on the **first day of absence** if no information has been received and reasons noted. Letters will be sent to the parent or carers if no explanation has been given.

A letter is sent requesting explanation of absence. If no reply is received; the absence is counted as unauthorised. Two school weeks are allowed for responses after the letter is sent.

What happens if attendance is unacceptable?

The Local Authority, through the Educational Welfare Service, the attendance team and the Headteacher review the attendance of all pupils monthly. If the attendance of a pupil falls below 95% the reasons for the absence are investigated.

The reasons for absence are discussed. If there are not extenuating circumstances the following procedure is instigated:

1. The Headteacher will write to the parent or carer. The situation is reviewed at the next month's check.
2. 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.
3. 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.
4. 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 (see Appendix A).

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

If the child is below 5 years of age, the Education Welfare Officer will not accept a referral. In this instance the Headteacher will pursue the situation. In extreme cases a nursery place could be withdrawn

Lateness

The school day starts at **8.30am** and all school doors are closed at **8.40am**.

Pupils who arrive after this time must enter school through the main entrance. They must then be signed into the late book.

Registers will close at 9.00am. 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.

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

1. Appointment made to see Education Welfare Officer – one month is given for improvement.
2. If no improvement is seen the Education Welfare Officer will request another appointment.
3. If unacceptable improvement after a month referral to Education Welfare Officer made.

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

Afternoon Register

Registers must be submitted by teaching staff straight after lunch before afternoon lessons commence.

Punctuality Inspection

We also do sporadic punctuality inspections at the school gate. Our Education Welfare Officer is sometimes involved in these.

How will this information be collated?

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

Pupils Absence and Extenuating Family Circumstances

If parents or carers need to remove their child from school for any reason they must complete a Pupil Absence Request form. The governors have instructed that **no absences for holidays may be authorised**. Permission 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. This is in line with the 2013 Amendments to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations.

Collection after school

School finishes at 3.30pm (EYFS, KSI & KS2).

Teachers will keep the children with them until 3.40pm

After this time children are brought to the dining hall, and entered into the "Late Collection Book".

The trigger to action is set at 10% i.e. 3 times within a six-week block.

1. The Headteacher will write to the parent/carer.
2. The Headteacher will request an appointment with the parent/carer.
3. The Headteacher will again request appointment with parent/carer.
4. Governors will request an appointment with the parent/carer.

As with punctuality and attendance, progress is reviewed each month.

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 school office are late and should be marked as such, even if the register has not been taken yet.

Rewards

Weekly Celebration Assemblies

Assemblies are held every week on Monday. Classes with the highest attendance/punctuality receive a certificate.

100% Attendance Celebration

Children with 100% attendance are presented with a certificate and attend 100% attendance cinema/incentive at the end of each half term. All the children's names are put into a prize draw and the winner is presented with a voucher.

Weekly School Newsletter

Each week, the school newsletter is used to highlight the importance of good attendance and punctuality by presenting each class's attendance figure.

School Attendance Board

The board includes attendance information and information about the classes with the highest attendance and punctuality. Children who have achieved 100% attendance are also included on the display.

Attendance & Punctuality Policy

Appendix A

Procedure for the issue of Penalty Notices:

Schools 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(s), along with evidence of what measures they have taken to bring this matter to the parent's attention.

The LA will produce an information letter for distribution to all parents whose children have been identified as falling below 95% attendance at their respective schools. 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.

Each pupil's attendance will be monitored for 15 school 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.

Should the required improvement not take place a 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.

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.

Following a change to advice issued by the DfES in recent months, Penalty Notices may now be issued to the parents of **all** pupils registered at Croydon schools, irrespective of their actual home address. This also means that follow-up prosecutions where parents fail to pay the Notice or to improve their children's attendance will extend to families resident outside the Borough.

Withdrawal of Penalty Notices:

The LEA will withdraw any Notices issued if:

- It can be established that the Penalty Notice was issued to the wrong person.

Or

- The use of the Penalty Notice does not conform to the terms of the Protocol.

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.

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:

Arrangements for payment will be detailed on the Penalty Notice.

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.

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.

Any revenue arising from the issue of Penalty Notices will be retained by the LEA to defray the costs involved in their issue or any subsequent prosecutions arising from non-payment.

Non Payment:

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