

Attendance Policy

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Good attendance is essential if pupils are to take full advantage of school and gain the appropriate skills which will equip them for life. It is important to ensure that our most vulnerable students are given the same opportunities, which may mean extra support in certain cases.

The academy aims to achieve good attendance by operating an attendance policy within which staff, students, parent(s)/carer(s), local community and the Behaviour and Attendance Service can work in partnership. The academy will monitor attendance and ensure quick and early intervention if a problem is identified.

All staff will encourage good attendance and will liaise with home and partner agencies if this is appropriate. Good attendance will be seen as an achievement in its own right and recognised as such by the academy. The attendance policy is based on the premise of equal opportunities for all.

Aims

- To improve the quality of academy life.
- To create a culture in which good attendance is 'normality'
- To demonstrate to pupils, parent(s)/carers and staff that the academy values good attendance and to recognise that good regular attendance is an achievement in itself.
- To be consistent in the implementation, both in terms of rewards and sanctions.
- To value the individual and be socially and educationally inclusive.

Objectives

- To involve students more in their academy attendance
- To improve communication with parents(s)/carers about regular academy attendance
- All academy staff to continue to take responsibility for student's attendance.
- To recognise the important role of class teachers and learning mentors in promoting and monitoring good attendance

Children or young people are expected to attend school for the full 190 days of the academy year, unless there is a good reason for absence. There are two types of absence:

- Authorised (where the academy approves pupil absence)
- Unauthorised (where the academy will not approve absence)

It is expected that parent(s)/carer(s) will provide an explanation if the child or young person is absent on the first day the absence occurs. This can be by letter, telephone, personally at the office or by appointment.

If contact, explaining the child or young person's absence, fails to be made by parent(s)/carer(s), then the academy will contact the home by telephone on the initial day, followed by a letter after 3 days of unexplained absence.

The principal will regularly remind parent(s)/carer(s) of the importance of good attendance and punctuality.

Children or young people with 100% attendance will be rewarded by the academy weekly, termly and yearly through the Vivo rewards scheme.

Identification and Referral

- Identification is made by the form teacher (cause for concern)
- Concerns are passed to the relevant Student Support Coordinator for contacting parent(s)/carer(s).
- The Student Support Coordinator responsible will contact parent(s)/carer(s) with letter 1.
- If further absence occurs, letter 2 will be delivered by the Attendance Improvement Officer and a home visit. No further absence will be authorised.
- If attendance has improved over the last four weeks we will continue to monitor attendance.
- At this point you would refer to Attendance and Pupil Welfare Service if attendance has not improved and you may feel a final warning letter is appropriate at this point.
- The referral to the Behaviour and Attendance Service will consist of the referral form, copies of all correspondence to parent(s)/carer(s) and a print out of the child or young person's attendance certificate.

Family Holidays during Term Time

Every school day counts towards your child's future. Days off school add up to lost learning.

In total there are 175 non-school days a year. This gives families the opportunity to:

- Spend time together
- Go on family visits
- Go on holiday
- Go on days out
- Attend routine appointments

The law says that parent(s)/carer(s) do not have the right to take their child out of school for holidays during term time. If you take your child on holiday during term-time without the academy's permission this will be recorded as unauthorised absence and may result in parents being issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice.

Why shouldn't I take my child on holiday during term time?

Many parents and carers think it is okay to go on holiday during term time however this has a negative effect on their children's learning and ability to achieve. .

- 10 days absence = 95% attendance
- 19 days absence = 90% attendance
- 29 days absence = 85% attendance
- 38 days absence = 80% attendance
- 47 days absence = 75% attendance

Children with over 90% attendance are more likely to gain 5 or more A-C GCSE'S or equivalent qualifications.

How do I request leave of absence for a family holiday?

All requests should be made on an Application for Leave of Absence for Annual Holiday which is available from the academy or via the academy.

www.ashhillacademy.org.uk/parentinformation/holidaysintertime

This should be submitted no later than 21 days before the start of the holiday.

Will the academy authorise taking my child away during term-time?

Parents cannot demand leave of absence be granted for a family holiday. The Principal has a discretionary power to grant leave but is under no obligation to do so. The academy will not authorise holidays in term time except in exceptional circumstances that are conveyed in writing to the academy. In considering whether to authorise leave for a family holiday, the academy will consider each case individually, taking into account a child or young person's overall attendance and the reason for the holiday. The academy will not authorise holidays taken during any exam weeks.

What happens if the Principal does not agree my request?

If you take your child on holiday during term time, without the authorisation of the principal, the principal will make a request to the Local Authority to issue a Fixed Penalty Notice. If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued, the penalty is £60 per child, per parent/carer when the payment is made within 21 days, after 29 days it will increase to £120. Failure to pay within 28 days will result in a summons to appear before the Magistrates Court on the grounds that the parent/carer has failed to secure their child's regular attendance at school. Please note that a separate Fixed Penalty Notice will be issued to each parent for each child and all monies are payable to the Local Authority.

Lateness

The academy day begins at 8:30am and all students are expected to be in the academy by 8:25am. Students who are consistently late are disrupting not only their own education but also that of others. Where persistent lateness gives cause for concern further action may be taken.

Monitoring and Review

The designated Assistant Principal will monitor the implementation and effectiveness of this policy and will report annually to the Local Governing Body. This report will include overall trends, amendments made to the policy, as a result of best practice, or in response to Government guidelines